



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
COMMITTEE REPORT**

MEETING DATE: 02/26/2025

ITEM NO: 5

DATE: February 21, 2025
TO: Historic Preservation Committee
FROM: Joel Paulson, Community Development Director
SUBJECT: Requesting Approval for Modification of Planned Development Ordinance to Allow Modifications to Building E, an Architecture and Site Application for Exterior Modifications to an Existing Commercial Building in the University/Edelen Historic District, and a Conditional Permit for Formula Retail over 10,000 square feet and for a Restaurant with Alcohol Service on a Property Zoned C-2:LHP:PD. **Located at 31 University Avenue.** APN 529-02-044. Planned Development Modification PD-25-001, Architecture and Site Application S-25-004 and Conditional Use Permit U-25-001. Categorically Exempt Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15301: Existing Facilities. Property Owner: SRI Old Town, LLC. Applicant: Rick Nelson, MBH Architects. Project Planner: Erin Walters.

RECOMMENDATION:

Requesting approval for exterior modifications to an existing commercial building, Building E in the Old Town Los Gatos Shopping Center in the University/Edelen Historic District on property zoned C-2:LHP:PD, located at 31 University Avenue.

PROPERTY DETAILS:

1. Date primary structure was built: 1999
2. Town of Los Gatos Historic Status Code: R
3. Does property have an LHP Overlay? Yes
4. Is structure in a historic district? Yes, University Edelen District
5. If yes, is it a contributor? No
6. Findings required? No
7. Considerations required? Yes

BACKGROUND:

The subject building is located in the Old Town commercial center on the southwest corner of University Avenue and Elm Street. Planned Development Ordinance 2025 was approved in 1996

PREPARED BY: Erin M. Walters
Senior Planner

and provided for redevelopment of Old Town, including construction of several new buildings (Attachment 1). Amongst the new construction completed in 1999 was the subject building, referred to as Building E in the PD Ordinance. The Old Town commercial center remains in the University-Edelen Historic District and the newer buildings support the district, although are not included as Contributors to the district.

Included in PD Ordinance 2025 is a condition that required Building E to be designed so that it appears to be a collective of individual structures that abut each other with a roof design reflective of individual structures (Attachment 1, Condition 15). Once completed, Building E became the longtime home of a restaurant and several retail uses.

In January 2025, the applicant applied for modification of PD Ordinance 2025, an Architecture and Site application for exterior modifications to Building E, and a Conditional Use Permit for formula retail use exceeding 10,000 square feet and for a restaurant. The proposed exterior modifications are the subject of this report and the aspect of the project on which the Committee should focus.

DISCUSSION:

The applicant is proposing to modify the exterior of Building E to establish more cohesive architecture for the future single tenant of the building. The applicant provided a Letter of Justification discussing the proposed project in the context of the historic district (Attachment 2) and Development Plans providing details of the proposed exterior work (Attachment 3). Exterior modifications would be made to all four elevations and include:

- Roof alterations creating consistent and symmetrical massing;
- Changes to window and door shapes, integrating arched and rectangular fenestration;
- New fabric awnings and metal and glass canopy awnings;
- A new skylight; and
- New stucco siding.

A color and materials sheet showing the proposed finishes of the new exterior materials is included on A406 in the Development Plans included as Attachment 3.

CONCLUSION:

The applicant is seeking a recommendation from the Committee for exterior modifications to Building E. Should the Committee find merit in the request, the Committee should forward a recommendation of approval for the request to the Planning Commission. The application package would continue through the discretionary review process and would not return to the Committee.

CONSIDERATIONS:

A. Considerations Required with Recommendation

In evaluating applications, the deciding body shall consider the architectural style, design, arrangement, texture, materials and color, and any other pertinent factors. Applications shall not be granted unless:

_____ In historic districts, the proposed work will neither adversely affect the exterior architectural characteristics or other features of the property which is the subject of the application, nor adversely affect its relationship, in terms of harmony and appropriateness, with its surroundings, including neighboring structures, nor adversely affect the character, or the historical, architectural or aesthetic interest or value of the district.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Planned Development Ordinance 2025
2. Applicant's Request and Letter of Justification
3. Development Plans

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