

Harvest Properties

PA-2021-082, 31-57 S.B Street (Pre-App)

Summary of Pre-Application Community Meeting

Date: April 11, 2022

Time: 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Location: Virtual Zoom Meeting

Community Attendees: John Eberle, Ann Rarden, Sandy, Drew, Vic, Russ Ito, Curtis Driscoll

City Staff Attendees: Julia Klein, Manira Sandhir

Applicant Attendees: Preston O'Connell, Tyler Issadore, Claire Wang, Danielle Friend, Evan Fraser, Ryan Stone, Charlie Brucker, Chris Jew, Jonathan Stone, Don Peterson

Community Feedback

Question/Comment:

Appreciate the overall building design. 1) Why not set the building back a couple feet? 2) Why not add a 5th floor? 3) Why not a basement story with an atrium to let some light down below to the lower level?

Harvest Response:

1) The challenge with setting the building back a couple of feet is that it's a very small site, so the proposed building is already compressed. The other thing we heard from our retail consultant is that you want the project to be right up against the property line to create that engagement zone. If you set the building further back, it wouldn't be consistent with the adjacent buildings (a lot of which are historical) and it would create this inconsistent datum. 2) Currently, there is a height limit of 55' so it would be very challenging to add a 5th level without compromising the natural light and what would feel like a comfortable condition on each floor. We are also respecting our allowable FAR in order to make sure that this project is fully in compliance with all the zoning requirements. 3) It would be challenging to get enough natural light in the basement space to make it functional. Because we are trying to create this vibrant and connected retail zone. Creating this light well/atrium could be disruptive to the ground plane and retail frontage and counter some of the goals we are trying to accomplish in the project and what we heard from the community. With the General Plan Process going on right now, if the community were to want to increase the building height limit or FAR, that could be possible.

Question/Comment:

Would like to better understand impact of sidewalk widening to street parking and the sidewalk. What is the sidewalk going to look like on 1st Ave and what is being taken away or encumbered?

Harvest Response:

Street parking will remain. We want to find harmony between creating what we think is the ideal sidewalk condition which is around 16' and maintaining the parking (8') and having a Sharrow (shared lane for the bike and the car) which is what you see on most slow speed streets such as the B Street corridor. A block north is the Train Station and a block south is the pedestrian mall street closure, which creates conflicts with a separate bike lane traveling down B Street a high speed as proposed in the City Bike Masterplan, which we don't think it's in harmony with the retail vision for the B Street corridor. We think relocating the bike lane to a different street or having a Sharrow can really solve this issue. Currently, this portion of the B Street uses parallel parking spaces whereas further to the south, the diagonal space takes up more room, so we are able to reclaim some of that unnecessarily wide travel lane and give it back to the pedestrian. On 1st Ave, the sidewalk will stay at it's current width (12') with the transit stop. The proposed condition is the current width and street trees with an addition of the bulb-out at the intersection.

Question/Comment:

Will Donut Delite store be coming back to the redeveloped property?

Harvest Response:

This conversation hasn't commenced. We will try to keep them there as long as possible and see where the project lands, we are totally open to having the conversation.

Question/Comment:

Will there be a copy of this Neighborhood Meeting Presentation available?

Harvest/City Response:

A copy of the presentation will be posted on the project webpage at:

www.cityofsanmateo.org/whatshappening

Question/Comment:

Brainstorm on things to do with sidewalks or configuration to welcome pedestrians across.

Harvest Response:

One of the intents of our bulb-out was to create a very inviting corridor for the pedestrians. Need to maintain drive aisle for service/emergency vehicles. Add bulb-out to align with sidewalk across the street. The bulb-out affords a number of benefits such as reducing the distance of crossing for pedestrians, creating additional zones for planting, offering opportunities for parklets, and allowing area for stormwater treatment.

Question/Comment:

What will separate 19 S. B building and the new proposed project?

Harvest Response:

The property boundary will be shared much like how the properties share it today instead of having a setback and window lines in case 19 S. B gets redeveloped in the future.

Question/Comment:

Consider relocating the bus stop on 1st Ave into the Cal Train station to consolidate public transit and clear the area on the south side? Consider doing some kind of minimalist artwork on the blank wall of 19 S. B at the property boundary prior to the redevelopment.

Harvest Response:

Great idea. Need to speak with City & Transit authorities. We are open to the idea if it's important to the community.

Question/Comment:

Consider doing some kind of minimalist artwork on the blank wall of 19 S. B at the property boundary prior to the redevelopment.

Harvest Response:

Public Art is a great idea. We can also bring the materiality of the proposed project to that side to make it feel more cohesive with our overall building design.

Question/Comment:

Remove the wall at the alleyway between the property and the Cal Train station or indent it to create an entry way on the north side of the proposed project and make that corner inviting.

Harvest Response:

The continuity of main street and bringing it across 1st Ave is one of the first project drivers in our design process. We are currently proposing taking back that wall by 20' and setting back the building at that corner

to create visibility and connection to/from the train station and draws people to the B Street retail corridor.

Question/Comment:

Stairwell needs more windows or design to make it interesting ie. a sign or graphic that says "Welcome to San Mateo".

Harvest Response:

The stairwell and exit/entry point serves as an important feature for fire safety but our design team will continue to refine that.

Question/Comment:

When you go down B Street, there is a lot of brick and masonry type of structures. Is it the intention to tie into the historical feel of Downtown San Mateo?

Harvest Response:

Yes, this is an important concept in our design. We have the 2-story brick volume which relates closely to the majority of the buildings along B Street both in terms of height and materiality. Same concept goes for the 3-story brick volume along 1st Ave matching the 3-story buildings across the street. The brick base of the building ties in the materiality of the surrounding neighborhood with detailing and features reminiscent of some of the earlier architecture in the surrounding neighborhood. The curtain walls on level 4-5 fades into the sky, reduces visual impact while showcasing the beautiful natural material of mass timber. We also soften the building with lush landscape design both on the ground plane and terraces on every level of the building. Walking down the street in real life (as opposed to looking at a rendering), what you are really going to feel is the lower 2 – 3 story condition.

Question/Comment:

What would happen to the sidewalk pass this building heading north?

Harvest Response:

If we were to modify the public realm area per our proposal, then there will be continuity; if we were to carve back, then you will have this setback condition until you hit the neighbor at the property line which creates an awkward condition.

Question to the Community:

Do you prefer to have a) a shared bikeway which will allow 16' sidewalk and maintained street parking or b) a separate bike lane and 9-10' sidewalk with eliminated street parking?

Community Response #1:

Project team can maybe consider a hybrid condition between option a) and b). Perhaps building can setback for 2' and the rest (4'-5') can push into the street to achieve the proposed 16' sidewalk condition. And have all future development/redevelopment hold the same datum to keep the consistency of the public realm. I wouldn't mind the sidewalk being a little wider, it's a good thing for sure.

Community Response #2:

I like your proposal of not setting back the building. If you have to set it back 2' that will take away from the building but I'm wonder how the widening of the sidewalk will impact the neighbors. Will they have to follow the same width for sidewalk fronting their properties?

Harvest Response:

When you look at our plans and the existing conditions, one thing to note is that the adjacent neighbor to the north its right up against the property line as well. The widening of the sidewalk is proposed since we have a couple of projects and properties that we own on B Street, so our goal is to curate an energized and successfully retail experience not only for this block but down the whole B Street corridor. A lot of the buildings along B Street are historic and at the property line, so it's important to keep this consistent datum

and respect the historical context. What is easier to modify is reformatting the street condition by having a shared bike lane. 16' wide sidewalk seemed to be the sweet spot when we look around the country for successful retail/public realm precedence, but we want to make this works for the whole neighborhood.