



ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD

MINUTES: August 3, 2023

Council Chamber & Zoom

8:30 AM

Call to Order / Roll Call

The Architectural Review Board (ARB) of the City of Palo Alto met on this date in Council Chambers and virtual teleconference at 8:30 a.m.

Present: Chair Peter Baltay, Vice Chair Kendra Rosenberg, Boardmember Yingxi Chen, Boardmember David Hirsch, Boardmember Osma Thompson

Absent: None

Oral Communications

None

Agenda Changes, Additions and Deletions

Senior Planner and ARB Liaison Claire Raybould indicated there were no Agenda changes, additions, or deletions.

City Official Reports

1. Transmittal of 1) the ARB Meeting Schedule and Attendance Record, 2) Tentative Future Agenda items and 3) Recently Submitted Projects

Senior Planner Raybould reported only two projects had been submitted since the last ARB meeting, one for exterior modifications to a previous planning entitlement for Restoration Hardware, and the project on this agenda which is the 3600 Middlefield fire station. There are a few ad hoc items that have not yet been reported, which could be added to the next meeting.

Chair Baltay requested reports for 3150 El Camino (formal application has now been submitted), 3265 El Camino and 3997 Fabian Way at the next meeting.

Vice Chair Rosenberg requested project links be forwarded to the ad hoc subcommittees.

Ms. Raybould inquired if any future known absences were planned by any of the Board Members.

Chair Baltay confirmed that the August 17 meeting would be Boardmember Thompson's last meeting for the summer.

Action Items

2. PUBLIC HEARING / QUASI-JUDICIAL. 3600 MIDDLEFIELD ROAD [23PLN-00178]: Recommendation on Applicant's Request for Approval of Major Architectural Review to Allow the Deconstruction of the Existing Palo Alto Fire Station No. 4 and Construction of a New 8,000 sf Fire Station. Environmental Assessment: Exempt from the Provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act in Accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15302 (Replacement) and 15303 (Small Structures). Zoning District: PF (Public Facility).

Senior Project Planner Garrett Sauls provided the staff report for 3600 Middlefield Road [23PLN-00178], the deconstruction of Palo Alto Fire Station No. 4 and the rebuild of a new 8,000 square foot (sf) City Fire Station, including a brief summary of the history of the project, prior ARB comments, and the changes made by the applicant and/or response to those comments. The project packet, along with the attachments, can be found [here](#).

The project shares property with one of the City's electric substation and is bounded by the Presbyterian Church on one side and a little league field on the other side. The project is to replace an existing one-story fire station with a LEED silver one-story fire station that is approximately 25-feet in height. Within the project proposed there are twelve parking spaces, 10 of which will be primarily for city staff, two available for the public. There will be three emergency loading bays, two of which will have a direct exit out onto Middlefield Road. One will be a storage loading bay. There is also a proposed emergency generator on site. The project proposes to remove twelve trees on the property with a replacement requirement of thirty-three trees on and off site. It was reviewed by the ARB during a preliminary ARB application on February 16, which ARB comments that focused on consideration to redesign the building to provide more of a civic statement structure, possibly taller or more dense; adding a corner glazing element to provide more of a pop at the corner of the building; adding additional windows in the training room to increase connectivity to the space for the public; and ensure that the drawings are consistent with the proposed project. More windows have been added to the training room, the eaves on the elevated side of the front elevation have increased, and the rear glazing has been changed to more stucco siding of the building. Other ARB comments included consideration of a different type of wood type siding, relocation of the existing fuel tank, and to ensure the functionality was provided for all users and provide a full landscape plan, which is now included in the plan sets. Public works had public outreach events after the original public hearing, an online community meeting on April 6 and a presentation by City staff at the MSC's open house event on July 15. A survey was provided at the July 15 event for the public's response to the project. On July 19 Public Works did a meet and greet with the artist that has been selected for the public art component that will be incorporated into the design, which allowed for additional community input. Overall response from the public indicated the current design was overwhelmingly positive. Staff's recommendation is that the ARB recommend approval based on the included findings and conditions of approval.

Chris Ford, Principal at BRW Architect, provided the applicant's presentation and introduced the team that joined him. The DRC review was completed, in addition to the public outreach and comments from previous ARB hearing, resulting in edits from the original plans. Mr. Ford outlined some of the changes based on the ARB prior comments. The drawings have also been updated to match the layout of the fuel system for City vehicles. The pumps are not blocking traffic and the circles on the prior plans which

appeared to block traffic, are actually access ports for the fuel. The prioritized use of the training facility as recommended by fire station staff is a back-up Emergency Operations Center (EOC), city sponsored events, and fire department training. There is an ability for the public to use the training facility, with an understanding that there will be priorities that may prevent temporary access. Fence details have now been included in the submittal, as is the full landscape plan. The plaza and painting design are included in the drawings and on the study model. The vehicle flow has now been clarified, and how the gate will work from East Meadow. Drawing M-1 explains the traffic circulation of the proposed structure, including city vehicle's use of the fuel tanks, and the entrance and exit of the utility yard (items 6, 7, and 8 on M-1).

Windows have been added to the common area hallway to add lighting but limit the public's ability to see into the kitchen, living area and day room where the firefighters live when on duty. The windows in the training room have been modified so the public will be able to see into that area, within seeing the back of heads during training sessions. A window was also added at the front corner, providing more of a pop on the front elevation from the intersection. The DRC reviewed the sound concern from the firefighters sleeping quarters to ensure proper sound control, as well as sound control blackout curtains are standard in their sleeping quarters. They worked with the Fire Chief regarding security and flow of traffic inside the building. There is now one door between the lobby and the training room and one door to get from the training room to the lobby for public restroom access. On the operations side, most of the adjustments were made due to equipment and mechanical system needs. The request to possibly move the fuel tanks was not changed as the tanks are better accessed from where they are. Vehicles are able to access the tank to fuel and then exit onto East Meadow without being in the way of the emergency vehicles leaving or returning to the station. The back utility yard is used quite extensively, multiple City departments use it. A sample board has been provided, as well as a model, for the exterior elements of the building. The rainscreen tile being used meets the City's deconstruction ordinance standards. Included in the pack are some of the quotes from the surrounding neighbors that were collected during the two community meetings.

Fire Chief Steve Lindsey spoke regarding the project and indicated they spent a good amount of time with the architects reviewing multiple iterations of station designs and the design being submitted is one they are quite proud of, and believe it meets the needs of the community while meeting the needs of the department. The station layout was very well thought out with regard to respecting the crews when they are not on emergency calls.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chair Baltay opened the hearing to public comments, seeing none, he closed the hearing to public comments.

Chair Baltay asked for Boardmember disclosures. All Boardmembers noted they had visited the project site.

All Boardmembers stepped down from the Chamber Dais to look at a model of the proposed project.

When they returned there were technical difficulties.

[TIMESTAMP: NO AUDIO 35:36 meeting paused]

[TIMESTAMP: 1:15:00 meeting resumed]

City staff cleared the issues and the meeting resumed.

Chair Baltay requested the meeting resume with a question from Boardmember Hirsch.

Boardmember Hirsch inquired about the exterior material of the elevations in the rear courtyard.

Mr. Ford replied that the stucco is a light color, they printed elevations are darker than what it would actually be. They are considering an off-white. It's an area not seen by the public, so they did not see the value of investing in the wood pattern tile for the rear of the building.

Boardmember Hirsch asked if the fitness room as a perimeter outdoor area for exercise.

Mr. Ford explained that when the interior was designed, they used fire station no. 3 as the model. The glass doors are sliding glass doors which can be opened up for outdoor activities. There is currently a basketball court in the rear courtyard.

Boardmember Hirsch asked if the station's residential area will be the same stucco as the exterior rear.

Mr. Ford replied that it will. The wood color in the slide show is darker than what is intended. Much of the tree replacement will take place along Middlefield to replace the bottlebrush shrubs that are currently in place.

Chair Baltay requested the applicant stay focused on the questions.

Boardmember Thompson asked if the color on the stucco is not yet defined, because the stucco on the material board present has a color on it.

Mr. Ford replied that he didn't recall the name of the color, but it's not as bright as what was being displayed in the animation.

Boardmember Thompson asked what the texture of the stucco would be and if the glass is bird safe.

Mr. Ford answered it was going to be a light dash, but not a sand finish. Light textured stucco that won't collect dust and will be easier to maintain compared to a sanded finish. There will be controlled joint seems. And the glass will be bird safe. He deferred to James on how the glass will be bird safe.

James Haliburtin, BRW Architects, explained the glass is bird safe by use of a footing pattern that has been proven to be a bird safe measure for glass, he is not yet sure of the exact pattern.

Mr. Sauls explained there is a standard they have used for other projects that require certain levels of bird safe glazing; however, they are many ways to achieve it. He could share a slide with the materials and the specific names that were provided during the review.

Boardmember Thompson asked if that was included in the packet.

Mr. Sauls responded that he did not believe it made it into the packet and he shared the slide on the screen.

Boardmember Thompson inquired if the design intent was for the wood tile to match the color of the fence.

Mr. Ford responded that they intended for the tile to be slightly richer and darker. The natural wood of the fence would lighten as it weathers, the wood tile would not. There was no intent for continuity.

Boardmember Thompson asked about the letter Four on the front façade, it's size and material.

Mr. Ford replied it was proposed by staff to start projecting a station number at all stations, the details have not yet been worked out, however, based on prior projects, the material would be like a water-cut steel, thin, or such as Fire Station 14 in Sacramento, it was a dimensional aluminum. The intent is to be simple, not lit, and pulled away from the building to create shadow. It is still optional; the fire department liked the idea.

Mr. Sauls added that the signage was not included in this application. Any signage will be a separate staff level application that will be reviewed.

Boardmember Hirsch inquired about the mechanical system and the equipment on top of the exercise room and asked if there were clear story windows in that area.

Mr. Ford replied there were not.

Boardmember Hirsch asked how the system is described since it was not included in the drawings set, and it is separate from the office system.

Mr. Ford answered that they are separate, and all are driven by a pair of VRF condensers that are fully electric and can modulate between hot and cold. In the training room there will be one air handler, in the smaller rooms there will be individual air handlers that it would feed air to. The main equipment will be above the exercise room to minimize sound in the sleeping quarters. There is some sound and vibrations associated with the equipment. The vehicle bays will not be cooled and will have electric heaters as this area has specific design guidelines for tailpipe exhaust systems. The VRF system is all electric.

Boardmember Chen inquired about the dimensions of the walkway on the power station side of the building.

Mr. Ford replied that the pinch-point between the exercise facility and the fencing is about six feet. As it continues outside of the captain's bedroom it ultimately expands to about ten to eleven feet, which will be the storage area for station staff's bicycles.

Boardmember Chen suggested they update the site plan to show the bike racks in the wider area of the walkway and asked about the curb design at the street corner near the utility pole.

Mr. Sauls inquired which page she was reviewing.

Boardmember Chen referenced Sheet B-4, in addition to the colored landscape plan.

Chair Baltay noted page J-1.

Mr. Ford apologized and stated the elliptical curb has an existing pole with a raised box that controls the traffic signal. Their intent was to scoop out that area and create a landscape design that would detour

people from walking in that area. There is also a guidewire. The architects suggested surrounding the area with a sidewalk which would make the area easier to maintain. Currently it's in the middle of a bunch of ivy and is a bit of a mess.

Boardmember Chen asked if the windows in the training room are operable.

Mr. Ford explained the architects suggest high level operable windows and not at the ground level. If they were hopper or transom windows, they would block the walkway. Clarifying the operable windows would be above the lower windows.

Boardmember Chen inquired if the doors facing Middlefield are different than the doors facing the utility yard.

Mr. Ford answered that they are different. The doors facing Middlefield are the four-fold sectional doors that are fast and reliable and open horizontally. It is becoming a standard due to the reliability and speed when opening, however the cost is approximately three times of the conventional bay doors. Upon return from a call the trucks are not in a hurry and can take their time pulling into traditional bay doors in the rear.

Vice Chair Rosenberg inquired if there will be notable gridlines on the large section of white stucco on the front façade.

Mr. Ford explained they integrated a pattern in that area with expressed control joints, they are not yet sure where the public art will be created, so the end results will be coordinated once those details are known.

Vice Chair Rosenberg confirmed the upper portion of the white is being reserved for signage, art, something.

Mr. Ford replied in theory, yes.

Valerie Tam, an engineer with public works, stated the commissioned artist is Stephen Galloway, who is in the design process. He took part in the outreach events, however, does not yet have anything to review.

Vice Chair Rosenberg requested explanation of what was planned for the space above the Captain's quarters.

Mr. Ford explained the air handler for the training room would be in that space. It will be a mechanical mezzanine which will include the water heater and possibly support equipment for the micro-grid. The access will be from a ladder in the storage room.

Mr. Sauls referenced page H-1 which shows some of that detail.

Vice Chair Rosenberg asked if there would be a vent in that area to the outside and where is the location.

Mr. Ford said there would be an exterior duct that would be hidden on the left side or rear of the building.

Vice Chair Rosenberg inquired if the wall between the day room and the hallway was a full height wall or low wall.

Mr. Ford started it is a low wall, just high enough to extend above the chairs.

Chair Baltay requested the pitch of the roof, the drawings appear to be different from the model.

Mr. Ford referenced page H-1 as where they would have the top and bottom targets, roughly at one and twelve to get the pitch for the micro-grid.

Chair Baltay asked if that is what is currently shown on the elevations. Additionally, he inquired what the thickness would be of the visible fascia. The model has a fairly large horizontal band, however the details in the elevations didn't seem to include dimensions.

Mr. Ford explained that the study model that was created for the open house is low tech, they are now working with the structural engineer on the cantilever system and insulation for energy modeling. Their goal is to get it as thin as possible, while still appearing substantial. They are attempting to get it down to fifteen to eighteen inches. Currently they don't yet have definitive measurements.

Chair Baltay questioned what the material is on the underside of the soffit. A wood soffit is referenced throughout; however, the material is not included on the material board.

Mr. Haliburton from BRW Architect answered that the soffit material is aluminum with a wood finish. It's intended to complement the colors and textures of the other woods; however, it is a soffit application that is very light weight and durable.

Chair Baltay asked if that was explained in the package.

Mr. Haliburton thought it had been.

Chair Baltay asked staff if that information was included in the packet.

Mr. Haliburton confirmed that information was not included, and the material is a powder coated aluminum system.

Chair Baltay stated that he saw the reference to wood soffit, but his understanding was that it is a printed aluminum soffit.

Mr. Haliburton answered that it should be more of a wood-look soffit.

Chair Baltay inquired about a slide that Mr. Sauls had shown.

Mr. Sauls replied it was part of a submittal provided to City staff, it was not included in the packet, but it is part of public record.

Chair Baltay inquired regarding parking spaces available in the event that the training room is utilized by the public.

Mr. Ford explained that part of the community could park at Mitchell Park and walk along E. Meadow in front of the church on the sidewalk.

Chair Baltay requested confirmation that the intention is not to provide parking for that type of onsite function.

Mr. Ford stated that was correct.

Chair Baltay mentioned there is no curbside parking in that area to speak of.

Mr. Ford agreed, not in that area.

Mr. Sauls stated there is street parking that isn't quite as far as Mitchell park and showed pictures of those parking locations.

Chair Baltay inquired if the two public spaces provided onsite were Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) restricted.

Mr. Ford replied that one would be ADA restricted and the other would be prepped for an electronic vehicle (EV).

Chair Baltay asked if there would be signage.

Mr. Ford explained once it's developed, their instructions were to anticipate a roughed-in for an EV charger and roughed-in for EV chargers for staff parking in the service yard.

Chair Baltay asked Chief Lindsey if it was truly the intention that the training room would be open to the public.

Chief Lindsey responded that the primary intention of the room is to be used as a south zone Emergency Operations Center (EOC) which would be in coordination with the office of Emergency Services. The secondary use is as a community training room for public training, public education, and fire fighter training. The firefighters are required to have 24-48 hours of continued education for their EMT and paramedic licenses. They would be hosting fire department EMS training there as well.

Chair Baltay pointed out that the firefighters could park behind the fence and asked if that would also be open to public parking when there is a public session.

Chief Lindsey answered that they could coordinate that for those events. They would likely park their apparatus out in front or leave it in the actual bays which would leave an area for someone to usher parking to the back area due to the space being limited.

Chair Baltay commented that sounded like it could limit their emergency operations.

Chief Lindsey replied they could leave a lane open so they could get through. In the past when they had public park, they coned off areas that were available for parking and left an area for the emergency vehicles to get through.

Chair Baltay inquired if that was something done at other stations.

Chief Lindsey stated that the other fire stations don't have a training room, however when public events were previously hosted, they pulled the apparatus out onto the front apron and used the bay as the public training venue. In this location they wouldn't have to do that, they could leave the vehicles in the bay.

Mr. Sauls noted that on M-1, the turning diagram was shown for the emergency vehicle passing through the area and not having to use that area that could be blocked off for parking.

Chair Baltay asked if there were any other questions of the applicants. Seeing none he moved into the ARB's discussion of the project.

Boardmember Chen thanked the applicant for the presentation and the model. She was in favor of the project and sees a lot of improvements since the study session. She appreciated that they relocated the windows in the training room and day room to face the corner and provided deeper over hangs. She believed the materials were well sorted, and the site plan is more clear and seems functional. She felt the scale and style of the project is compatible with the neighborhood. Overall, she believed it was a nice improvement and addition to the area.

Boardmember Thompson thanked the applicant for the presentation and noted she had not attended the study session in February. It's not to see the project for the first time. She has a few concerns, one being that the material board appears to be incomplete. The material for the soffit or fascia were not provided, and they typically ask applicants to define the textures of the stucco on the material board as that often affects the color and how the color appears. It feels like all the pieces are not available to make a concrete assessment of if it will be successful. Another concern is the stucco wall along the residential side appears to be very blank. That's not a very public facing side, however it sticks out as something incomplete in terms of the thought. The design is very simple and very clean, in general her concern is it might be too simple, there's a next level of detail that could happen to create a richness. The sloping roof form is great, it has a relationship to the library down the road which is nice. The library has a lot of texture and a lot of materials, and this project seems quite muted in comparison. She believes there's a lot that could be done in terms of textures where the number 4 will be, it would be interesting to see how that could have evolved.

Chair Baltay asked if she was concerned about the number 4 in a good way or bad way.

Boardmember Thompson stated she was concerned that it took up so much space of the façade, which out really contributing anything from a design perspective. She also believes there may be code standards regarding the size of signage, which may be an issue for the "4".

Chair Baltay commented he requested that clarification because he wants to call that out as a Board discussion because it's an integral part of the design, that as a separate application, changes his thinking.

Boardmember Thompson agreed.

Boardmember Hirsch commented that one day he was visiting Mitchel park and while he was there two of the firefighters came down to play pickle ball and it seemed they were very much part of the community, so his concern is that the building doesn't really open up in a manner that would let them be part of the site and more visible to the community. The limitation of the clear story windows and the lack of openness to the site when claiming to improve the landscape throughout is disappointing. He would like to see more openness to the building for a better relationship to the site for the community. Particularly the corner of the day room. He's concerned about the interior planning even though it's functionally sound. The middle area could for example make a switch between the kitchen and the dining room and rather than the standing rear wall, sliding doors could be added that could open the area up to the exterior landscaping and the additional trees and the community. The site is big enough, that is a feature that could easily be worked into the plan. He also feels large windows could be added to the

exercise room that would open the space up as well, the large opening at the back of the exercise room isn't appropriate to the use of the room, particularly since it doesn't open up to an outdoor facility. It would be a much nicer room if it could have clear story windows all the way around it. He's bothered by the idea that back of the building is a forgotten area in regard to style. There should be distinction between the common fire area and the residential areas within the building on the outside of the building from front to back, not just on the front. He's bothered that the exercise room is the location for the mechanical towers. He doesn't understand why it can't be put over the bathrooms, they would function just as well and the clear story windows could be added, which would satisfy make it's distinction. The planning is very good, but it could use improvement and that should be worked out during the planning of the elevations of the building. Overall, a lot more windows could be added throughout all the elevations that would open the building up without compromising the privacy of the residential area. Particularly in the corner of the exercise room. He suggests significant changes in the elevation treatments. He believes the building could be vastly improved if they would work on that. Boardmember Hirsch requested that the applicant relocate the mechanical equipment to the rooftop, exercise clear story windows at the room perimeter, and revise the facade materials to match the front façade. Another suggestion would be to make the airduct to the outside a vertical element on the front of the building, rather than trying to hide it. This building works functionally but he also feels it could use one more level of design improvements. A skylight on the roof over the interior corridor might be a nice addition. It's a pretty dead space. Natural light would be an improvement, in the locker room as well. Boardmember Hirsch understands there are likely budget constraints, but it would be nice to see them work on some ideas that might better enhance the interior and exterior elevations.

Vice Chair Rosenberg thanked the applicant and Chief Lindsey for their presentation and time. She commented that she is a fan of the project and felt it was well thought out. It's clean, clear, and the floor plan makes sense. She agrees with Boardmember Hirsch's comments that if the mechanical was moved to possibly above the lockers, they could increase the height of the training room. The clear story windows would be quite nice. Ventilation in an exercise room, probably a good idea. Overall, she's a fan and thinks it's an interesting application. She did want to emphasize that when there's an overwhelming positive response from the public on any type of public project, it is rare. She appreciates the effort put into community outreach and the return of 95% positive feedback is incredibly rare. It is a community building and if the community is supporting the project, the Board should take that into account. She appreciates the improvements that were made, particularly the over-hang extension. It makes a world of difference. She likes the way the windows have now been done. Putting a glass door next to a big glass window can sometimes be confusing. The wayward of the glass doors now is very clear where the entrance to the building is location. With the rear being bland and a little plain, sometimes that's how it goes with budgets. She appreciates the care and thoughtfulness put into the two front facing façades. They are both quite elegant. Her comments regarding the project include that she would like to know what the fascia looks like, she would like to know the under-eave material. The aluminum look can be concerning, those colors can be tricky. If they are going to abut porcelain tile, they are going to want to see what they look like against each other. Stucco texture is important, joint lands are important, she feels those items could be reported in an ad hoc committee; along with the bird glass. That is her opinion alone. She does not feel they are major design concerns that should hold up the project. She also like's Boardmember Hirsch idea of a skylight in the hallway. She would urge that if the artwork and signage are handled separately, the

Board would like to see the signage. Having the large number “4” does appear as a major part of the façade. If it’s not part of the project, they shouldn’t necessarily be looking at it with this current package. She can’t speak on the City’s processes, however, having a signage and artwork review should happen, whether it’s at the staff level or with the ARB. They are important design elements. It would have been helpful not to have the renderings included if they weren’t under consideration.

Chair Baltay commented that he leans both ways and finds himself mostly agreeing with Boardmembers Thompson and Hirsch. The materials are not clearly enough specified and what he’s heard is not really satisfactory. There are three different kinds of wood on the project, that’s a lot for any building to have and not seeing the details or how that’s going to work is not alright, there needs to be more information on that. The same applies to the questions regarding the stucco finish. Even a different color of stucco or treatment. That’s not a budget item. Crack control joints, color on stucco on different textures to accomplish slight variation isn’t expensive. He feels they haven’t pushed the design as much as possible. He brought up Boardmember Hirsch’s comment and recalled his prior request to make the building more civic, have more of a presence in the community as a public building. The response was that this was a residential design that the community likes and wants. He can respect that, when a residential building is built, it’s done so in a way that it relates to the community. There aren’t windows at six feet height and up on front facing elevations. There are windows that show that people live there. That’s what’s missing in this project. It’s stylized as a house, but the function is like a fortress. If the intention is to keep the firefighters separate and private, you don’t want people watching them as they eat, that’s understandable. There are ways to pull it both together and this project lacks that. He’s disappointed by that because it was a comment from a prior review. They do want the firefighters to be part of the community because they are, and an essential part. The over all forms are attractive and he agrees that the fact that the residential nature may be a better design choice for the community, particularly given the community's input that has been received. What the community is not judging are the comments that Boardmember Hirsch made, which go possibly a level deeper than what you’d get at a public open house, but yet very valid comments. He would like to see more detail about the roof. He is concerned about the slope of the roof, what is shown in the drawings is more than a one and twelve pitch. The model is different than the drawings. The thickness of the fascia will be critical, particularly if it grows to be closer to two feet. He suspects that’s where that will end up. If a two-foot-thick single homogenous band is the treatment, the painted metal is not going to look very good, in his opinion more of a detraction. He’s concerned about the size of the roof overhangs. It’s good to make them larger but he’s concerned about the street facing corner, where the overhang seems to be different on two sides, and yet the façade treatments are the same on both sides. He’s concerned about the signage. This is not a commercial application, where a tenant will be coming in at a later date with a separate sign. That’s why they do staff level reviews for commercial applications. This is a single building; they know the function; signage is part of the design. Especially when it’s a large number 4. The signage needs to be part of this application. He’s not sure he agrees that it’s inappropriate, he rather likes the large numbers. Regardless of the details of the signage, it should have been part of this application. He believes it should come back for one more round of design to get this project right. We are at the point where it could be put before a subcommittee to look at the material selections, perhaps the roof detailing, but other elements, he doesn’t feel is quite ready yet for that type of review. Chair Baltay does believe they should be mindful of the fact that some of the statements he’s making about the civic-ness of it, and the openness of it, are perhaps beyond the

ARB findings that they need to make. He wants to provide clear guidance on what is expected. He thinks opening the corners more does make sense and it is something that was previously requested.

Chair Baltay asked if there were any other Board comments.

Boardmember Chen commented about the openness of the building. She does appreciate the low-key residential form for the building, and when walking around the neighborhood, they can see many Eichler homes across the street and in that area. She believes the building is very compatible with the neighborhood. When you talk about Eichler homes, they are always smaller windows facing the street. She believes it's a very elegant design of the two elevations facing the public streets. There are also plenty of areas for glazing on the building, the clear stories, she believed they are perfect.

Boardmember Hirsch commented that he disagreed because the back of Eichler buildings open up to the sites. This site is held back from the street a bit and it will have a significant amount of landscaping in front. Those are the areas that are more interesting to look at from an indoor perspective looking out. The rear is a parking lot and the exterior of the bays. He believed it's beneficial from both the outside looking in, and indoors looking out to the front of the building. It would also show from the front of the building that the firemen are a part of the community, and they belong there. Additionally, this building is significantly larger than most Eichler buildings. The front of the building is 25-feet high, which is almost 2.5 stories. He recommends that any drawings shown to the ARB include scaled figures in front. He will accept it though, that it probably works sloped that way.

Boardmember Thompson commented that she wasn't sure if she agreed fully to opening the building more. She did see that was a comment from the Board at the previous meeting and it wasn't incorporated, she felt she didn't have much to add on the item. She did agree that the building needs another layer of detail, however, in reference to finding number three, the ARB is to find the project is of high aesthetic quality, using high quality integrated materials, incorporating textures, colors and other details that are compatible with an enhanced surrounding area; stucco typically hasn't been one of those materials from the ARB's perspective. She wonders if for the major white stucco piece in front, the ARB would want to reconsider doing something a bit more durable and a bit more high quality, possibly a rainscreen, Swiss pearl or something that even has texture, that could give it that extra layer of detail that it's missing right now. Her emphasis would be there rather than changing the floor plans. As far as access, she believes the existing fire station is somewhat closed up, there are pros and cons to that in terms of functionality. She doesn't want to break a mold that makes sense.

Vice Chair Rosenberg commented regarding the civic versus residential comment. She finds there are two different opinions. One is that the scale of the building is residential, despite the height. They are trying to be respectful of residential geometry. She felt if they turned it into a residential building, it would make is less civic. She believed they found a nice balance between having a residential scale and geometry that compliments the surroundings while still giving it civic treatments of the high windows, and providing privacy for the firefighters, and coming up with the wayfinding of the front glass doors. This building does stand out and in a positive way. She does agree there needs to be clarity for the applicant on which way to go and was interested in hearing Chair Baltay's thoughts.

Chair Baltay agreed. His preference in opening the building would be to open the day room up to a patio facing the street on the Middlefield side. There's enough space to heavily landscape the perimeter of that

patio, which would allow big doors opening to the area, and the firemen could recreate on a nice day. Instead, the patio has been put on the side next to the electric station and in a tight space. It's not nearly as desirable for the firemen or for the community. Being able to drive by, walk by and see the firemen is only a plus. There may well be security concerns in doing so, he wasn't making a request, rather providing an example of what his thoughts were in terms of civic use and opening up the building. He would like to see at least one corner window into the training space, and into the front reception area. He would like to walk by and see a member of the public speaking to someone at the front desk. He would like to be able to walk by and see the firemen training. He would appreciate what they are doing. When that is closed off with high windows, that is an opportunity lost. He didn't want to give prescriptive answers on what to do, he is of the mind that the building is good enough. Architecturally, it's doing what it's supposed to do. It's a good design and it does mix the civic scale and residential style, and he could support a motion that they return to an ad hoc committee some of the material details and roof specifications. He was on the fence with the rest of it. Historically on civic projects they ask they return one more round and give the applicant a chance to work through some of the ARB comments and see if any stick. He does understand there is a deadline to get the permit issues within a year to get the funding. He doesn't want the ARB to slow that process, he made the comments last time about the application being complete, it really isn't yet. They aren't specifying all the materials. He feels it's on staff if they want the application to go quick. Seeing if colors match is the ARB's job.

Boardmember Thompson commented that Chair Baltay's suggestion for opening up the day room made it more clear for her and she believes those are great ideas and she believes that would enhance the building tremendously. She could very much support some of those suggestions given it sounds like it would benefit the building and the occupants as well.

Chair Baltay offered the applicant the opportunity to comment on some of the ARB's comments.

Mr. Sauls stated it sounded like the ARB was looking for more refinement of what is provided rather than doing something different, which is a much easier response to provide.

Chair Baltay agreed, the ARB wasn't looking for something different, and he doesn't hear any complaints regarding the circulation patterns, the fuel tanks, exits and entrances. They are all accepting of those aspects.

Mr. Ford agreed they owe the ARB and/or the subcommittee more answers. They take that to heart; they need to be more specific, along with the engineering team, with what the facade will be. They can provide those details within reason because the project requires public bidding, and with public bid projects, substitutions are allowed within reason. However, they do need to fill in some gaps in the details of the projects. He looks forward to answering some questions regarding the richness of the design. He deferred to Chief Lindsay about the idea of having a dining patio on Middlefield. He appreciated the comments about finding the balance of a residential shape with a civic scale.

Chair Baltay didn't feel it was necessary to get into the specifics of adding a patio. He was merely providing something for the fire department to think about and an example to clarify some of the thoughts he and Boardmember Hirsch had regarding opening the building up to the community. He did have an interest in hearing from Public Works regarding the project schedule.

Ms. Valerie Tam, Public Works, explained that they would like the construction documents started October 1, which would allow sufficient time to bid, as well as go before Council for construction contract approval by the funding deadline which is June 30, 2024. Staff looked at the schedule to ensure the project is within budget and the schedule is such that they can execute.

Chair Baltay inquired from staff if there are other approvals pending.

Mr. Sauls answered only the ARB recommendation. From that they can do concurrent reviews to finish the last bit up.

Chair Baltay asked the applicant if seven weeks would give them enough time.

Ms. Gerhardt added that they originally had told the applicant they would try to get approval in September so they could move forward in October. That would be a one month turn around, which is only about a week or so for the architect.

Mr. Ford stated they have many on staff who can work with that time frame and agreed they owe them more detail and information. They will make it happen and he felt confident they can return with that in time for a review in September.

Chair Baltay stated he would like to work with a consensus on returning the project.

Boardmember Hirsch agreed.

Vice Chair Rosenberg disagreed.

Boardmember Chen felt she could support another round for more detail.

MOTION: Vice Chair Rosenberg motioned to approve the project with the stipulations that they come back to an ad hoc meeting to discuss materials, specifications, detailing of the facade board, artwork, and signage.

There was not a second on the motion.

MOTION: Boardmember Thompson moved that the item be continued to a date certain of September 21 subject to the following comments addressed: better defined material board that is complete and comprehensive, conclusiveness of the bird safe glass, reconsideration of the main stucco element facing Middlefield, consideration to provide greater openness on the façades as it relates to the interior function and public visibility, better defined signage, roof specifications, and public art if available.

Ms. Raybould added that part of the motion included public art and it's already in the code that public art is considered by staff and the Public Arts Commission only, it is not within the purview of the ARB.

Boardmember Thompson inquired if the ARB is allowed to weigh in on the location of the art.

Ms. Raybould answered they could consult with Elise; however, the Public Art Commission weighs in on the location, what type of art, and they select the artist.

Boardmember Thompson stated that they would like to see the signage.

Matt Raschke, Public Works, stated that in all the past buildings they built, they did a separate signage package to review by the Board at a later date. It is likely in the best interest of the project to follow that same track. Possibly once the contractor is onboard, who can refine the signage. He's not sure the September 21 meeting would allow them sufficient time to fully prepare the development details of the signage.

Chair Baltay asked if they could present a conceptual signage design.

MOTION AMENDMENT: Boardmember Thompson moved, Chair Baltay seconded, that the item be continued to a date certain of September 21 subject to: better defined material board that is complete and comprehensive all materials used in the project inclusive of the bird safe glass, consideration of different material than stucco facing Middlefield Road, consideration to provide greater openness on the façades as it relates to the interior function and public visibility, present a conceptual signage design, and provide better details of the roof specifications.

Boardmember Hirsch commented he believes it's important to consider relocating the HVAC equipment to allow opening up the exercise room for more lighting and ventilation.

Boardmember Thompson suggested adding the item consideration to adding clear story windows to the exercise area as a friendly amendment.

FRIENDLY AMENDMENT: the addition of Consideration to clear story windows or a skylight in the exercise room to provide more daylight.

Boardmember Thompson and Chair Baltay both accepted the Friendly Amendment.

Chair Baltay requested a roll call vote.

VOTE: 4-1-0-0 (Boardmember Rosenberg voted No)

Vice Chair Rosenberg commented in terms of addressing her No Vote, she believes it is a complete package that meets requirements, and it should be moved forward. She believes the Board as a whole did an excellent job of providing fair direction forward and in theory, she supported their concepts but would have liked to have seen the project moved forward.

Approval of Minutes

3. Draft Architectural Review Board Meeting Minutes for May 18, 2023.

Chair Baltay asked for comments or a motion.

MOTION: Vice Chair Rosenberg moved, seconded by Boardmember Hirsch, to approve the meeting minutes for May 18, 2023 as written.

VOTE: 5-0-0

4. Draft Architectural Review Board Meeting Minutes for June 1, 2023.

Chair Baltay asked for comments or a motion.

MOTION: Boardmember Chen moved, seconded by Vice Chair Rosenberg, to approve the meeting minutes for June 1, 2023 as amended.

VOTE: 5-0-0

5. Draft Architectural Review Board Meeting Minutes for June 15, 2023.

Chair Baltay asked for comments or a motion.

MOTION: Boardmember Thompson, seconded by Boardmember Chen, to approve the meeting minutes for June 15, 2023 as amended.

VOTE: 5-0-0

Boardmember Questions, Comments or Announcements

Chair Baltay requested a report from Boardmember Hirsch regarding the status of the sign display of the Boards from the Architectural Rewards Program at the Public Library.

Boardmember Hirsch heard that the boards have been used by the Planning Department during a public display and they are now available to distribute to the local library. Rinconada has already expressed an interest. He will discuss with Ms. Raybould how and when he can pick up the boards. They all had written pieces about the projects and requested the Boardmembers send those comments to him so he can forward them to the library to have them typed up so that they will be included in the display.

Boardmember Thompson requested a deadline.

Boardmember Hirsch said he felt that it will take a couple of weeks to get the easels ready.

Chair Baltay requested they each have their comments type or written and prepared for the next ARB meeting.

Vice Chair Rosenberg stated it would be helpful if staff could email a request.

Boardmember Thompson commented that she noticed it was not noted in the official City Report that Boardmember Chen and she shared out on the 300 Lambert project.

Ms. Raybould thanked her for the information, she did not realize that had taken place.

Ms. Raybould commented that Boardmember Thompson and Boardmember Chen were on an ad hoc due to report when the NVCAP returned as related to bird safe glazing and suggested a replacement for Boardmember Thompson as she will not be available when that return is expected on September 7.

Chair Baltay confirmed the purpose of the ad hoc and asked if anyone would like to take her place and suggested putting that item on the next agenda for discussion.

Adjournment

Chair Baltay adjourned the meeting.