



# *DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE*

## AGENDA ITEM

AGENDA DATE: NOVEMBER 4, 2015  
TO: Chair McCormack and Members of the Design Review Committee  
THRU: Leslie Aranda Roseberry, Planning Manager  
FROM: Jennifer Le, Acting Principal Planner  
SUBJECT: **DRC No. 4675-13 – Metrolink Parking Structure Project**

---

### **SUMMARY**

A proposal to construct a new parking structure at the northwest corner of Chapman Avenue and Lemon Street. The parking structure would contain 611 parking spaces on five levels (two below grade, one at grade and two above grade). 500 spaces would be for transit users and 111 for general use.

### **RECOMMENDED ACTION – RECOMMENDATION TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION**

Staff recommends the DRC recommend approval to the Planning Commission subject to the conditions listed in the staff report and any other conditions the DRC deems necessary to support the findings. In taking an action, the DRC should note for the record that it has reviewed and considered the information presented in MND 1832-14.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Applicant/Owner: City of Orange  
Property Location: 130 North Lemon Street  
General Plan Designation: Old Towne Mixed Use (OTMU)  
Zoning Classification: Public Institution (PI) and OTMU-15  
Existing Development: City-owned surface parking lot  
Property Size: 1.73 acres  
Associated Applications: Zone Change No. 1275-14, Major Site Plan Review No. 0649-10, Parcel Map 0005-14 & Environmental Review No. 1832-14  
Previous DRC Project Review: March 20, 2013, July 15, 2015 and September 16, 2015

## **PUBLIC NOTICE**

Public Notice was posted in accordance with procedures outlined in the Orange Municipal Code.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

An Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) was prepared in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and concludes that all potentially significant environment impacts resulting from the project can be reduced to less than significant levels with the incorporation of mitigation measures in the areas of biological resources, cultural resources, noise and vibration, and traffic. The public review period for the MND was held from June 10, 2015 through July 15, 2015. The Mitigation Monitoring Report and the Public Review Draft MND, including the Historic Resources Report, is provided as an attachment to this staff report. The DRC is required to review and consider the information presented in the MND prior to making a recommendation on the project.

Because a portion of the project may be federally funded, compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act is also required. NEPA and Section 106 compliance are being undertaken concurrently with the CEQA process. A Section 106 Historic Resources Report has been prepared and submitted to the State Historic Preservation Office for concurrence.

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The project site is 1.73 acres in size and is comprised of the proposed parking structure site (1.23 acres) and the adjacent construction staging area (0.5 acres) to the south. The project would involve the removal of the existing 172-space public surface parking lot and construction of a five-level parking structure, with two subterranean levels, one at-grade level, and two above-grade levels on the 1.23-acre portion of the project site. The parking structure would provide 611 parking spaces, with 500 dedicated for transit users (Metrolink) and 111 spaces for general use. Access would be provided via two driveways, one on Lemon Street and one on Maple Avenue.

The structure height would be up to 28 feet. The structure would be clad with a brick veneer exterior wall finish to blend in with the historic masonry commercial and industrial buildings in the surrounding area. The structure openings would be squared off with metal mullions and echo the style of window openings found on many commercial buildings in the Old Towne area. Brick pilasters with a precast concrete base would be incorporated on all four structure elevations. A precast concrete band is proposed at the top of the parapet. Brick soldier courses are also incorporated into the facade to add visual interest. Parking structure access points would be accented with metal canopies. Two elevator towers are proposed at the north and south ends of the structure (maximum height of 41 feet) and would be finished with glass panels to allow for visibility and security. Flush-mounted photovoltaic panels are proposed on the top deck of the parking structure to generate power for the structure. The panels would be flush-mounted on top of the two elevator towers and on the parking structure's top deck located on a ramp cover that is positioned below the top of the parapet. Lighting would also be installed on the top deck for security purposes, using a combination of 14-foot light poles and wall-mounted lights.

Historically-referenced public art is envisioned along the east elevation of the parking structure and down-lit with historically referenced gooseneck lighting. However, due to project funding considerations, the public art may be designed and installed as a separate future effort from parking structure construction. Should the City move forward with public art installations, the DRC would review the design at that future time.

An equipment/storage area with a metal door is proposed on the northwest side of the parking structure off of Maple Avenue and will house a Southern California Edison transformer. The enclosure will either reuse the existing block wall at the western property line, or the City will demolish the existing block wall and construct a new enclosure wall at the same height as the existing wall.

A bicycle plaza that would accommodate City bike lockers and bike racks would be included in the project along Maple Avenue immediately west of the parking structure. The bike plaza includes decorative paving, landscaping, lighting, a canopy, bike lockers and bike racks. Flush-mounted photovoltaic panels are proposed on top of the bicycle plaza canopy and are designed in a manner that they will not be substantially visible from the street.

The proposed project includes construction of a new sidewalk, curb and gutter, and installation of street trees and Acorn style light standards along Lemon Street and Maple Avenue where the parking structure interfaces with the sidewalk. Onsite landscaping is concentrated on the east and north project site frontages at the base of the parking structure along Maple Avenue and Lemon Street.

## **EXISTING SITE**

The site is 1.73 acres and is currently used as a 172-space public surface parking lot. The site is paved with striped parking spaces, planters, landscaping, lighting and perimeter fencing and walls. Access is via two driveways on Lemon Street. The site is located within the City's National Register-listed and locally designated Old Towne Orange Historic Districts.

## **EXISTING AREA CONTEXT**

The project site is located in a transitional area of the City which contains a mix of residential, commercial, industrial and institutional uses. The site is bordered to the north by Maple Avenue and Chapman University's Dodge Film School; single family residential and commercial uses on Lemon Street to the east; Chapman Avenue and commercial uses to the south; and single family residential and commercial/industrial uses on Cypress Street to the west. The surrounding area contains a mix of contributing and non-contributing structures.

## **EVALUATION CRITERIA**

Orange Municipal Code (OMC) Section 17.10.070 establishes the general criteria the DRC should use when reviewing the project. This section states the following:

The project shall have an internally consistent, integrated design theme, which is reflected in the following elements:

1. **Architectural Features.**
  - a. The architectural features shall reflect a similar design style or period.
  - b. Creative building elements and identifying features should be used to create a high quality project with visual interest and an architectural style.
2. **Landscape.**
  - a. The type, size and location of landscape materials shall support the project's overall design concept.
  - b. Landscaping shall not obstruct visibility of required addressing, nor shall it obstruct the vision of motorists or pedestrians in proximity to the site.
  - c. Landscape areas shall be provided in and around parking lots to break up the appearance of large expanses of hardscape.
3. **Signage.** All signage shall be compatible with the building(s) design, scale, colors, materials and lighting.
4. **Secondary Functional and Accessory Features.** Trash receptacles, storage and loading areas, transformers and mechanical equipment shall be screened in a manner, which is architecturally compatible with the principal building(s).

## **ANALYSIS/STATEMENT OF THE ISSUES**

The project was reviewed by the DRC for preliminary review on March 11, 2013, July 15, 2015 and September 16, 2015. The below analysis focuses on responding to the DRC's preliminary comments provided during the most recent review.

### **Issue 1: Adequacy of design changes in addressing DRC's previous comments**

- DRC suggested replacing the open mullion treatment with the concrete shear wall behind on the Maple Avenue elevation with a brick façade.
  - The elevations and plan details have been revised to show a brick façade on Maple Avenue in place of the open mullion with the concrete shear wall behind it. The revised elevations and details are included as attachments to this report.

- DRC requested photographs and examples of buildings where a precast brick has been used.
  - LPA has provided addresses and photographs of a few buildings in southern California where precast brick has been used. This information has been included as Attachment 3 to this report.
- DRC expressed concern about the monotony of the precast brick and suggested that the brick façade may need more contrast. Suggested using brick work variations.
  - Staff believes that the combination of architectural elements and materials as shown on the elevations (including the brick material and color blend, openings, mullions, pilasters, concrete band at the base of the pilasters and at the top of the structure, brick soldier course at the top of the second floor and ground floor openings, etc.) provide sufficient variation in the façade. If the DRC decides that additional variation is needed, the design team will be prepared with visual representations of a few brick pattern options for discussion at the meeting. These brick variations could be incorporated into the design at the DRC's discretion.
- DRC indicated the brick color blend was acceptable and preferred clear glass over the brown glass material.
  - Staff will bring a revised materials board to the DRC meeting that incorporates the clear glass material. It should be noted that pedestrian security screens details have been added to the plan set and will be included on the materials board as well.
- DRC expressed concern with the linear root barriers and the condition of the root zone for the proposed street trees.
  - Structural soils were evaluated and do not appear appropriate for the proposed street tree species. Linear root barriers are proposed. However, the planting detail on Sheet L7.02 has been revised to call for over-excavation of the tree pit to 3 times the root ball diameter to improve the root zone conditions.
- DRC suggested use of an aluminum tree grate in a rectangular shape.
  - The landscape plan calls for the Urban Accessories "Boston" tree grate. The tree grate will be rectangular in shape and comes off-the-shelf for 7' tree wells. Staff is seeking DRC feedback on the tree grate choice, as the tree grate design is more contemporary than the tree grate suggested in the Depot Specific Plan. The tree grate suggested in the Depot Specific plan does not come in 7' sizes, unless custom made.
- DRC requested photographic examples of the landscape species.
  - Photos have been added to the landscape plans.
- DRC suggested changing the rhythm of the landscaping to expose the concrete base of the pilasters.
  - The landscape plans have been revised so that gaps in the shrub plantings occur at each pilaster to allow for the concrete base to show.

- DRC discussed public art and stated that the parking structure could be an opportunity for public art in the future.
  - The elevations have been revised to show approximate locations of future public art. Should public art be pursued in the future, detailed locations and designs would come back to the DRC. This is also included in the conditions of approval.
- DRC requested lighting plans and discussed lighting details.
  - A draft lighting plan and details will be presented at the DRC meeting. Should lighting plan details need further revision, DRC may add a condition requiring staff to bring the lighting plan back to the DRC prior to issuance of building permits.

### **ADVISORY BOARD RECOMMENDATION**

The City's SMART team (formerly SRC) reviewed the project on February 2, 2011 and December 14, 2011 for preliminary review. SMART recommended approval of the project subject to conditions on May 27, 2015.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION AND REQUIRED FINDINGS**

The courts define a "Finding" as a conclusion which describes the method of analysis decision makers utilize to make the final decision. A decision making body "makes a Finding," or draws a conclusion, through identifying evidence in the record (i.e., testimony, reports, environmental documents, etc.) and should not contain unsupported statements. The statements which support the Findings bridge the gap between the raw data and the ultimate decision, thereby showing the rational decision making process that took place. The "Findings" are, in essence, the ultimate conclusions which must be reached in order to approve (or recommend approval of) a project. The same holds true if denying a project; the decision making body must detail why it cannot make the Findings.

The Findings are applied as appropriate to each project. Below are the four findings that, as applicable, are used to determine whether a project meets the intent of the code related to design review and historic preservation guidelines:

1. *In the Old Towne Historic District, the proposed work conforms to the prescriptive standards and design criteria referenced and/or recommended by the DRC or other reviewing body for the project (OMC 17.10.070.F.1).*

The project is located within the Old Towne Historic District and has been designed to comply with the Old Towne Design Standards. Specifically, the project complies with the four criteria in the Standards which are applicable to new construction in the district, related to compatibility of new construction with surrounding development and require new construction to have no adverse impacts to a historic resource or district. Compliance is

detailed in the project's historic resources report (included as an attachment to the MND). The report concludes that although the project introduces new construction into an established historic district, the project is generally compatible with the surrounding area and would not have an adverse effect to historic resources or the district as a whole.

- 2. In any National Register Historic District, the proposed work complies with the Secretary of the Interior's standards and guidelines (OMC 17.10.07.F.2).*

The project is located within the National Register-listed Old Towne Historic District and has been designed to comply with the Old Towne Design Standards and the Secretary of the Interior's standards and guidelines for the treatment of historic properties. The project complies with SOI Standards for Rehabilitation, Standard 8, 9 and 10 and with the SOI's guidelines related to "setting" in a historic district. Compliance with these standards and guidelines is detailed in the project's historic resources report (included as an attachment to the MND).

- 3. The project design upholds community aesthetics through the use of an internally consistent, integrated design theme and is consistent with all adopted specific plans, applicable design standards, and their required findings (OMC 17.10.07.F.3).*

The project has an internally consistent, integrated design theme through the use of consistent materials, colors and design elements that communicate a specific architectural style that is compatible with the surrounding area. The proposed design elements such as the brick façade, structure openings, mullions, elevator towers, and the pilasters on all four elevations help to create a structure with visual interest that is also compatible in scale and style with other large commercial and industrial buildings in the surrounding area. Appropriate landscaping is proposed at the building foundation line along Maple Avenue and Lemon Street to soften the building. Large street trees in 7' tree wells are also proposed to enhance the streetscape. Signage is limited to parking structure identification signage and uses appropriate materials and colors. An equipment enclosure is proposed along the northwest side of the structure to house the SCE transformer. The enclosure is designed with similar materials and colors as the parking structure and will screen the project's mechanical equipment. Therefore, the project has an integrated design theme and has been designed as a high quality project.

In addition, the project site is located within the Santa Fe Depot Specific Plan area. The Depot Specific Plan identifies the Lemon Street site as the future location of a parking structure. Further, the design of the structure is consistent with the Specific Plan's Design Guidelines for Historic Buildings and specifically the criteria for new construction. Compliance with the Depot Specific Plan is detailed in the project's historic resources report (included as an attachment to the MND).

- 4. For infill residential development, as specified in the City of Orange Infill Residential Design Guidelines, the new structure(s) or addition are compatible with the scale, massing,*

*orientation, and articulation of the surrounding development and will preserve or enhance existing neighborhood character (OMC 17.10.07.F.4).*

The project is not residential in nature. This finding does not apply.

## **RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS**

Staff recommends the following conditions, in addition to the City's standard conditions of approval:

DRC Condition 1: The detailed design for the future public art component (when undertaken) shall be reviewed and approved by the DRC.

DRC Condition 2: Staff shall bring forward for City Council consideration an amendment to the Depot Specific Plan to allow for the tree species shown on the Parking Structure's landscape plan. Tree species installed on Lemon Street and Maple Avenue shall be consistent with the Depot Specific Plan approved at the time of tree installation.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Project Site Map
2. Minutes from the March 20, 2013, July 15, 2015, and September 16, 2015 DRC Meetings
3. LPA Memorandum, Examples of precast brick
4. Design plans
5. Color elevations
6. Perspective Views
7. Mitigation Monitoring Program (hardcopy). Mitigated Negative Declaration No. 1832-14 (electronic file, on disk)
8. Color & Material Board, to be provided at the meeting.

cc: Lisa Kim, Economic Development Manager