



**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**Date:** 03/13/2023  
**Time:** 7:00 p.m.  
**Location:** Zoom.us/join – ID# 862 5880 9056 and Council Chambers  
751 Laurel St., Menlo Park, CA 94025

**A. Call To Order**

Acting Chair Cynthia Harris called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**B. Roll Call**

Present: Cynthia Harris (Acting Chair), Linh Dan Do, Henry Riggs, Jennifer Schindler, Michele Tate

Absent: Andrew Barnes

Staff: Fahteen Khan, Associate Planner; Leila Moshref-Danesh, City Attorney’s Office; Kyle Perata, Planning Manager; Matt Pruter, Associate Planner; Corinna Sandmeier, Principal Planner; Chris Turner, Associate Planner

**C. Reports and Announcements**

Principal Planner Sandmeier said the City Council at its March 14, 2023 meeting would consider the 201 El Caminor Real tentative map extension, SB 9 code amendments-titles 15 and 16, and the Parkline project environmental review comments.

**D. Public Comment**

- Ron Schloss, Sand Hill Circle, asked whom to contact to have the speed limit on his street changed from the current 25 miles per hour to the original 15 miles per hour.
- Kenneth Do, Carpenters Union Local 217, encouraged the city to adopt regulations to use workforce that met labor standards for both the benefit of the workers and the community.

**E. Consent Calendar**

E1. Approval of minutes from the November 14, 2022 Planning Commission meeting.

E2. Approval of minutes from the December 1, 2022 Planning Commission meeting.

**ACTION:** Motion and second (Do/Schlinder) to approve the consent calendar as submitted; passes 3-0-2-1 with Commissioners Riggs and Tate abstaining and Commissioner Barnes absent.



## **F. Public Hearing**

- F1. Consider and adopt a resolution to approve a use permit to demolish an existing one-story, single-family residence, and construct a new two-story residence on a substandard lot with regard to minimum lot width in the R-1-U (Single Family Urban Residential) zoning district, at 893 Woodland Avenue; determine this action is categorically exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15303's Class 3 exemption for new construction or conversion of small structures.

Associate Planner Khan noted a letter from a neighbor received after publication of the staff report.

Leo Li, project designer, spoke on behalf of the project.

Acting Chair Harris opened the public hearing.

Public Comment:

- Naomi Goodman, resident adjacent to the subject property, expressed concern with the noise level of proposed heat pumps and suggested using high grade equipment, use of a sound-absorbing pad, and an enclosure.
- Greg Webb, resident adjacent to the subject property, expressed concerns about preservation of the heritage redwood trees, privacy impacts related to windows in the master bedroom, and light and noise pollution.

Acting Chair Harris closed the public hearing.

The Commission discussed location of the replacement tree in the front and code requirements for the location of heat pumps with staff, and confirmed with the applicant that external lights would be turned downwards.

Replying to Acting Chair Harris, Mr. Li said the heat pump chosen would comply with code and they were open to building an enclosure around it to reduce noise.

Commissioner Riggs moved to approve with three added conditions: second floor windows as discussed would have their lower half obscured, the replacement tree in the front would be planted as close as possible to the sidewalk, and the applicant would work with staff to construct an enclosure and/or ways to reduce noise below 50 decibels at the property line from the heat pump. Commissioner Schindler seconded the motion.

Upon inquiry, Leila Moshref-Danesh, City Attorney's Office, said the two-story residential development could be so conditioned regarding the heat pump and noise level.

Mr. Li clarified the two windows to be obscured were in the master bedroom.

Commissioner Schindler asked that the condition regarding the enclosure for the heat pump use the word "endeavor" to reduce the noise to below 50 decibels.

Commissioners expressed concern with trying to reduce the noise level below the municipal code allowance.

Planning Manager Kyle Perata said that requiring more than code for the noise level was a policy issue.

Commissioner Tate referred to the previous meeting's discussion about heat pumps for the pool and that the noise be less than 50 decibels at the property line, and questioned consistency.

Planning Manager Perata said the item mentioned by Commissioner Tate was a use permit requesting to exceed the 50 decibels allowed at night or 10 p.m. to 7 a.m.

Commissioner Riggs noted the applicant's willingness to enclose the heat pump to try to mitigate the noise level to lower than 50 decibels.

Acting Chair Harris suggested use of the word "endeavor." Ms. Moshref-Danesh said the applicant's willingness to build an enclosure supported the condition and the use of the word "endeavor" would strengthen the condition from a legal perspective.

Commissioner Riggs said that was acceptable to him to use the word endeavor and Commissioner Schindler's language. Commissioner Schindler said her wording for the condition was: applicant shall endeavor to reduce heat pump noise levels below 50 decibels through a range of tactics such as building an enclosure.

**ACTION:** Motion and second (Riggs/Schindler) to adopt a resolution to approve a use permit to demolish an existing one-story, single-family residence, and construct a new two-story residence on a substandard lot with regard to minimum lot width in the R-1-U (Single Family Urban Residential) zoning district, at 893 Woodland Avenue and determine this action is categorically exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15303's Class 3 exemption for new construction or conversion of small structures with the following modifications; passes 4-1-1 with Commissioner Tate opposed and Commissioner Barnes absent.

**Add Condition 2b:** Simultaneous with the submittal of a complete building permit application, the applicant shall revise the elevation drawings to indicate that the lower half of the master bedroom windows shall have obscured glass, subject to review and approval by the Planning Division;

**Add Condition 2c:** Simultaneous with the submittal of a complete building permit application, the applicant shall revise the site plan and landscape plans to indicate the location of replacement heritage tree as close to the front property line as possible, subject to review and approval by the Planning Division and City Arborist;

**Add Condition 2d:** The applicant shall endeavor to reduce heat pump noise levels below 50 decibels through a range of tactics such as building an enclosure.

- F2. Consider and adopt a resolution to approve a use permit and architectural control to make landscaping modifications to an existing golf course in the OSC (Open Space and Conservation) zoning district. The proposed work includes grading changes, irrigation improvements, new pathways, and landscaping throughout the fairways. The proposal also includes an expansion of the artificial lake for additional recycled water storage. The project also includes a request to construct three carpools on the main parking lot adjacent to the existing clubhouse and two pergolas adjacent to the existing clubhouse and pool deck, which would provide solar arrays. Determine this action is categorically exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15301's Class 1 exemption for existing facilities, Section 15302's Class 2 exemption for replacement or reconstruction, Section 15303's Class 3 exemption for new construction or conversion of small structures, and Section 15311's Class 11 exemption for accessory structures. The City Arborist conditionally approved the removal of 258 heritage trees for the proposed project.

Associate Planner Matt Pruter said six comment letters were received after publication of the staff report with some supporting the project, others expressing concern with the number of heritage trees proposed for removal and the process of tree removal approval, and the level of environmental review.

Andy Duncan, project representative, introduced attorney Frank Petrelli, civil engineer Cliff Bechtel, arborist Gordon Matt, environmental specialist Scott Yanger, and golf course superintendent Chad Twaddle. Mr. Duncan spoke on behalf of the proposed project.

Acting Chair Harris opened the public hearing.

Public Comment:

- Lynne Bramlett said she was concerned with the proposed heritage and other tree removals and the process allowing that with seeming ease for development projects.
- Jennifer Johnson, Sharon Heights, Country Club Fairways Homeowners' Association (HOA), said her HOA was not invited to the presentation given to the other HOA named by the speaker and expressed concern with the number of trees, heritage and other, being removed and not all being replaced including safety concerns as well as concerns with construction noise and dirt.
- Ron Schloss questioned the 100 trees for which no reason was given for removal and noted he did not think there was any value in replacing a redwood tree with a native tree unless there was an environmental impact or cost impact.
- Nancy Larocca Hedley, Environmental Quality Commission, said she was speaking as an individual and echoed concerns expressed by previous commenters and suggested changes to the process to allow for greater citywide input when large numbers of heritage trees were proposed for removal.
- Rick Johnson said the International Audobon Society was not affiliated with the National Audobon Society,

- Ron Snow said the Country Club impacted the biodiversity environment for miles around it; questioned how many trees were in fact ill or dead, and suggested goals could be accomplished without removing so many trees.
- Joseph David said he supported the project noting he was initially opposed to tree removals but realized that those trees were planted unwisely, took a lot of water, and that naturally this area would be grasslands and oak and sycamore trees.

Acting Chair Harris closed the public hearing.

The Commission discussed the tree removal, public comments, and presentation and noted the complexity of understanding the why of the tree removal through those.

Commissioner Riggs moved to approve as submitted. Commissioner Tate seconded the motion.

Replying to the Chair, Mr. Duncan said regarding errant golf balls and safety to nearby residences that they intended to increase the safety netting height from 50 feet to 75 feet and with the project would plant trees that were bushier and would block balls from the second and eighth holes better.

ACTION: Motion and second (Riggs/Tate) adopt a resolution to approve a use permit and architectural control to make landscaping modifications to an existing golf course in the OSC (Open Space and Conservation) zoning district and determine this action is categorically exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15301's Class 1 exemption for existing facilities, Section 15302's Class 2 exemption for replacement or reconstruction, Section 15303's Class 3 exemption for new construction or conversion of small structures, and Section 15311's Class 11 exemption for accessory structures; passes 4-0-1-1 with Commissioner Do abstaining and Commissioner Barnes absent.

Acting Chair Harris recessed the meeting at 9:30 p.m. for a short break.

Acting Chair Harris reconvened the meeting at 9:35 p.m.

## **G. Study Session**

- G1. Request for a study session for a proposal to demolish two existing, one-story commercial buildings and construct a new three story life science/research and development (R&D) building with a ground floor commercial space in the L-S (Life Sciences) zoning district. The project site currently includes four legal parcels with four existing buildings. Two of the existing buildings, addressed 980-990 and 1010 O'Brien Drive would remain. The proposed total gross floor area of the proposed building would be approximately 61,901 square feet of R&D space and 5,787 square feet of commercial space. The development regulations would be calculated across the entire project site (e.g. gross floor area, parking, etc.). The total area of R&D and related uses, inclusive of the two buildings to remain, would be a floor area ratio of approximately 0.55. The commercial space would be an additional floor area ratio of approximately 3.7 percent beyond the 55 percent allowed for R&D uses. The proposed project is anticipated to include the following entitlements: architectural control, use permit, below market rate (BMR) housing in lieu fee, and environmental review. The proposed project also includes a request for hazardous materials (diesel fuel) for an emergency backup generator. Additionally, two of the four parcels would be merged to allow for the proposed building.

The Planning Commission held a study session to provide feedback to the applicants and receive public comments on the proposal.

Planner Khan presented the item.

Steve Reller, property owner, and Rob Zirkle, project architect, spoke on behalf of the project.

Acting Chair Harris opened for public comment.

Public Comment:

- Lynne Bramlett said that such proposed life sciences projects did not address the safety element, environmental justice or the municipal code and questioned adequate regulation of these life science industries close to residential areas.
- Pam Jones said she lived close to this project and many others slated to be developed in District 1 and expressed concerns about the loss of view and hazardous waste disposal impacts to residents including East Palo Alto residents.
- Naomi Goodman said she was concerned about city regulation of life science research and development projects and mentioned biosafety levels for life science facilities and how those should be analyzed relative to people and the environment's safety.

Acting Chair Harris closed public comment.

Planning Commissioners provided the following general comments:

- Proposed public space seemed adequate.
- Proposed project used nice materials, was an attractive building, the modulations worked, and the building entries were clear.
- Consider creating openings or slits in the proposed stairwells.
- Consider reducing the number of parking spaces proposed on-site.
- Confirm the commercial use.
- Consider more outreach to neighbors of the subject properties in Menlo Park and in East Palo Alto.
- Consider reducing nighttime lighting impacts on the surrounding neighbors.
- Consider City of East Palo noise ordinance requirements.

## **H. Informational Items**

### **H1. Future Planning Commission Meeting Schedule**

- Regular Meeting: March 27, 2023

Planner Sandmeier said the March 27 agenda would have Willow Village architectural control permits (not residential), an architectural control permit for the 120 Constitution Drive project and a use permit for 1145 Hidden Oaks single-family development project.

- Regular Meeting: April 10, 2023

**I. Adjournment**

Acting Chair Harris adjourned the meeting at 10:56 p.m.

Staff Liaison: Corinna Sandmeier, Principal Planner

Recording Secretary: Brenda Bennett

Approved by the Planning Commission on May 1, 2023



# Menlo Park Planning Commission

*March 13, 2023*

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## Introduction

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- In 2018, SHGCC embarked on a master planning process to improve our infrastructure with a focus on sustainability
- First project was our Recycled Water Facility completed in 2020
- We are here today seeking approval for the following:
  - Solar energy system for our Clubhouse
  - Renovation of our Golf Course





## SHGCC Recycled Water Overview

- Public private partnership with West Bay Sanitary District
- Plant construction completed - State approved in July 2020
- 99 year partnership financed by SHGCC with plant operated by West Bay Sanitary District
- Project goal was to meet the water needs of SHGCC golf course and to partner for excess recycled water for environmental and community benefit
- Designed for target delivery of 400K gal/day and a maximum of 500K gal/day (approximately 180M gal/year of saved drinking water)



# Solar Project Overview



- Expand our green footprint/sustainability in the community by investing in solar
- First system proposed will cover 72% of our Clubhouse Energy needs (500 kW)
- Cost is \$1.6M and includes battery storage system to minimize grid usage
- Panels will be installed in our parking lot and around pool on structural beams covered in wood to compliment the trellis look around the clubhouse and provide shaded parking
- First of 3 Solar projects eventually planned, totalling approx 1 mW of DC power:
  - Recycled Water Facility (in conjunction with WBSD) planned in 2024
  - Operations Center planned in 2024



# Sustainable Golf Course



Renovate the Sharon Heights golf course greatly improving sustainability including:

- Reducing water usage
- New and reduced areas of turf grass
- Reforestation of the trees/land
- Plant 208 new native trees (160 oaks)
- New drought tolerant landscaping
- Expand recycled water storage
- New irrigation and drainage



SHGCC 1965

# Tree Reforestation

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- In 1962 SHGCC Members planted 1,000+ of 1 and 5 gallon Redwood trees to address safety issues in a tight golf course layout
- Redwoods were not native to this land: clay soil, lack of fog and water
  - Trees were planted too close together
- 60 years later:
  - Trees are too dense to support long term growth/sustainability of all trees
  - Extended drought has created additional stress
  - Many trees are failing or are dead
- 1300 Total trees on golf course
  - 359 are being removed (342 heritage size)
  - 91 of the 342 are in poor health or dead
- 208 new trees being planted:
  - 160 oaks, 43 sycamores, 5 cypresses
  - Varying sizes from 36" to 72" boxes (20-25 feet tall)

# Community Outreach

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- Sharon Heights G&CC hosted two community meetings October 23rd and 29th, 2022
  - Over 100 people attended the meetings
  - Reviewed all plans explaining timing of the proposed work - extensive Q&A session
- Follow up meetings have occurred with:
  - Board members of the HOA's within the community
  - All individuals that requested a meeting or information including site walks
  - All letters sent to City Planning or City Council have been followed up and addressed
- Letters of support for the project from:
  - Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter
  - Audubon International
  - Stanford University
- Important to note that 153 households in Menlo Park (350+ people) are members at SHGCC



## Sharon Park Drive

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- Easement road between holes 2 and 8
- Many trees in poor or worse health
  - 27 being removed
    - 23 in poor or dead condition
      - Health related removal permit approved
    - 2 in fair, 2 in good condition (development related removal)
      - Reduce overcrowding
  - 36 trees remaining
- Already Committed to SPHOA for a plan to replant appropriate trees and number of trees
  - Will be done in conjunction with HOA representatives
  - Landscaping will also be re-done



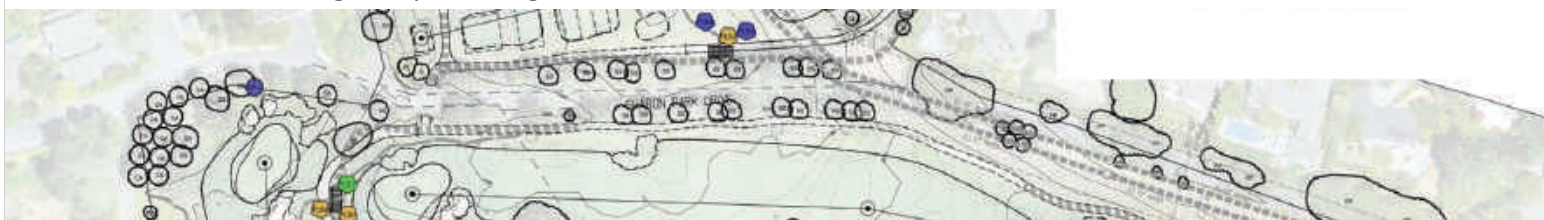
## Tree Plan along Sharon Park Drive

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Tree Removal Plan - X Poor or Dead      ● Fair      ● Good



Current Tree Planting Plan prior to agreement with HOA



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Rendering Proposal for trees  
along Sharon Park Drive





# Golf Course Renovation Schedule

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Approval is imperative for a start date of April 1, 2023

- Summer Construction: April-October (critical to schedule)
- Winter Grow-in of new turf and landscaping: November-April
- Reopen renovated course: April 2024



# 1030 O'Brien

Planning Commission Study Session

March 13, 2023

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brick.

site & existing conditions

brick.

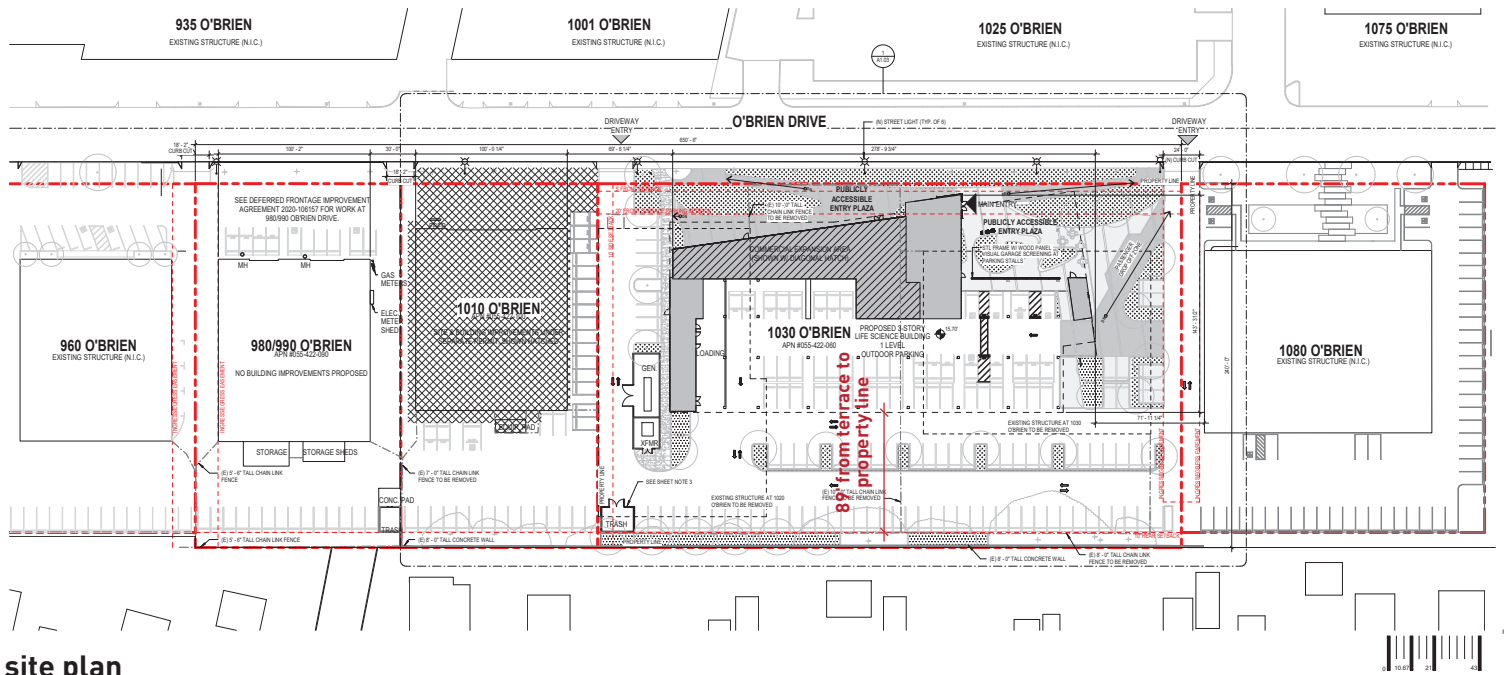




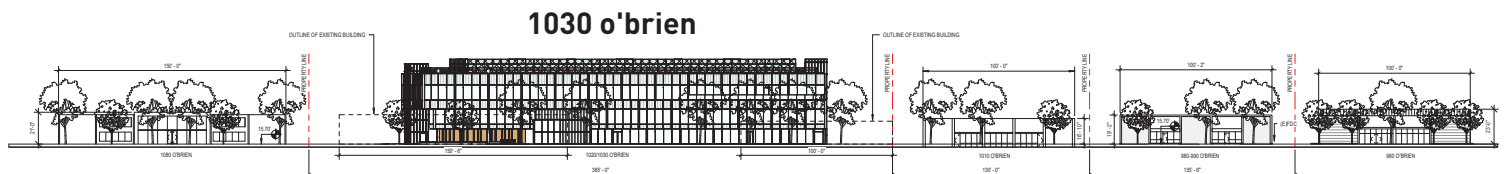


# site design

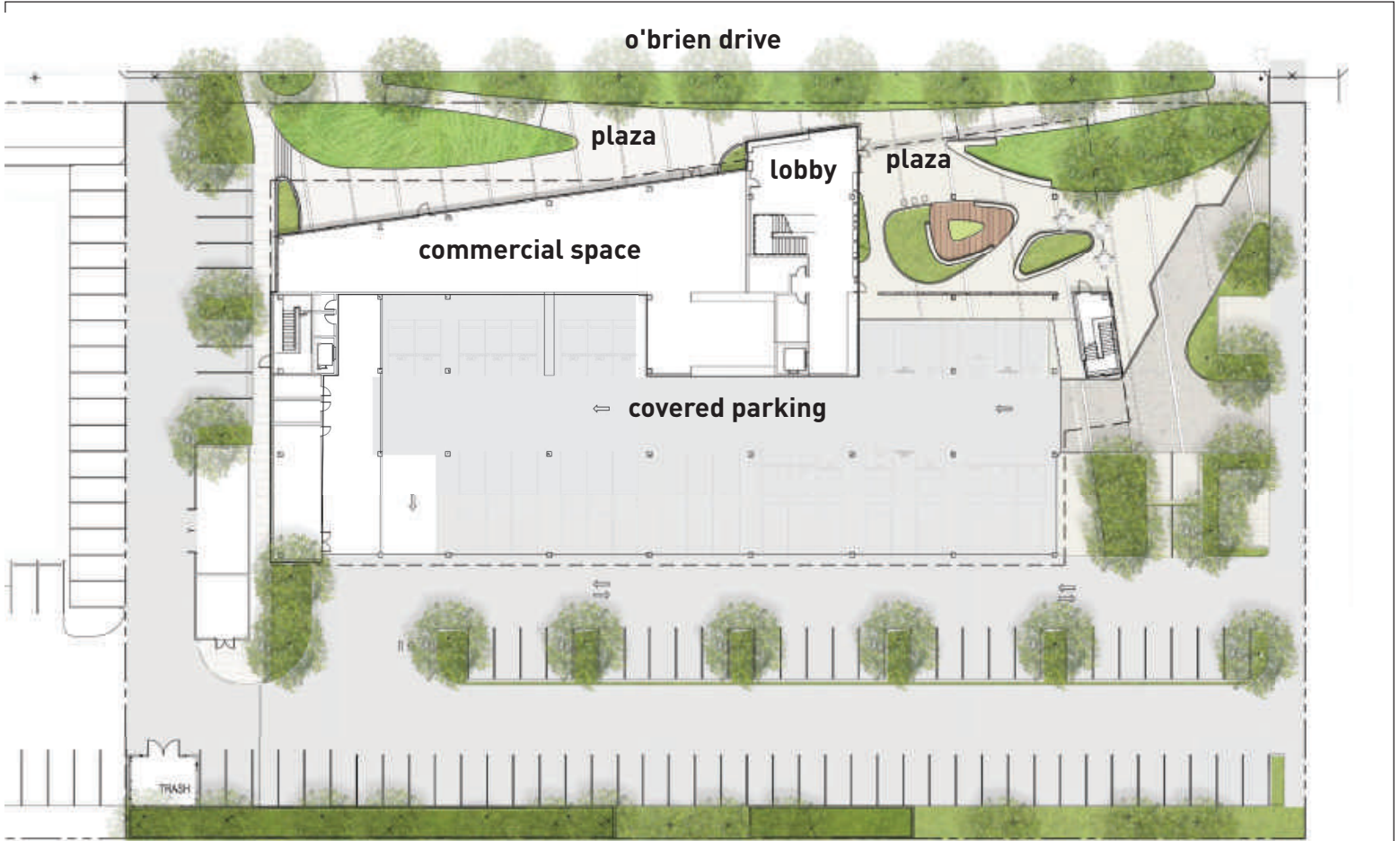
brick.



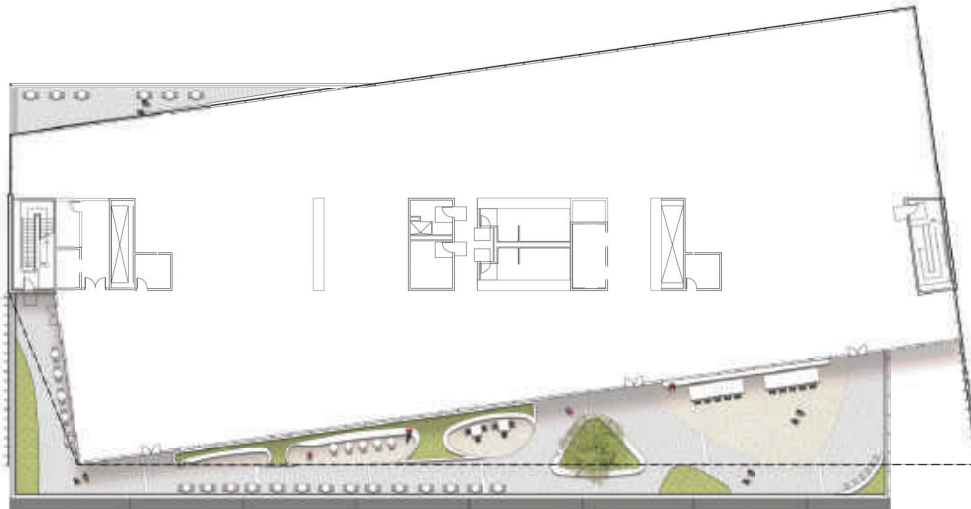
site plan



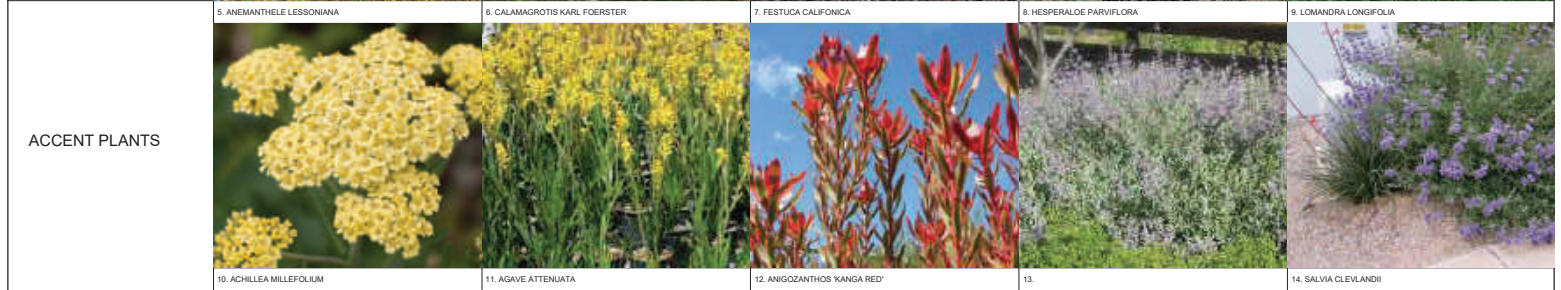
street frontage elevation



illustrative site plan



illustrative terrace plan



TREE PLANTING



1. ARBUTUS MARINA



2. CERCIS CANADENSIS



3. GINKGO BILOBA



4. OLEA EUROPAEA



5. PLATANUS X ACERIFOLIA



6. PISTACIA CHINENSIS



9 | PLAZA PRECEDENT



8 | ORGANIC CONCRETE SEAT WALL



7 | WOOD DECKING BREAKOUT SPACE

# proposed r&d building

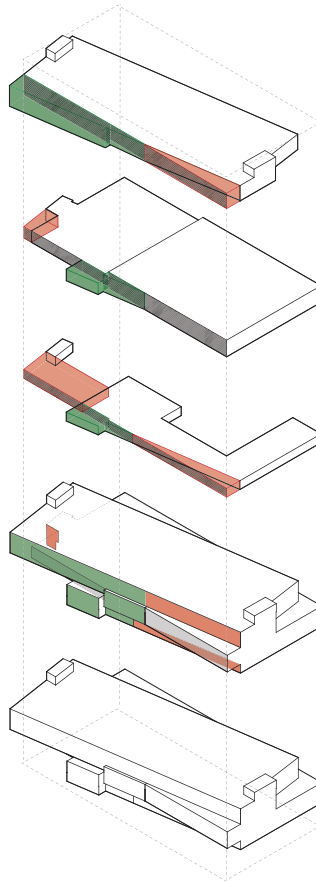
level 3 modulation

level 2 modulation

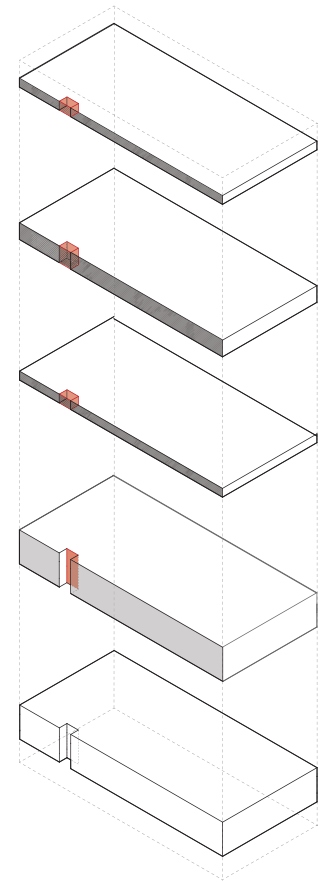
level 1 modulation

overall modulation

overall massing



as proposed



as required

## massing modulation study



view looking southwest



**view looking southeast**



**view looking northwest**

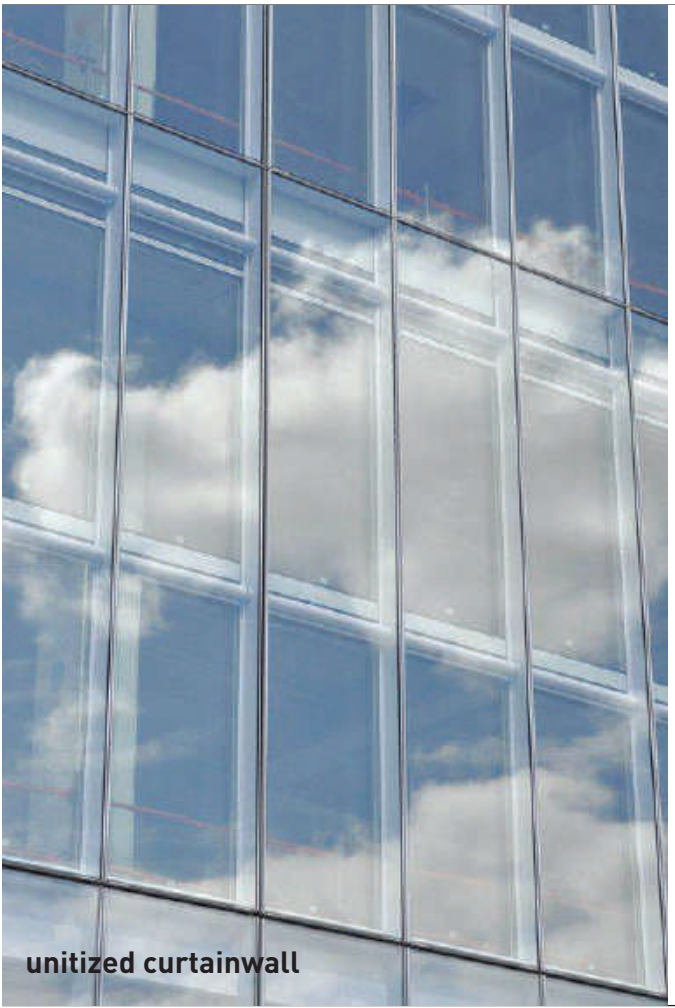




**view looking northeast**



**view looking northeast**



unitized curtainwall



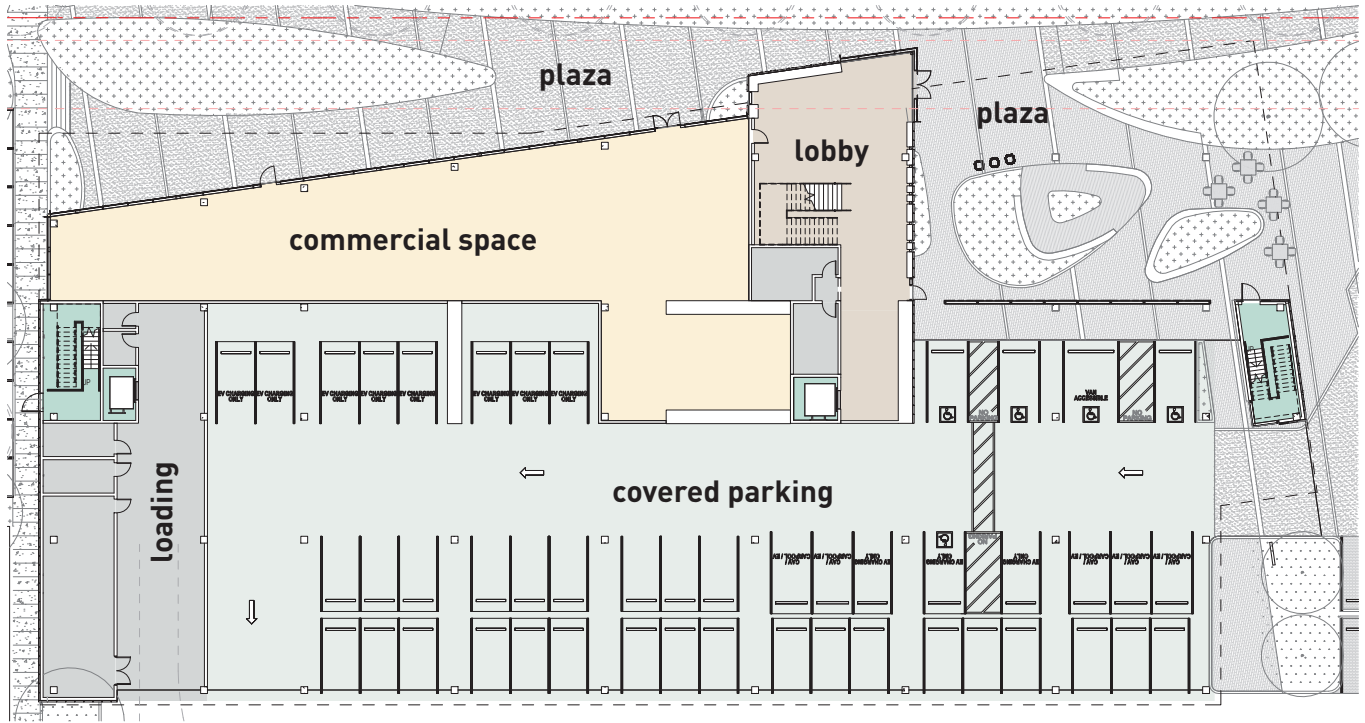
bird-friendly glass



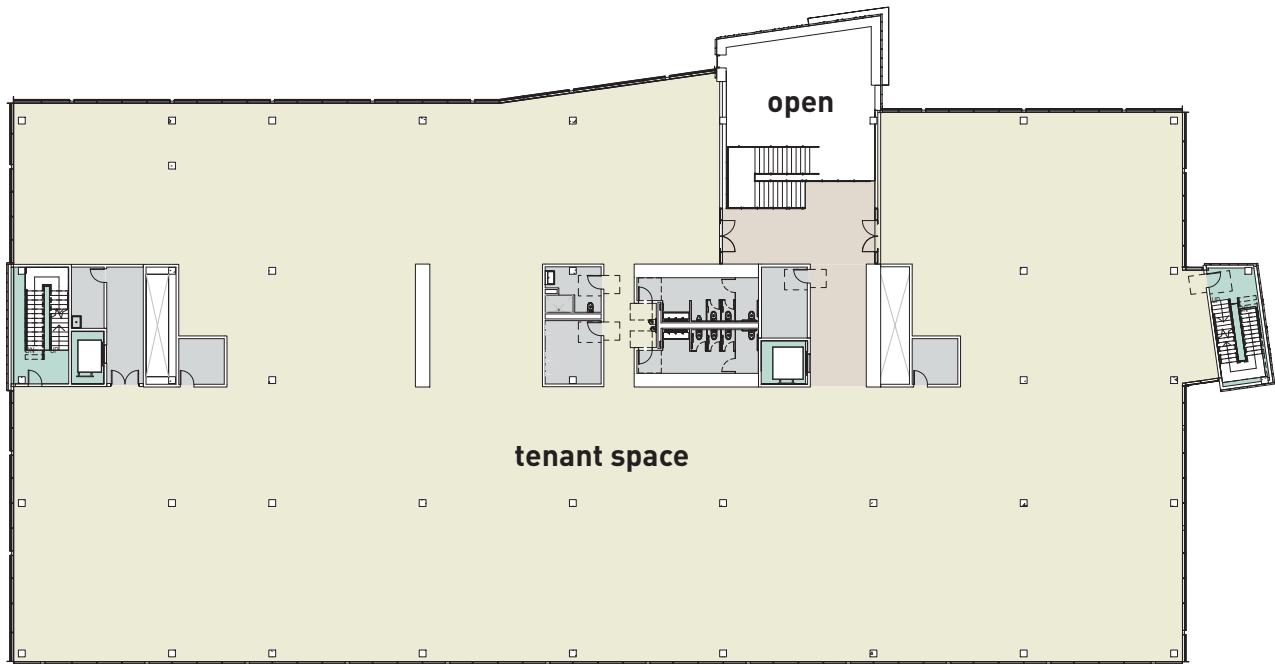
variegated composite panel

# floor plans & elevations

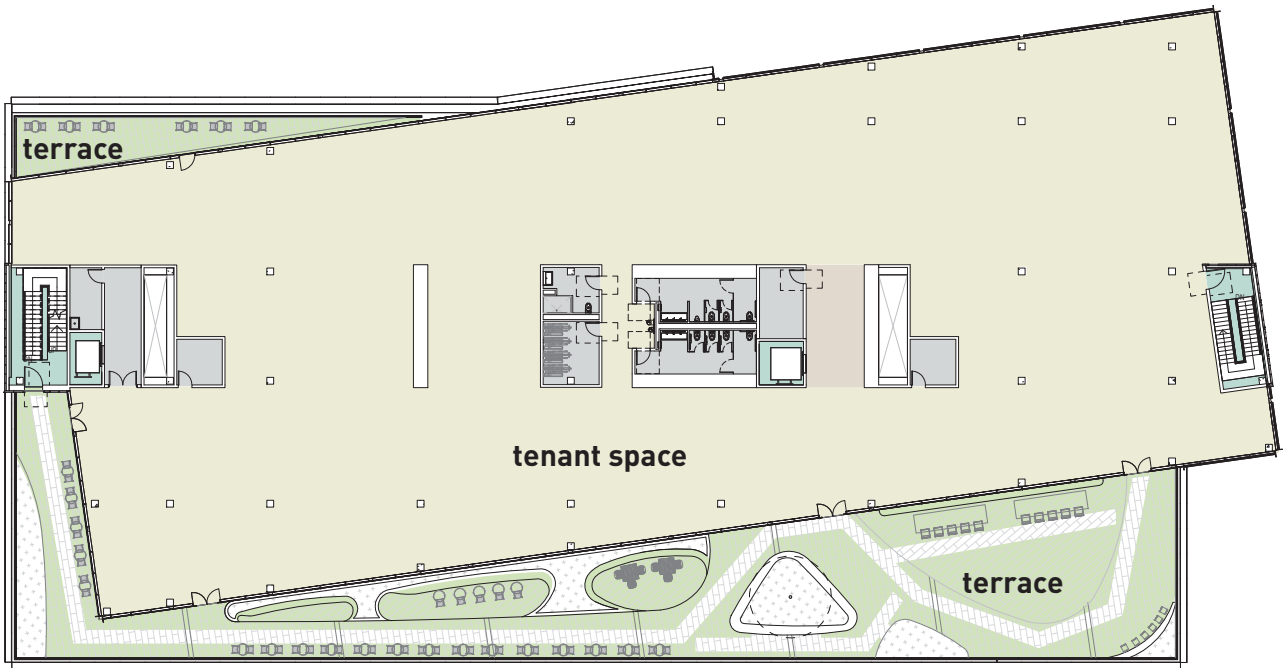
brick.



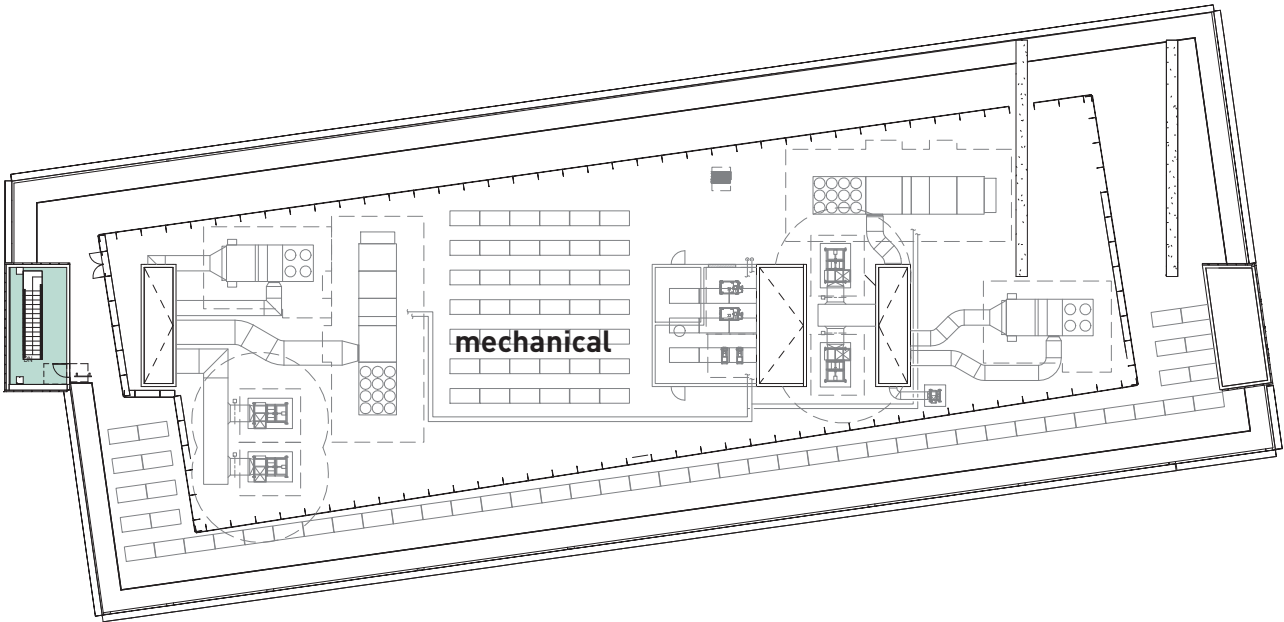
first floor plan



second floor plan



**third floor plan**



**roof plan**



questions?

Planning Commission Study Session

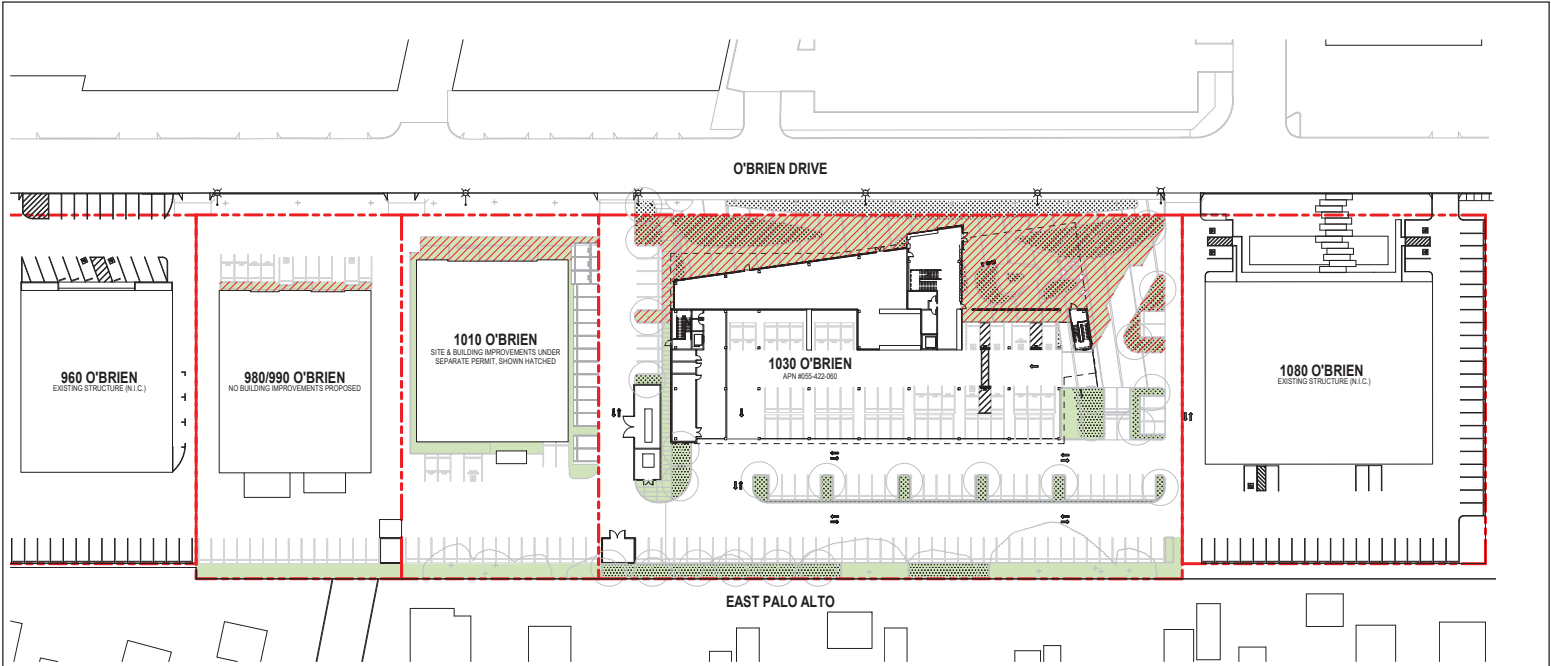
March 13, 2023

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brick.

appendix

brick.



**open space plan**

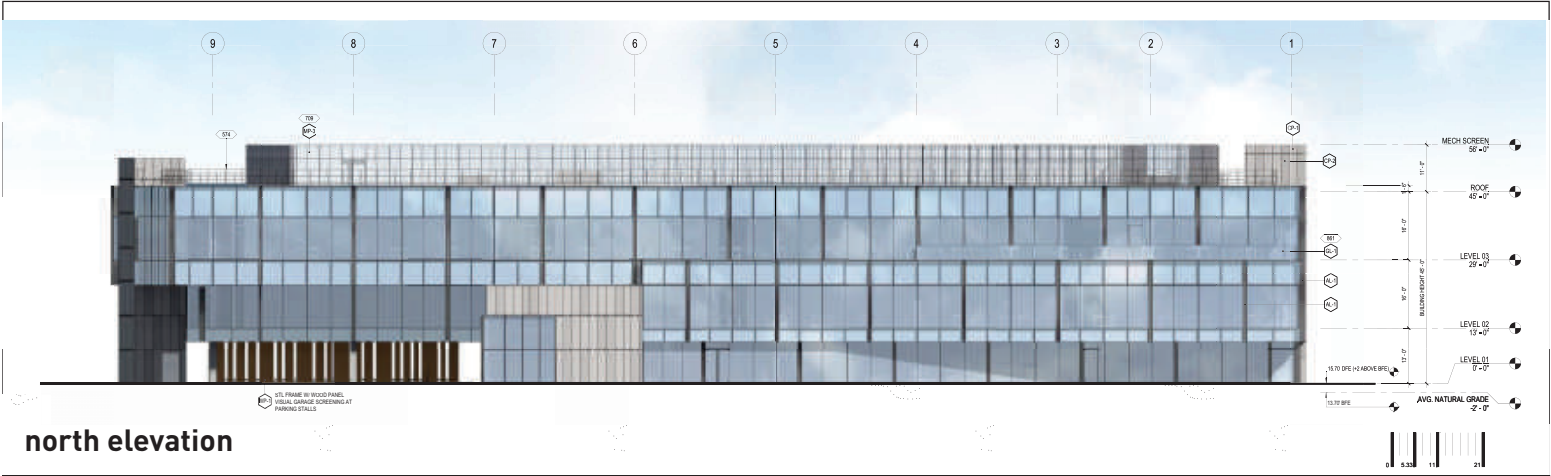
**total lot area: 156,120sf**  
*(980, 1010, 1030 O'Brien)*

**required open space: 31,244sf**  
*(20% of total lot area)*

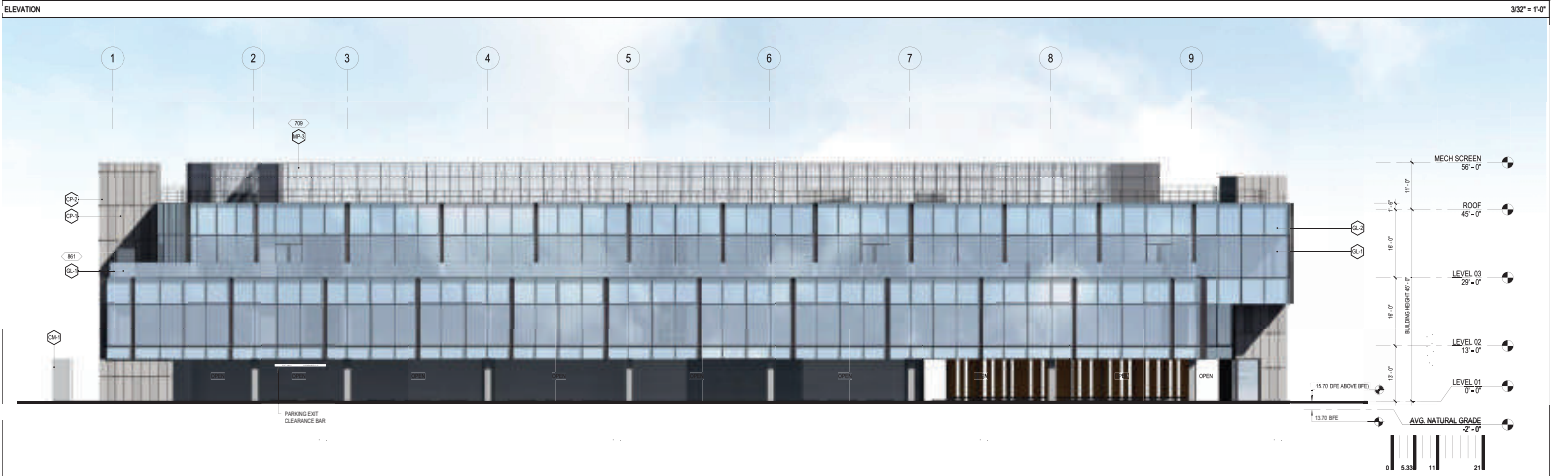
**required publicly accessible open space: 15,622sf**  
*(50% of required open space)*

 **open space provided: 30,270sf**  
*(19.3% of total lot area)*

 **publicly accessible open space provided: 17,287sf**  
*(55% of required open space)*



**north elevation**



**south elevation**



# 980-1030 O'BRIEN

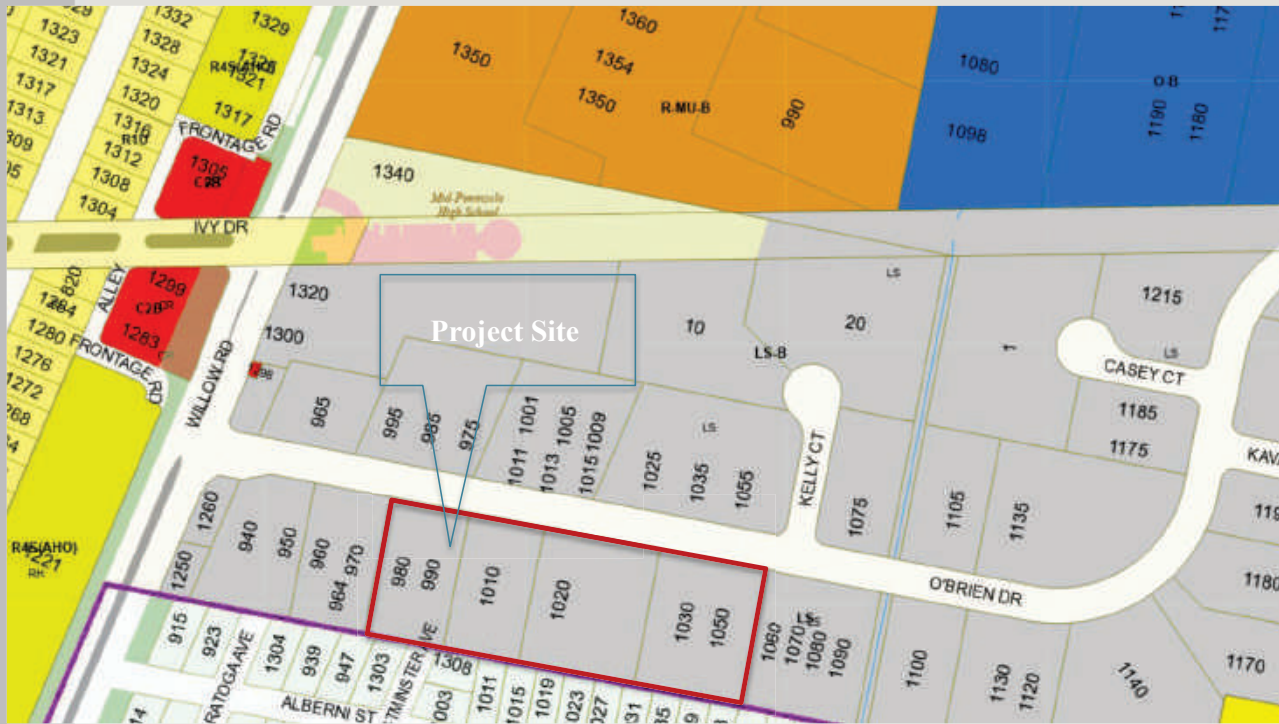
Study Session - March 13, 2023



## RECOMMENDED MEETING FORMAT

- Study Session
  - Staff introduction
  - Presentation by applicant
  - Public comments
  - Commissioner questions
  - Commissioner feedback









## ANTICIPATED ACTIONS

- Architectural control
- Use permit
- Environmental review
- Below Market Rate (BMR) in-lieu fee
- Lot merger
- Heritage tree removal (HTR) permits



## TOPIC AREAS FOR CONSIDERATION:

- Below are some topic areas for the Planning Commission's consideration; however, the Commission's discussion is not limited to these topics:
  - Open space/publicly accessible open space
  - Commercial use
  - Gross floor area
  - Architectural design and materials
  - Building modulations
  - Overall approach



**THANK YOU**