



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

701 OCEAN STREET - 4TH FLOOR, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060
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TOM BURNS, PLANNING DIRECTOR

December 27, 2005

Agenda Date: January **11, 2006**

Planning Commission
County of Santa Cruz
701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Subject: Design **Resubmittal**
Application: 04-0294 (Portola Plaza)
Applicant: Abbas Haghshenas

Members of the Commission:

Responses to Comments **from** the Commission -

Your Commission initially reviewed this application on November 9, 2005. The public hearing was continued to this agenda to allow the applicant to address concerns raised by your commission. Discussion revolved around the design of the project and the following recounts the points that were made by Commission members and the response from the applicant:

1. Two Story Facade

The design that ~~was~~ submitted previously contained one section that was a two-story wall almost 32 ~~feet~~ high (the lower floor did have a two foot indentation). The applicant has reduced the second floor office area and has moved the upper wall back eight feet from the plane of the lower floor.

2. Depth of Second Floor Set back

In the previous version, all balconies were shown as six feet maximum in depth. The applicant has increased the depth to be seven feet minimum, with some areas increased to eight feet, and a portion of the new balcony at the office area has been designed to be ten feet in depth.

3. Amount of Light in Residential Outdoor Corridors

The inner overhang at the upper floor, outside of the residential units, formerly extended to create dark areas at both ends of the comdors. The applicant has revised the plans to permit more light to all the comdor space by using a standard overhang width throughout.

4. Increased Natural Light in Units

The Commission noted that some of the units (particularly those that align with the back wall of the office area and those which do not have side walls facing the exterior) have areas with limited natural light. The applicant has added skylights to these units, as well as to the back of the office area.

5. Amount of Covered Parking

There was discussion by your Commission that questioned why there were 18 carport spaces shown, where there were only 17 residential condominiums proposed. The applicant has redesigned the parking to show 17 *tandem* spaces with one covered by a carport and one additional space (to be designated for the manager) in the last space at the carports.

Setback Variance –

In the report submitted to the Planning Commission, the residential carports were described as requiring a Variance because they were located within the fifteen feet setback. The location of the residential carports has been revised and the carports are now located a minimum of twenty feet from the property line, eliminating the need for a variance request.

Summary -

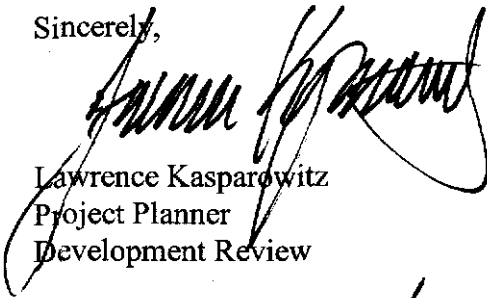
The photomontage submitted with the plans clearly shows the exterior modifications. The second floor is set back for the entire length of the building, and there are no two-story masses facing Portola Drive. The appearance of the building is that these are five structures that were separately built, but have similar features. From the street level, the upper floor will be much less noticeable. Staff supports the revisions made to the exterior that help emphasize the first floor plane of this structure.

The applicant compensated for the decrease in the upper floor office area by increasing the lower floor retail/office area (to the west) and rearranging the parking. Staff believes this creates a safer entry drive (in the previous submission, parking backed out into the drive).

Staff has reviewed the revised plans and is recommending:

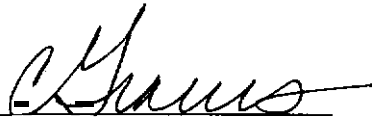
- Certification of the Mitigated Negative Declaration as complying with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act
- Approval of Application 04-0294, based on the attached findings and conditions.

Sincerely,



Lawrence Kasparowitz
Project Planner
Development Review

Reviewed By:



Cathv Graves
Principal Planner
Development Review

Exhibits:

- A. Revised plans prepared by A Plus, dated December 15, 2005.
Photomontage prepared by Archigraphics, dated December 14, 2005.
- B. Staff Report to the Planning Commission, dated November 9, 2005.
- C. Letters received after the 11/9/05 staff report was submitted.

APPLICATION NO. 04-0294
STAFF REPORT TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION

FOR EXHIBITS B & C,
Please refer to the November 9,2005 Agenda,
Item # 11

Letters received after the 11/9/05 staff report was submitted