



December 5, 2024

Zachary Dahl, Director of Community Development
Community Development Department
City of San Mateo
330 West 20th Avenue
San Mateo, CA 94403

Dear Zach:

At your request, I have reviewed the SPAR drawing set (October 24, 2024) for the project at 44 East 3rd Avenue Draper University (APN – 034-143-280).

As you know, on October 8, 2024, I conducted a site visit and reviewed the progress of the project currently under construction. I have provided the following evaluation of the project, based on the current drawing set and whether the proposed project would comply with *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (The Secretary's Standards)* and the *City of San Mateo Downtown Retail Core & Downtown Historic District Design Guidelines (Downtown Design Guidelines)*.

Since the west penthouse room is a non-contributing feature to the historic resource, there is an opportunity to set it back from the East 3rd Avenue parapet, employ a flat roofline with code compliant ceiling height, create a glazing scheme that would have helped this feature receded from view, and generally improve the overall appearance and placement of this feature on the roof. Unfortunately, the drawings do not reflect this approach. A redesigned west penthouse room, set back from the parapet and with a flat roofline, would more effectively blend into the roof, limit the visual impact, and meet *the Secretary's Standards*.

Further, newly installed mechanical equipment and piping, which is visible at the west side of the new elevator tower, is proposed for screening using a horizontal, metal product from Moren (Matrix MX-6 Gauge), painted to match the existing color of other rooftop features. The drawings, specifically Sheet Ao.2b, illustrate this screening. It is recommended that the screening continue further northward toward the parapet to additionally screen all the rooftop equipment. However, it is unclear if all the rooftop equipment is shown on the drawings. This requires further review. During the site visit a large, round roof vent was visible, but it is not shown on the drawings.



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As I noted in my previous review, the expanded height of the elevator mechanical room has not resulted in any adverse change to the historical building. The taller mechanical room is not highly visible from across East 3rd Avenue when viewing the building's north façade. It is visible when viewing the building at an angle from further east or west on 3rd Avenue and from the rear pool area. It is also visible from surrounding intersections in downtown San Mateo. However, since the feature is set at the south and east sides of the building it does not dramatically change the overall perception of the Churrigueresque decorative elements of the building's parapet from 3rd Avenue.

Please let me know if you have any questions regarding the information provided.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bridget Maley".

Bridget Maley, Principal
architecture + history, llc