

**Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Design Review Board**  
June 24, 2019, 12:30 p.m.  
City Manager's Conference Room, 8130 Allison Avenue, La Mesa, CA

**CALL TO ORDER**

Board member Langdon called a regular meeting of the Design Review Board to order at 12:30 p.m. in the City Manager's Conference Room at 8130 Allison Avenue, La Mesa, California.

**ATTENDANCE**

Members Attending: Board members Kusiak, Langdon, Lee, Robinson, and Soutowood.

Absent: Kinnard

Visitors: Kent Coston, representing Project No. 2017-04

Staff: Consulting Planner Papp

**INFORMATION ITEMS**       None

**BUSINESS**

- a. **Project No. 2017-04 (CUP 17-03)** – Consideration of a partial demolition and reconstruction of an existing commercial building and parking lot located at 7323 El Cajon Boulevard in the C-D-MU (General Commercial / Urban Design Overlay / Mixed Use Overlay) zone

Consulting Planner Papp summarized the staff report. The applicant provided additional overview of the project.

Board member Langdon offered concerns regarding the proposed landscape palette. He opined that many of the proposed species are not appropriate for Southern California and suggested limiting the palette to only those species that are appropriate. He also noted that the street trees proposed were indicated as 24-inch box trees on the plans and should be a minimum of 36-inch box trees. He noted that shrub plantings fronting El Cajon Blvd. were sparse and the number of plantings should be doubled fronting the pedestrian realm. Mr. Langdon also suggested planting a species of tree at the rear of the property that, when mature, will be smaller than the larger species proposed on the conceptual landscape plan.

Board member Robinson discussed the asphalt in the parking area and asked if the parking area was being rebuilt. Mr. Coston opined that a low spot in the parking area will be filled with approximately one foot of asphalt and then the lot will be reconfigured around new interior block walls and gates. Mr. Robinson expressed concern about the possibility of drainage issues at the low spot to be filled in. Mr. Robinson asked about the gable roof element shown in the south elevation which appears higher than the storefront. Mr. Coston opined that the gable roof element is a part of the auto parts store, is set-back far from the south elevation and will not be visible from the south side of the building.

Board member Soutowood noted that the main drive aisle into the site was narrow, and any effort to make the drive aisle pedestrian friendly would be of benefit to the site. Community Development Director Kusiak opined that the drive aisle is an existing condition that may remain, and moreover, that staff had evaluated the possibility of widening the drive aisle

and determined it was not feasible. Mr. Soutowood also noted that customers of, or deliveries to the auto parts store may park “anywhere,” further impacting pedestrians and vehicles from entering or exiting the site, and that a sidewalk could be installed if the existing landscaping between the building and the drive aisle were removed. Mr. Coston suggested that the design strived to keep the existing landscaping. Mr. Soutowood went on to state that the proposed drainage and storm water controls may create drainage issues, but recommended that staff revisit this issue during construction drawing plan check. He agreed that the street tree size needed to be upgraded.

Associate Planner Lee asked about the CMU block walls adjacent to residential uses. Mr. Coston stated that design specs will be provided and that the intent is to plant vines on the block walls.

Board member Langdon made a motion to recommend approval of the project based on the based on plans dated June 4, 2019 and a finding that the project is consistent with the City’s Urban Design Program, Mixed Use Urban Design Guidelines, and General Plan, and subject to the following conditions:

1. Provide additional landscape plantings along the El Cajon Boulevard project frontage.
2. Street trees shall be minimum 36-inch box.

Board member Robinson seconded the motion.

Aye:	Board members Kusiak, Langdon, Lee, Soutowood, and Robinson.
Nay:	None.
Absent/Recused:	Kinnard.
Abstain:	None.

**PUBLIC DISCUSSION AND AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**      None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Emery Papp  
Consulting Planner