



MEMORANDUM

Date: May 16, 2022	
To: Brian Froelich, AICP – Senior Planner	Organization: City of Capitola
From: RRM Design Group	Title: Design Review Team
Project Name: Capitola Hotel Design Peer Review	Project Number: 1783-02-CU21 (A.01)
Topic: 720 Hill Street – Boutique Hotel – Second Review	

Dear Brian,

We have reviewed the revised project design for 720 Hill Street based on the previously provided Design Recommendations Memo, dated August 26, 2021.

Revised project documents are dated April 5, 2022 and include Title Sheet, Overall Site Plan Sheet A100, Level 2 Site Plan Sheet A101, Level 1 Site Plan Sheet A102, Level 2 Site Plan Sheet A103, Ground Floor Plan Sheet A201, Level 2 Floor Plan Sheet A202, Level 3 Floor Plan A203, Roof Top Patio Plan Sheet A204, Roof Plan Sheet A205, Elevations A301, Elevations Sheet A302, Rendered Elevations Sheet A301R-A305, Color/Materials Board, Inspirational Images, Civil Site Plan Sheet C1.0-C1.1, Preliminary Grading Plan Sheet C2.0-2.2. Retaining Wall Profiles Sheet C2.3, Preliminary Drainage Plan Sheet C3.0 1 and 2, Preliminary Stormwater Control Plan Sheet C3.2, Preliminary Drainage Details Sheet C3.3, Preliminary Utility Plan Sheet C4.0, Preliminary Utility Plan Sheet C4.1, Preliminary Phase 1 Erosion and Sediment Control Plan Sheet C5.0, Preliminary Phase 2 Erosion and Sediment Control Plan Sheet C5.1-C5.2, Preliminary Erosion and Sediment Control Details Sheet C5.3, Existing Trees Sheet L-1.0, Planting Ground Level Sheet L-1.1, Plant Images Sheet L-1.2, Planting Roof Garden Sheet L-1.3, Planting Details and Notes Sheet L-1.4, Hardscape and Lighting Plan Sheet L-2.0, Elevations, Details, & Cut Sheets L-2.1, Site Amenity Cut Sheets L-2.2, Concrete Details and Layout Plans, Irrigation Ground Level & Roof Garden Sheet L-3.0, Irrigation Details Sheet L-3.1, and Hydrozone Map & Water Use Calculations Sheet L-3.2.

Revised project response documents also reviewed include GJ Architecture PLLC Response Letter dated April 6, 2022, and Gwen Jarick, AIA Response Letter dated April 4, 2022.

Previous Additional Information Needed

The following project information was previously requested to ensure adequate staff review going forward.

1. Conceptual Landscaping Plan
 - *The applicant has provided a conceptual landscaping plan to allow for staff review.*

Previous Design Recommendations

The following recommendations were previously made to ensure the project responded to the proposed “Modern” architectural style in a manner that was consistent with relevant Capitola Municipal Code design guidance and to enhance the overall project design.

Site Planning

1. Consider integrating screening at the roof top egress/stair tower and refine stair tower orientation to minimize potential privacy impacts on adjacent single-family residences (CMC 17.120.070.B).
 - *Applicant has sufficiently addressed the previous comment by relocating the stair tower further north, away from the adjacent single-family residences.*
2. Look for opportunities to introduce fast-growing, evergreen landscaping along the southern property line adjacent to the existing single-family residences to further enhance screening (CMC 17.120.070.F).
 - *Applicant has sufficiently addressed the previous comment by integrating a variety of fast-growing, larger, evergreen sized landscaping along the southern property line, as noted on Sheet L-1.1.*
3. Look for opportunities to incorporate unique paving, pedestrian lighting, enhanced landscaping, and/or other features to facilitate pedestrian access and enhance the overall project design (CMC 17.120.070.L).
 - *Applicant has sufficiently addressed the previous comment. Unique paving, lighting, and landscaping provided, as noted on Conceptual Landscape Plan sheets.*
4. Provide adequate signage to direct and inform guest traveling from the parking area, through the hotel, to the lobby area (CMC 17.120.070.L).
 - *Per Item #14 in GJ Architecture PLLC Response Letter dated April 6, 2022, signage will be added in strategic locations to direct guests accordingly. Applicant should continue to work with City staff in the design and placement of noted signage.*

5. Confirm design intent of outdoor patio area adjacent to internal dining/buffet area at ground level (CMC 17.120.070.O). Incorporate pedestrian elements to enhance ground level activity and guest experience.
 - *Applicant has addressed the previous comment. Small outdoor patio intended to serve lobby/breakfast area and includes planters, enhanced paving, and tables and seating, as shown on the Conceptual Landscape plans.*
6. Consider locating any required public art as part of the project proposal at the intersection corner of the Private Drive/Crossroads Loop to further enhance and provide attractive semi-public outdoor spaces (CMC 17.120.070.O).
 - *Comment still applies going forward. Applicant should work with City staff to determine public art approach for project. If practical, integration of art at north elevation at entry drive should be pursued, consistent with applicable City code requirements for public art.*

Architecture

7. Look for opportunities to introduce additional vertical elements into the project massing design (CMC 17.120.070.H). This could include expansion of projecting/recessed massing elements, enhanced massing at prominent areas such as the primary entry or building corners, among other possible design interventions.
 - *Applicant has sufficiently addressed the previous comment through minor modifications to the massing and additional refinement to roofline variation.*
8. Reduce blank wall areas through additional design interventions such as windows/doors, materials/colors, among other possibilities (CMC 17.120.070.H).
 - *Applicant has indicated that the primary blank wall concern, along the entry drive, may include a public art installation. If not practical, applicant should consider alternative design interventions, such as windows, material/color changes, among other possible design interventions.*
9. Enhance project articulation/detailing, consistent with architectural style direction, in order to foster greater visual interest and the coastal character and aesthetic within project design (CMC 17.120.070.J). This could include incorporation of additional trim, wood or composite wood accents, other materials/colors, architectural features, and/or other stylistic appropriate elements.
 - *Applicant has addressed the previous comment through integration of additional materials, colors, and detailing, including aluminum, decorative laser cut metal, among other accents.*

10. Look for opportunities to further enhance exterior staircase design, such as decorative paneling, rather than metal picket as shown (CMC 17.120.070.J). The applicant may also consider enclosing the exterior staircase, if appropriate.
 - *Applicant has appropriately addressed the previous comment by introducing custom laser cut metal guard rail, consistent with the design direction shown at the primary hotel entry.*
11. Provide additional roofline variation in order to break up the appearance of a continuous, unarticulated roof plane (CMC 17.120.070.J).
 - *Applicant has sufficiently addressed the previous comment by providing additional roofline variation at the north, south, east and west elevations.*
12. Integrate additional design interventions at the primary hotel entry (CMC 17.120.070.E), which could include awning/overhang, variation in window/door mullion systems, varying material/color, public art, among other possible design interventions.
 - *Applicant has addressed the previous comment by introducing a custom laser cut metal surround, enhanced materials and lighting at soffit of porte cochere, as well as enhanced paving design at entry drive. However, as shown on Sheet L-2.3, concrete colors noted for paving design at porte cochere appear overly bright and inconsistent with overall project design direction. Applicant should revise selected colors and/or material selection at porte cochere paving design to be in line with the direction of the project color/material palette – refer to Sheet A305 for more appropriate palette.*

In addition, applicant should provide additional emphasis at secondary entry located at East Elevation. While metal awning shown in previous design, additional design interventions should be pursued to provide emphasis at this entry location, consistent with the overall project design direction. This could include additional material/color variation, among other possible design interventions.
13. Consider integration of higher-end window system with casement and/or operable windows to further enhance the visual interest of the project (CMC 17.120.070.J).
 - *Applicant has addressed previous comment. Window Detail 4 provided on Sheet A301, noting operable window to 4-inches proposed within project design, consistent with relevant Building Code requirements.*
14. Revise A/C unit grill at individual room design to further enhance visual interest within the overall project (CMC 17.120.070.J).

- *Applicant has addressed the previous comment. Louvered a/c unit grill integrated into window design and consistent with window color/design, as noted on Window Detail 4 on Sheet A301.*
15. Ensure applied materials within project design terminate at an inside corner, rather than hap-hazardously in the middle of a flat wall plane (CMC 17.120.070.K).
- *Applicant has sufficiently addressed the previous comment, noting that all materials revised to have natural termination point, as shown on revised plan set.*
16. Consider expansion of resin panels at north and south elevations to provide enhanced visual interest of overall building design (CMC 17.120.070.K).
- *Applicant has sufficiently addressed the previous comment.*
17. Integrate wood and/or composite wood-like materials into the project design to further enhance the coastal village character of the project (CMC 17.120.070.K).
- *The applicant has appropriately integrated additional materials into the project design to further the coastal village character of the project. This includes custom laser cut and decorative metal screen materials, aluminum paneling, as well as wave inspired materials at primary entry soffit.*

Landscaping

18. Provide a conceptual landscape plan for the project to allow for adequate staff review.
- *The applicant has provided a conceptual landscaping plan to allow for staff review.*
19. Ensure landscape design for the project is appropriate to the coastal character and aesthetic of the site location, complements the design of the building, and enhances the surrounding area of the project site (CMC 17.120.070M). The conceptual landscape design should address the materials/colors aesthetic of the planters, outdoor dining furniture, signage, rooftop deck, bellhop desk, sidewalk experience, and other exterior elements to ensure consistency and coherency within the overall project design.
- *The applicant has addressed the previous comment. Conceptual landscape plans identify appropriate landscape planting selection, planters, outdoor furniture and other amenities that complement the design of the building.*
20. Look for opportunities to strategically place landscaping to soften the building transition at the ground plane.
- *The applicant has appropriately addressed the comment by refining the landscape design to provide landscaping along the building edge to aide in transitioning and softening the building at the ground plane.*

General Comments

21. Clarify any intended project features related to sustainability, such as on-site energy generation, passive solar design, enhanced energy efficiencies, water conservation measures, and/or other green building techniques for staff review (CMC 17.120.070.D).
 - *No clarifying information provided by applicant for staff review. Comment still applies going forward.*
22. Ensure all site and building light fixtures selected for the project are complementary of the architectural style (CMC 17.120.070.Q).
 - *The applicant has addressed the previous comment. Light fixtures are identified on Sheet L-2.0 and are considered consistent with the overall project design direction.*
23. Ensure all lighting fixtures are shielded and directed downward so as minimize spillover onto adjacent properties and minimize illumination of the night sky (CMC 17.120.070.Q).
 - *Per Sheet L-2.0, selected light fixtures are shown as shielded and to be directed downward, consistent with CMC 17.120.070.Q.*
24. Acknowledging utility provider setbacks from their facilities, the applicant should incorporate architectural enclosures, fencing, landscaping, and/or other design interventions to screen these areas from view (CMC 17.120.070.S).
 - *Per Sheet L-1.1, applicant has identified Cat's Claw Creeper vine at wall adjacent to transformer at internal drive. However, Detail 3 on Sheet L-1.4 notes vine to attach to wall. Applicant should verify that vine is able to attach and be maintained at retaining wall without assistance and that ultimate height of vine is sufficient to screen views of adjacent transformer at internal drive.*
25. Clarify if existing monument signage at the intersection corner of Crossroads Loop and Hill Street will remain and/or be revised as part of the project. If revised, design should be consistent with the new boutique hotel aesthetic given its immediate adjacency.
 - *Applicant has clarified that the existing monument signage will be removed and a directional sign will be placed appropriate for the existing hotel, under separate permit.*
26. Clarify elevation labels shown on Sheet A301, as they appear to be incorrect.
 - *Applicant has sufficiently addressed the previous comment.*

Overall, we feel the applicant has made significant strides in addressing the previous design recommendations. By addressing and refining the remaining comments, as noted above, we believe the project will be a welcomed addition to Capitola, while also being consistent with the City's desire for high quality new developments, consistent with the Capitola Municipal Code design direction.

Very truly yours,

RRM DESIGN GROUP