

DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE AGENDA ITEM

AGENDA DATE: MARCH 19, 2014

To: Chair Imboden and Members of the Design Review Committee

THRU: Leslie Aranda Roseberry, Planning Manager

FROM: Lucy Yeager, Contract Staff Planner

SUBJECT: DRC NO. 4723-13 – CHAPMAN UNIVERSITY - CENTER FOR SCIENCE &

TECHNOLOGY

SUMMARY

The applicant proposes to construct a 149,697 square foot institutional building (Center for Science and Technology) with two levels of underground parking and visitor bleachers for the abutting Wilson Field. The structure will replace the existing surface parking lot and four tennis courts located at 450 N. Center Street and 300 W. Walnut Avenue.

RECOMMENDED ACTION – PRELIMINARY REVIEW

Staff recommends the DRC review and provide comments to the applicant regarding the proposed project (focus regarding architectural design of the building).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Applicant/Owner: Chapman University

Property Location: 450 N. Center Street and 300 W. Walnut Avenue on the

Chapman University Campus. It is bounded by E. Walnut Avenue to the north, N. Center Street to the east, Chapman University's Wilson Field and Ernie Chapman Stadium to the west, and the Argyros Forum to the south. Project is entirely located in the Chapman University Specific Plan Area and within the City of Orange Old Towne District.

General Plan Designation: PFI (Public Facilities and Institution (Max 2.0 FAR)

Zoning Classification: P-I (SP) (Public Institution, Chapman University Specific

Plan)

Existing Development: Surface parking lot and four tennis courts

Property Size: 2.2 acres

Associated Applications: MJSP 0761-13

Previous DRC Project Review: None

Previous Associated City Approvals: None

PUBLIC NOTICE

No Public Notice was required for this project.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This project is fully and adequately addressed in the previously approved certified Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) No. 1717-03 prepared for the Chapman University Specific Plan Amendment No. 5.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant is proposing to construct a new three-story 149,697 square foot building located above a two-level, 145,560-square foot subterranean parking garage. The facility will provide a state-of-the-art educational facility for student use. It will include 18 teaching laboratories, 22 research laboratories, 47 faculty and graduate student offices and 3 classrooms. The parking garage will provide an additional 344 parking spaces to the existing Lastinger Parking Structure. In addition, there will be exterior outdoor stadium seating anticipated to accommodate up to 834 people. The northern portion of the building is proposed to be initially constructed as a shell.

EXISTING SITE

The existing site is the existing Chapman University's Argyros Forum surface parking lot with 123 parking spaces and four tennis courts along with perimeter parkway landscaping. The site is rectangular in shape and is relatively flat.

EXISTING AREA CONTEXT

Surrounding property consists of Wilson Field to the west, Argyros Forum to the south, single-family residential and University faculty housing to the east across N. Center Street, and Pralle-Sodaro Residence Hall (dormitory) to the north across E. Walnut Avenue.

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

Issue 1: Architectural Design:

The applicant has described that the Center for Science & Technology has been designed to take its design cues from the architectural elements of existing buildings found on campus and in the surrounding neighborhood while establishing its own image and identity, consistent with the Design Guidelines of the Specific Plan. The building is influenced by the Prairie architectural style, which emphasizes strong, horizontal lines. In addition, the building includes large, projecting eave overhangs, vertical-oriented windows and contrasting, horizontal lines achieved by the use of the Chapman Blend brick (in soft colors and tones) on the façade. Exterior cement plaster with custom Chapman limestone finish are used as building accents. The facility is designed with large openings on the first story to allow for pedestrian access and to provide massing relief.

The facility will also include an open, covered arcade fronting N. Center Street that will have multiple connections to the public sidewalk. The arcade will provide a protected pedestrian circulation alternative to the public sidewalk on N. Center Street. It is anticipated that students will use the arcade to travel back and forth from the dormitories located north of the Center for Science & Technology to Argyros Forum. The main entry facing N. Center Street is a large brick archway that will provide access to the visitors outdoor stadium seating located on the western side facing the football field.

The applicant has indicated that they have presented a permeable, welcoming face to the campus and surrounding community. An entry plaza facing Argyros Forum addresses the anticipated pedestrian traffic flow from campus into the building. An entry lobby and The Beckman Computational Science Lab line the plaza, soften by raised planters abutting the southern face of

the building. On the northern pedestrian entrance, which fronts onto E. Walnut Avenue, students and faculty enter a generously day lit two-story space (initially constructed as a shell).

The proposed building height ranges from 55 feet to 68.25 feet. Exhaust and elevator shaft enclosures are housed on the roof above the 55-foot building height maximum allowed by the Specific Plan. The project proposes, as an alternative architectural element, a 60-foot high tensile shade structure that provides a covering for the planned stadium seats. The shade structure also penetrates above the maximum 55-foot building height. The masts supporting the alternative tensile shade structure would be 68.25 feet in height. The alternative shade structure is an option that may or may not be constructed, at the discretion of Chapman University. The Specific Plan provides allowances for architectural elements and/or other integral parts of the building/structure to be excluded from the maximum height measurement. Analysis of these proposed provisions are under review by Staff.

GREEN Technology will be incorporated into the design, including, but not limited to, cool roof design, sunscreens, skylights, water efficient fixtures, green roof planters, drought tolerant landscape, and stormwater runoff mitigation. It will also have an energy efficient design.

The main structure is set back 36 feet, 2 inches from the N. Center Street right-of-way. The arcade is set back 24 feet, 2 inches from the N. Center Street right-of-way, which exceeds the Specific Plan's minimum setback requirement of 20 feet on the west side of N. Center Street. Additionally, the building will be set back 20 feet from the E. Walnut Avenue right-of-way. The approved Specific Plan requires a minimum 20 foot setback adjacent to the E. Walnut Avenue right-of-way. Along N. Center Street, the proposed project does step back on the third floor, assisting with achieving necessary 2:1 slope articulation.

The project proposes an expansion of the existing Lastinger Parking Structure, which is located underneath Wilson Field. The existing Lastinger Parking Structure was designed with knockouts on the first subterranean level for future expansion to the east. The proposed expansion consists of a two-level subterranean parking structure located underneath the Center for Science & Technology building, which will connect to the existing Lastinger Parking Structure.

Issue 2: Landscape:

The applicant has indicated that the landscape design for the project is carefully integrated and coordinated with the architecture. Landscape materials and details, including both hardscape and planting elements, express a classical, refined contemporary elegance. Recognizing the Prairiestyle influence creatively manifested in the architecture, the landscape vocabulary reinforces the simple and elegant horizontal planes reflected in the spatial organization and the elevations of the building.

The paving palette includes long narrow pavers that emphasize linearity and horizontal flow. At the eastern façade, low masonry planters at the base of the building function to transition the scale of the building for pedestrians along the N. Center Street sidewalk. Additionally, these

planters are currently designed to provide bio-filtration for stormwater runoff. Broad flowing sweeps of native and indigenous grasses are envisioned to be planted in each of these planters.

Additionally, the applicant feels the landscaped planters, the overall landscape and building design visually invites student and visitor pedestrian traffic under the arcade fronting N. Center Street. The arcade incorporates a series of science-related commemorative plaques integrated into the pavement and intimate, seating alcoves to accommodate student discussions and simple relaxation. Each alcove may be furnished with outdoor furniture and/or tables.

Additional decorative and furniture elements integrated into the design include "Prairie Bowl"-themed urns at key nodes, low bowl Prairie planters at primary entries, as well as, benches, bicycle racks and waste/recycling urns. Completing the site furniture, the landscape lighting will be integrated into planter walls and coordinated with building-mounted themed luminaries.

The applicant has indicated that collectively, the landscape statement not only enhances and reinforces the architectural expression, but mediates scale in order to be compatible with the residential setting of N. Center Street while providing critical water quality and bio-filtration functions.

The project proposes a total of 43,572 square feet of landscaped area, which will be located on raised planters above the underground parking structure. The landscaped area includes 30,585 square feet for hardscape and walkways (excluding City's sidewalks). Approximately 83% of the project area located within 50' of perimeter of the building is landscaped (either hardscape or planting) which exceeds the minimum on-site landscape requirement of 20% of the total area required per the Chapman University Specific Plan.

The applicant has proposed a double row of Holly Oak trees to be planted on the west side of N. Center Street – one row within the public right-of-way and the second row on the opposite side of the sidewalk within private property. Rotundiloba Sweet Gum trees are proposed to be planted on the south side of E. Walnut Avenue within the public right-of-way. These proposed tree species are in keeping with the Chapman University Master Landscape Plan. However, City Staff has concern regarding these choices and further discussion is underway.

Issue 3: Lighting:

All exterior lighting associated with the proposed project will comply with the provisions of the Chapman University Specific Plan and the City's Municipal Code. The applicant has indicated that it is anticipated that the existing City approved tall ornamental (cobra head) light fixture located at the southwestern corner of the N. Center Street/E. Walnut Avenue intersection will remain. A second existing cobra head light fixture located at the terminus of E. Sycamore Avenue (just north of Argyros Forum on N. Center Street) will be replaced with a tall ornamental light fixture that complies with the Old Towne Residential Street Light Standard. The other existing cobra head light fixtures, which are mounted on existing utility poles within the western parkway of N. Center Street between E. Sycamore Avenue and E. Walnut Avenue will be

removed and relocated to the east side of the street. Acorn street lights will be installed on the west side of N. Center Street, between Sycamore Avenue north of E. Walnut Avenue. A variety of compatible lighting fixtures will be installed on the Chapman University property associated with the Center for Science & Technology.

The Center for Science and Technology Justification Notebook dated March 5, 2014 should be referred to for more project description details and renderings of the proposed project. Additionally, the half-size plans dated March 5, 2014 have been submitted for this preliminary review. Further, the Lighting Fixtures Submittal, dated February 2014 are provided for review.

Staff and the applicant are seeking the DRC's review of the proposed project with focus on the architecture design through this Preliminary Review offering concerns/comments at this time. The DRC will be presented at a later date with the formal application to consider the entirety of the project.

ADVISORY BOARD RECOMMENDATION

The Staff Review Committee (SRC) has considered the submitted plans on December 11, 2013, and again on February 19, 2014.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1. Justification Notebook dated March 5, 2014
- 2. Submitted Plans dated March 5, 2014
- 3. Lighting Fixtures Submittal dated February 2014

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