



Community Development Department  
Jill Dever Ekas, AICP, Director

*Architectural Advisory Committee:  
Request for Design Review and Recommendations*

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**Date:** March 19, 2020

**To:** Architectural Advisory Committee Members

**From:** Art Henriques, contract Project Manager  
Jill Ekas, Community Development Director

**Subject:** 1191 Main Street, Hyatt Place, Planning File Number PDP 072-13

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**NOTE:**

The AAC’s focus is design review. The Committee’s comments will help inform the development of the project’s Environmental Impact Report (EIR) in areas related to design, aesthetics, and impacts to visual resources. The AAC members are professionals in design related fields and the committee’s meeting format includes an applicant presentation followed by a collaborative working session among committee members. There will be time for public comment at the AAC meeting, and there will be ample opportunity for further public comments as the project review progresses through the upcoming Draft EIR stage and when the proposal is before the Planning Commission and the City Council.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

The application is for a proposed 129 room hotel with an associated conference facility on an approximately 5 acre site at the south end of Main Street at Highway 1 and Higgins Canyon Road. The applicant proposes up to a 2,700 square foot conference center and related facilities. Bicycle and pedestrian paths are proposed along the west side of the buildings and easterly of Highway 1. The applicant is RGJC South LLC, and the project architect is Mason Architects. Project plans and a conceptual reduced height alternative are provided in Attachment 1.

Applicable Development Standards: The site is zoned PUD and comprises the L. C. Smith Estate Planned Development District in the certified Land Use Plan (LUP) Applicable development standards are summarized below. For comparison, the Commercial Visitor Serving (C-VS) and Commercial General (C-G) zoning Districts are also listed in the following because the LUP indicates that the site is appropriate for the General Commercial land use designation with modifications imposed by Land Use Plan policies. The General Commercial land use designation is consistent with the C-G Zoning District. Because the proposed use is a visitor serving coastal act priority use, the C-VS Zoning District standards are also presented as an additional reference.

Development Standard	LC Smith PD Policy and PUD Zoning Requirements <sup>1</sup>	C-G Zoning District	C-VS Zoning District	Proposed Project
<b>Min. Site Area</b>	1 AC (43,560 sq. ft.)	10,000 sq. ft.	10,000 sq. ft.	Approximate 5 AC
<b>Min. Site Width</b>	Not Specified	100 ft.	100 ft.	Provided
<b>Min. Setbacks:</b> Double frontage: HWY 1 Main Street Side: North Rear: There is no rear side to the site	HWY 1: 30 ft. Main Street: 15 ft. Side: Not specified Entry Feature: 10 ft.	Front: 25 ft. Side: 10 ft.	Front: 20 ft. Side: 10 ft.	HWY 1: 100 ft. Main Street: 15 ft. Side: 75 ft. Entry feature: 190 ft.
<b>Max. Site Coverage</b>	Not specified	No site coverage limit	No site coverage limit	23.9%, 52,377 sq. ft.
<b>Max. Floor Area Ratio</b>	NA	No FAR limit	No FAR limit	0.41
<b>Max. Building Height</b>	35 ft.	36 ft., 3 stories	36 ft., 3 stories	35 ft., up to 3 stories
<b>Min. Off-Street Parking</b>	Zoning Code: 1 per guest plus 1 per employee: 146 spaces			148 spaces
<b>Min. Bicycles Parking</b>	Zoning Code: 1 per 20 parking spaces <sup>2</sup> 8 spaces			Minimum 8, applicant researching bike share
<b>Min. Open Space or Landscaping</b>	Open space: 20% of gross area	Landscaping: 10%	Landscaping: 15%	Wetlands and Landscaping: Approximate 38%

1. The L.C. Smith PUD Land Use designation primarily follows a modified General Commercial designation. Visitor Commercial Zoning is listed for comparison purposes.

2. If hotel has 25 or more employees

### **Visual Resources Policies and Design Guidance:**

This is an important site given its prominent location on Highway 1 at Higgins Canyon Road at the south end of the City's Downtown. California Coastal Act policies are relevant, as well as policies in the City's Local Coastal Land Use Plan (LUP) and regulations in the Local Coastal Implementation Plan (including the Zoning Ordinance).<sup>1</sup> The Coastal Act and LUP policies are presented below. The zoning regulations are numerous and provided in Attachment 2.

Coastal Act: The findings and declarations made by the State legislature in establishing the Coastal Act state that "the permanent protection of the state's natural and scenic resources is a paramount concern to present and future residents of the state and nation."<sup>2</sup> The Coastal Act delineates several types of sensitive coastal resource areas, including two that specifically pertain to scenic resources: highly scenic areas and special communities or neighborhoods which are significant visitor destination areas.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, the Coastal Act prioritizes protection of views from public places such as trails, parks, vistas, rights-of-way, and areas with public access easements. Views from private property are not a Coastal Act policy concern. Coastal Act policies most relevant to visual resources and this project include:

*Policy 30251 – Scenic and Visual Qualities:* "The scenic and visual qualities of coastal areas shall be considered and protected as a resource of public importance. Permitted development shall be sited and designed to protect views to and along the ocean and scenic coastal areas, to minimize the alteration of natural land forms, to be visually compatible with the character of the surrounding areas, and, where feasible, to restore and enhance visual quality in visually degraded areas."

*Policy 30252 - Maintenance and Enhancement of Public Access:* "New development shall ... (5) Where appropriate, protect special communities and neighborhoods which, because of their unique characteristics, are popular visitor destination points for recreational uses."

Land Use Plan: For the Architectural Advisory Committee's consideration in reviewing this project, the most relevant guidance from the Half Moon Bay LUP are found in Chapter 7. Visual Resources and Chapter 9. Development. Coastal Access and Recreation policies are also relevant to the project, but less so with respect to the Architectural Advisory Committee's role in design review, thus they are not highlighted in this section.

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<sup>1</sup> Half Moon Bay's Local Coastal Program (LCP) was effectively certified by the California Coastal Commission in 1996. The City implements the California Coastal Act through the LCP. The LCP is comprised of the Local Coastal Land Use Plan (LUP) which is a policy document that serves as the City's General Plan Land Use Element; and the Local Coastal Implementation Plan (IP) comprised of both the subdivision and zoning ordinances which contain standards and regulations consistent with LUP policies.

<sup>2</sup> California Coastal Act, Section 30001.

<sup>3</sup> California Coastal Act, Section 30116.

*Chapter 7. Visual Resource Policies:* The LUP includes visual resource policies and standards for Highway 1. Highway 1 is not designated a Scenic Highway within the City limits of Half Moon Bay; however, Coastal Commission guidance indicates an intent to protect Highway 1 and views from it as visual resources. Most applicable to this site are views to the west of upland slopes and their ridgelines. While the proposed project is not located on an upland slope, portions of the project will be visible above the ridgeline as seen from Highway 1 from different viewing locations. The EIR under preparation by the City will include a visual impact analysis with four different viewing locations: one from Main Street, two from Highway 1, and one from the Naomi Patridge Trail across Highway 1 from the project site. In addition to these simulations, story poles will also be installed at a later time. Both the Architectural Advisory Committee and Planning Commission will have an opportunity to study potential visual impacts of the project's bulk, mass, and height.

*Chapter 9. Development - L. C. Smith Estate Planned Development District:* The City's LUP for the L.C. Smith Estate PD district states:

*"Given the unique location and shape of the parcel, limited uses and specific development standards have been required for this site..." and "To accomplish the objectives for this site the most logical alternative is to encourage a Planned Unit Development with a modified General Commercial designation, involving restrictions on the types of commercial uses, special limitations on the bulk, heights, and setbacks for any structures, requirement for a Site and Design Permit, and dedication of an area for an "entry feature" to the City. The Planned Development District/General Commercial designation is intended to encourage a development solution which will achieve all of these objectives."*

The LUP Policy continues with discussion of Proposed Development Conditions:

"In addition to the PD requirements described in Section 9. 3. 2<sup>4</sup>, development of this area shall be subject to the following conditions:

- a) Site & Design permits will be required for any development and shall address building design, height, traffic access plan, and a parking and landscaping plan designed to accommodate a City "entry feature."
- b) A 5,000 square foot area at the southerly end of the property shall be set aside for public facility use. The purpose of this area will be for an "entry feature" to the City. This feature could include a sign, sculpture, landscaping, etc. Any future building design shall be compatible with the entry feature.

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<sup>4</sup> Section 9.3.2 contains policies applicable to all of the City's PD areas. The requirements of these policies are reflected in the development standards table within this report, as well as the entitlement review process for this application.

c) Building(s) adjacent to the entry feature shall be limited to two stories (20 feet) and any additional structures shall not exceed three stories (maximum 35 feet).

d) Minimum development setbacks shall include 30 feet from Highway One right-of-way, 15 feet from Main Street, 10 feet from the "entry feature", and no minimum setback to the adjacent property on the north.

e) Consistent with Policy 9-12 at least 20% of the gross area shall be set aside for common and public open space.

f) The maximum allowable density under the modified General Commercial designation shall be compatible with the density and character of surrounding land uses. (Policy 9-11). Additionally, the previous designations and the proposed appear to have relatively similar intensity of uses given the previous potential development of Public Facilities (i.e., City Hall, or Fire Station) on the site contrasted with the current proposal of limited commercial.”

These LUP policies help inform the aesthetics analysis for the environmental impact report (EIR), as well as for the Architectural Advisory Committee’s design review.

**Required Entitlements:**

The project will require the following planning entitlements/discretionary permits in conjunction with the certification of an EIR.

- Coastal Development Permit
- Architectural and Site/Design Review
- Tree Removal Permit
- Sign Permit

The Coastal Development Permit and Architectural and Site/Design Review will require Planning Commission review and may also be reviewed by the City Council. Due to the proximity of recognized wetlands bordering the property along Highway 1, the City’s decision on the Coastal Development Permit may be appealable to the Coastal Commission. Typically, the Tree Removal Permit process is handled by the Community Development Director, however, it will be a part of the Planning Commission’s overall review of project entitlements.

**DESIGN REVIEW:**

The Planning Commission reviewed prior versions of the project on October 28, 2016 and October 9, 2018. There was also a Scoping Session on March 27, 2018 regarding the Notice of Preparation for the EIR. Minutes from the October 28, 2016 and the October 9, 2018 Commission meetings are attached to this report (Attachments 3 and 4).

The Planning Commission and staff are requesting the Architectural Advisory Committee's initial review of the project as it is being evaluated in the EIR. The Committee's review will further inform the environmental review analysis, including consideration of approaches and alternatives in the siting, massing and architectural design of the project.

The Committee's review should focus on the following:

- Overall consistency with design guidelines/requirements in the PD land use designation
- Relationship to Main Street, the Southern Gateway, the wetlands along Highway 1 and neighboring properties
- Site plan
- Landscaping and pathways
- Mass, bulk, and height
- Architectural details

### **Site Plan**

Site Conditions: This is an approximately 5-acre site; wetlands present

Past Use: Open field agricultural

Current Use: Fallow land

Building Placement: The site plan is responsive to the 100-foot wetland buffer requirements of the City's Local Coastal Program. The wetlands are roughly parallel with Highway 1 along the west side of the site. In addition to wetlands restoration and enhancement, bicycle and pedestrian pathways are included on the west side of the site as a segment of the future Eastside Parallel Trail. Bike and pedestrian access is provided from Main Street as well. Primary auto access is proposed from Main Street across from the Coastal Repertory Theatre. Solar access is maintained for this property as well as for neighboring properties. The property's sustainability plan is reviewed later in this report.

Parking: 148 parking spaces are proposed where 146 spaces are required.

Preliminary Utilities and Services Plan: The applicant is developing civil plans and has preliminarily layouts for required utility meters, backflow prevention and other necessary equipment. Trash and recycling storage is proposed along the east side of the conference area, at the south end of the project.

Offsite Improvements: The Southern Gateway development by the City has been designed and reviewed by CalTrans. Construction is expected in 2020. A sidewalk is proposed along Main Street with rustic fencing and a mix of trees, shrubs and other plantings behind the walk.

## **Landscape**

Right-of-way: Existing New Zealand Christmas trees would be preserved along Main Street except where accommodating the main entrance driveway and the service driveway further to the south are proposed to be located.

Eastside Parallel Trail: A Class 1 multi-use path is proposed along the west side of the site from the southern project border all the way to Seymour Street at the north end. The multi-use path would be setback 25 feet from the wetland areas, 10 feet wide, and be construction with asphalt/concrete to ensure long-term durability. The walking path closer to the building would be constructed with decomposed granite or another ADA compatible material.

### Site:

*Town side* - Along Main Street, the plantings would be a mix of trees, shrubs including coastal native and drought tolerant noninvasive planting materials suitable for the area. The planting theme is proposed throughout the parking lot with some shrubs and trees planted near the buildings for accent.

*Wetlands Side* - Detailed landscape and restoration plans for this area will require oversight of a wetlands plant specialist. The the area would be cleared of non-native and invasive vegetation, while the wetlands along the east side of Highway 1 would be preserved and enhanced. The wetlands buffer area further east would include bio swales and retention of plants native to the area. Landscaping along the west side of the hotel is intended to help soften the building massing and would include informally planted coastal natives and other compatible species.

*Gateway* – the project proposes a destination area adjacent to the Southern Gateway, with trees, shrubs, and and an vegetable and herb garden to be used by the hotel. The gateway design is no longer a part of this project. The City included a gateway entry feature in the design plans for the new signal to be installed at Highway 1 and South Main Street. The City Council has previously directed staff to explore options for relocating the Half Moon sculpture to a new location where it can be better enjoyed.

Sustainability: Water conservation, durability and related items are discussed in the application materials. The applicant would have to follow the Building Code and other requirements for water conservation. One innovative feature includes a proposed greywater system to recycle used water into the landscape area.

Lighting: Dark skies compatibility and safety are addressed with energy efficient down-lighting (e.g. LED) in and around the buildings. This will be reviewed in the project EIR. The City needs to carefully look at building lighting, especially in the greenhouse/pool area.

Solar Access: Existing and future for site and adjacent properties. The project proposes a mix of two and three stories. It will not create shadows on neighboring properties and is planning to provide solar on some/all of the rooftops.

### **Architecture**

Neighborhood Context: There is a significant mix of uses in the area including Main Street, including an auto dealership and residential properties to the north, residential uses to the east along with the Reparatory Theatre and the Fire Department complex. Agricultural uses/open space exist to the southeast and south with open space to the west across Highway 1.

Building Envelope: The project proposes three story massing tapering to two stories at the southern end where the hotel entry and conference facilities are proposed.

Architectural Elements: The applicant and the project architect envision the hotel as a large modern farmhouse with an adjacent barn, farm buildings and greenhouses - the applicant's goal is to provide a variety of building forms mimicking the farmsteads of the coastal area. According to the architect the main hotel buildings form "The Farmhouse" component, with the lobby/public space/conference building at the southern end of the development housed what appears as a deconstructed "Barn" and "Farm outbuildings." The indoor swimming pool and fitness center are housed in the main "Greenhouse." The plan set provides further description of the architect's approach to the design.

An open post and rail fencing in natural wood and a primarily informal landscaping scheme is proposed. Agricultural references are also explored, especially around the "Barn" (conference rooms) with raised beds for herbs and vegetables to be used by the hotel food and beverage services.

Materials proposed include board and batten siding, metal roofs, plaster, glass, timber, stone and concrete. Farm buildings of the region inspire the color palette.

The City needs to consider potential impacts to scenic and ridgeline resources during the project review process. Prior Planning Commission and community review of previous design approaches provided feedback on the building aesthetics and impacts on ridgeline views.

*Bulk, Mass, and Height:* The L. C. Smith Planned Development LUP language states that "structures shall not exceed three stories (maximum 35 feet)." The Zoning Ordinance defines height as measured from existing grade. A previous design proposal for this project included a one and a two- building option, both 35 feet above existing grade. Evolving from that starting point, the project architect design team proposes to mitigate the visual dominance of the project by dividing the hotel into several discrete building of different

sizes and shapes: arranging the guestrooms into (2) three-story wings with the lobby/conference area in another smaller building. The indoor swimming pool is proposed in a separate glass structure. This potentially creates view corridors from both the neighboring residential development and Highway 1. All of the structures are proposed to be lower than 35 feet above existing grade with Building 1 a few feet lower (the building fronting Highway 1) to improve views of the ridgeline from the Highway.

To reduce the perceived height and bulk of the three-story wings, the number of guestrooms has been reduced on the 3rd floor since an earlier version of the proposal. This reduction allowed the rooms to be set within roof dormers and brought the eaves down to a two-story height.

The smaller “Barn” building (the lobby and meeting space) is located on the southern end of the site adjacent to Main St. It provides a transitional one and two-story massing, helping to better integrate the hotel into the neighborhood. The pool building is the smallest structure on the property and intends to both evoke greenhouse architecture and provide space between the three-story guestroom buildings.

*Facades and Roof Forms:* The building façades contain both recessing and projecting elements, and a variety of materials with both vertical and horizontal details, creating variation as an approach to reduce the perceived massing. A variety of roof forms have also been used to create more visual interest. The corners of the northern building (Bldg. 2) at Highway 1 and Main St. have been reduced since earlier versions of the project design were presented to the Planning Commission.

*Highway 1 Frontage and Gateway:* The new Half Moon Bay gateway design creates a strong visual buffer at the southern end of Main St. with berming and trees-. This helps to obscure some of the hotel massing from the south. The northern guestroom building proposes a visual buffer to the Ford dealership’s service building and parking lots. The 100 ft setbacks from the wetlands included in this design places the buildings much further east, and the wetlands and buffer area become an important feature along Highway 1.

*Community Input on Project Design:* Members of the community have expressed concern about the hotel’s appearance, especially with respect to the project’s overall bulk, mass and height of the project. Written comments received addressing the Architectural Advisory Committee’s design review session for this project are provided in Attachment 5. In response to community input, the applicant has been working on project alternatives which will be subject to review in the EIR. A conceptual “Reduced Height Alternative” is provided with the project plan sets. In this alternative, Building 1 would be reduced from three-stories to two resulting in a reduction of ten guest rooms. The Barn building would also be reduced in height. Staff is requesting the Architectural Advisory Committee’s input about these conceptual design changes.

Use Considerations: The proposed hotel would operate on a daily basis with peak business demand expected during the week and peak occupancy expected on and around weekends.

Sustainability Features: Several important sustainability concepts are included in the design that are equivalent to LEED classification standards.

*Photovoltaic (PV) System:* A glass panel or film PV system is proposed to be integrated into the standing seam metal roof on the southern exposures. The system will contain high efficiency solar cells while providing a consistent aesthetic for the roof.

*Greywater System:* The system will collect water in a large below grade tank from hotel sinks, showers, tubs and washing machines. The greywater will be filtered and disinfected and used to supply drip irrigation for the hotel landscaping.

*EV Chargers:* Four minim Level 2 EV charging stations are proposed for guest use. Additional underground conduit will be designed into the plan and made available for EV station expansion in the future.

*Glazing:* A high-performance energy-efficient glazing system will be used to cut energy consumption through heat loss and air leakage. This will also improve comfort and minimize condensation within the building.

*Lighting:* Protecting the environment and the night sky, and preventing glare is an important consideration for Half Moon Bay. Interior lighting will rely on LED down lighting rather than hanging fixtures. Exterior and landscaping LED lighting systems will be fully shielded, minimize blue lighting and feature adaptive controls so that they can be dimmed. Occupancy sensors will be incorporated in the parking areas where appropriate.

*HVAC:* The applicant is exploring incorporating a VRF Heating / Air Conditioning System into the hotel design. The applicant's architect indicates that VRF systems achieve extremely high energy efficiencies by modulating the flow of refrigerant according to the exact demands of individual areas, resulting in an average of up to 39% energy savings compared to conventional heating, cooling and ventilation (HVAC) systems.

Signage: Signage will be considered at a future time.

**NEXT STEPS:**

The next immediate steps in the City project review process include the following:

- Design: Review of Architectural Advisory Committee input to inform the EIR, project Alternatives, and design revisions; and
- Draft EIR: Completion and distribution of the revised project plan and the Draft EIR for public review. The public review of the project plans and the Draft EIR would be for a

minimum of 45 days. The proposed project and the Draft EIR would then be reviewed at a noticed Planning Commission hearing.

Additional review with the Architectural Advisory Committee is anticipated to occur concurrently with the process going forward. As dates are firmed up, staff will keep the Committee and community informed of each next step. Public comments submitted regarding the project design are provided in Attachment 5. Staff will relay any additional comment received to the Committee in advance of the session. Public comment will also be taken during the design review meeting on March 19, 2020.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Plan Set including Concept Reduced Height Alternative
2. Zoning and Municipal Code Design Requirements
3. Planning Commission Minutes October 28, 2016
4. Planning Commission Minutes October 9, 2018
5. Written Public Comments