2435 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley, CA 94702
Applicant Statement
May 22, 2020

Project Overview

The proposed project is a 4-story mixed-use building on an existing vacant lot at 2435 San Pablo Ave. just north of Dwight Way. The current site is comprised of two lots (APN 56-1928-19 and APN 56-1928-20) which will be merged. The project adheres to the Zone requirements of stories (4), height (<50’), FAR (3), setbacks, useable open space and permitted uses. The proposed building will offer group living accommodations consistent with a residential hotels, and will include 42 private rooms each with a private bathroom and common kitchen facilities. The C-W district allows for Residential Hotels as a permitted use. Residential Hotels are a type of Group Living Accomodation (GLA). Each residential floor will include community kitchens and a shared outdoor balcony. Common usable open space will also include a large shared rooftop terrace. A shared laundry room will also be located on the roof. The tenant lease agreement will stipulate that each room will only have one occupant at a time, for a total of 42 occupants.

The ground floor will include a commercial space, residential lobby accessed from San Pablo Ave, bike storage, a trash room and mechanical space for the building. The lobby and commercial entrances are shifted to the north due to an existing bus stop enclosure at the south west corner of the property line. The indoor bike parking area can be accessed via an 18’ wide easement from Dwight Way to the back southeast corner of the building.

The building is designed to accommodate those who desire a more affordable and efficient place with shared amenities and a community of fellow residents. Tall ceilings and large windows will further enhance the private living spaces. The shared outdoor space has been sited on the West side of the building, along San Pablo. In addition to the required 10’ foot rear yard setback, the fourth floor has been setback an additional 10’ to reduce the building’s impact on the neighbors to the East.
The façade along San Pablo includes large framed windows which individually express the nature of the private rooms and together, colored with gradient shades of green to blues, the collective spirit of the building community. The pedestrian-friendly entrances are an extension of the buildings fenestration patterning and consistent with the commercial storefronts along San Pablo Ave. and Dwight Way. The curb north of the bus stop in front of the building will be marked as a pick up and loading zone for the building.

**Project Benefits**

The proposed project achieves the purposes put forward by the West Berkeley Commercial (C-W) District and the West Berkeley Plan. The mixed-us program is consistent with the purposes of the District and with the intention of the node designation. The project is compatible with the uses of the surroundings, located amongst both commercial and residential buildings.

The current, underutilized lot will be activated with appropriately dense housing. With no vehicular parking, the commercial fabric along San Pablo will no longer be interrupted by a driveway. The removal of the driveway will make the experience along San Pablo safer and more pedestrian oriented.

The proposed project will also bring new inhabitants to the area whom will, in addition to the new retail space, contribute to the vitality of the shopping and dining district.

The group living design will allow for the units to be leased at lower rents than traditional studio and one bedroom apartments making them accessible to a wide range of Berkeley residents. In addition to affordability, the building design seeks to provide an environment that fosters interaction and creates a sense of community for the residents.

We believe the project benefits the community as it strengthens the residential concentration in the District, preserves the mixed-use fabric, supports local businesses and enhances safety in the area.

**Parking/Traffic Analysis**

The required parking is 1 space for every 5 residents, or 9 spaces for 42 residents. An additional space is required for a resident manager and two spaces for the commercial space on the ground floor, for a total of 12 spaces. The Planning Department has recommended a modification of the parking requirements considering the project promotes the general purposes set forth in 23E.64.020. The project will provide a Transportation Demand Management plan including monthly bus passes for all residents. The building will also include a large capacity secure bicycle parking room on-site, and a car-share zone in front of the building on San Pablo in lieu of the existing curb cut driveway in lieu of on-site parking.

Nearby transit includes AC transit bus stops at the intersection of Dwight Way, with bus lines traveling north and south on San Pablo Ave. and east and west on Dwight Way. The North Berkeley BART station is 1.3 miles away and the Downtown BART station is 1.7 miles away. The Berkeley Amtrak Capitol Corridor Station is 1 mile away.