

July 11, 2024

Mr. Ryan Safty
Community Development Department
Town of Los Gatos
110 E. Main Street
Los Gatos, CA 95031

RE: 143 + 151 East Main Street

Dear Ryan:

I reviewed the new drawings in the context of its immediate neighborhood. My comments and recommendations are as follows:

NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT

The site is located on East Main Street close to the Town Hall and Library. Other nearby uses are a mix of commercial, institutional and residential uses. Photographs of the site and surrounding context are shown on the following page.



6729 FAIRFIELD DRIVE
SANTA ROSA, CA 95409

TEL: (707) 843-5747
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Commercial Building immediately to the left



THE SITE



Church immediately across Church Street



High School immediately across High School Court



Hotel Los Gatos across East Main Street



Landscaped High School lawn immediately across High School Court



Nearby multifamily residential across East Main Street



Nearby commercial building on East Main Street



Nearby church across East Main Street



Nearby commercial building on East Main Street

PROPOSED PROJECT



PROPOSED FRONT ELEVATION



PROPOSED REAR ELEVATION



PROPOSED WEST SIDE ELEVATION



PROPOSED EAST SIDE ELEVATION



PROPOSED FRONT FACADE

PROPOSED REAR FACADE



ISSUES AND CONCERNS

The proposed building is much taller than the preponderance of structures in the site's immediate context, but the presence of the adjacent high school main building provides some height transition for a taller structure here. Overall the design is well done but there are a few refinements that I would recommend to enhance its compatibility with its neighbors.

The following are issues that staff may wish to discuss further with the applicant.

1. The design appears to draw on the traditional formality and details of the adjacent high school structure with its punched window openings in a solid wall facade and classic architectural details. However, the main facades of this proposed building are broken up into smaller segments with a strong vertical appearance which is at odds with the adjacent high school and other nearby buildings.



EAST MAIN STREET LOOKING NORTH

Broken up facade treatment appears out of character with the proposed formal architectural style



Nearby important structures are more formal and have less fragmented facades

2. The separation of the facades into elements that are less unified than in traditional architecture also tends to make the facade overly fragmented and more vertical in its appearance. This carries through with the two side elevations having a distinctly different appearance than the front and rear facades.
3. The verticality of the facades which draw attention to its substantial scale difference from its surrounding context is further emphasized by the four story light colored facade over the main building entry.

Vertical element seems to over emphasize building height which is greater than other nearby structures



wide concrete area different than on floor plan

Broken up facade treatment appears out of character with the proposed formal architectural style

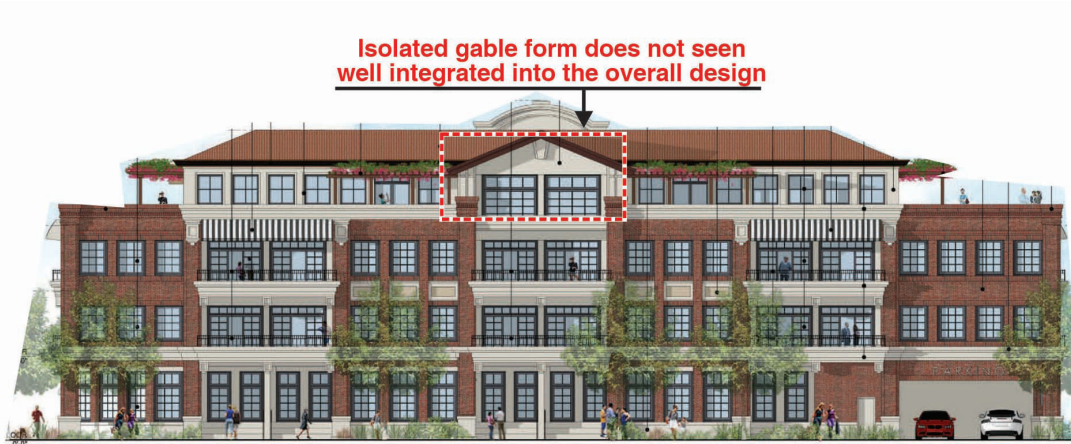


Both side facades appear very different from front and rear facades

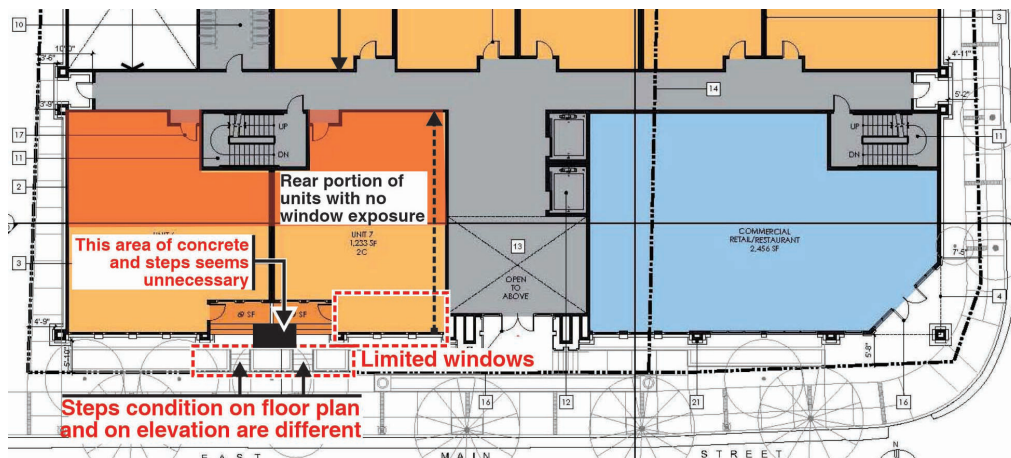


Both side facades appear very different from front and rear facades

4. The central gable roof on the rear facade is a form not found elsewhere on the building and seems out of place in the overall unity of the design.

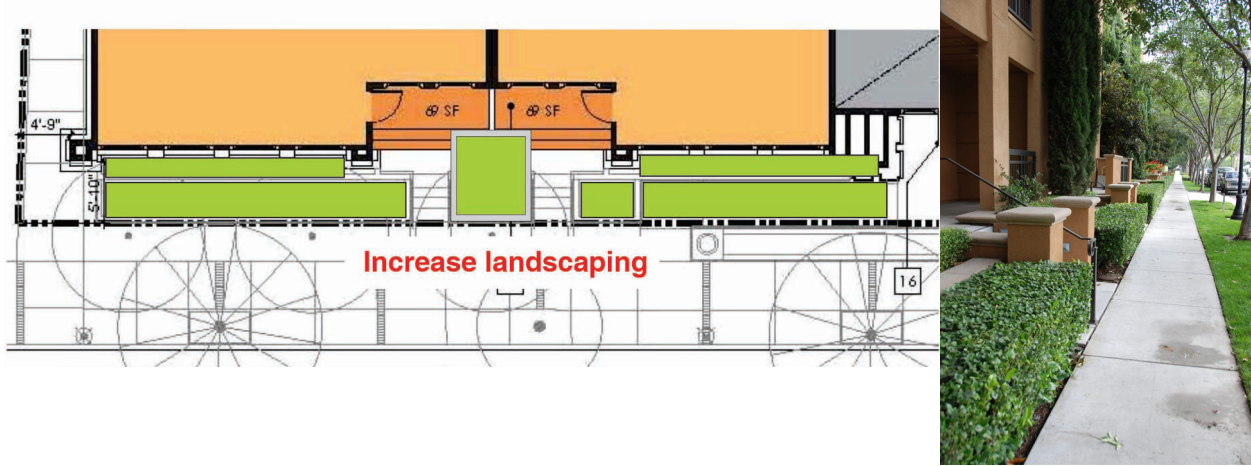


5. There is a small issue with the smaller residential unit entries facing the streets. The entries and stairs are shown graphically different on the floor plan and the elevations. The elevation shows a rather long stretch of concrete steps along the East Main Street sidewalk frontage. Given the reduced setback requested by the applicant along the frontage, it seems like an emphasis on more landscaping might be appropriate.
6. One issue of unit livability that might be an issue is the relatively deep units in some locations where some interior living spaces may be further away from a window than normally expected in high quality housing.

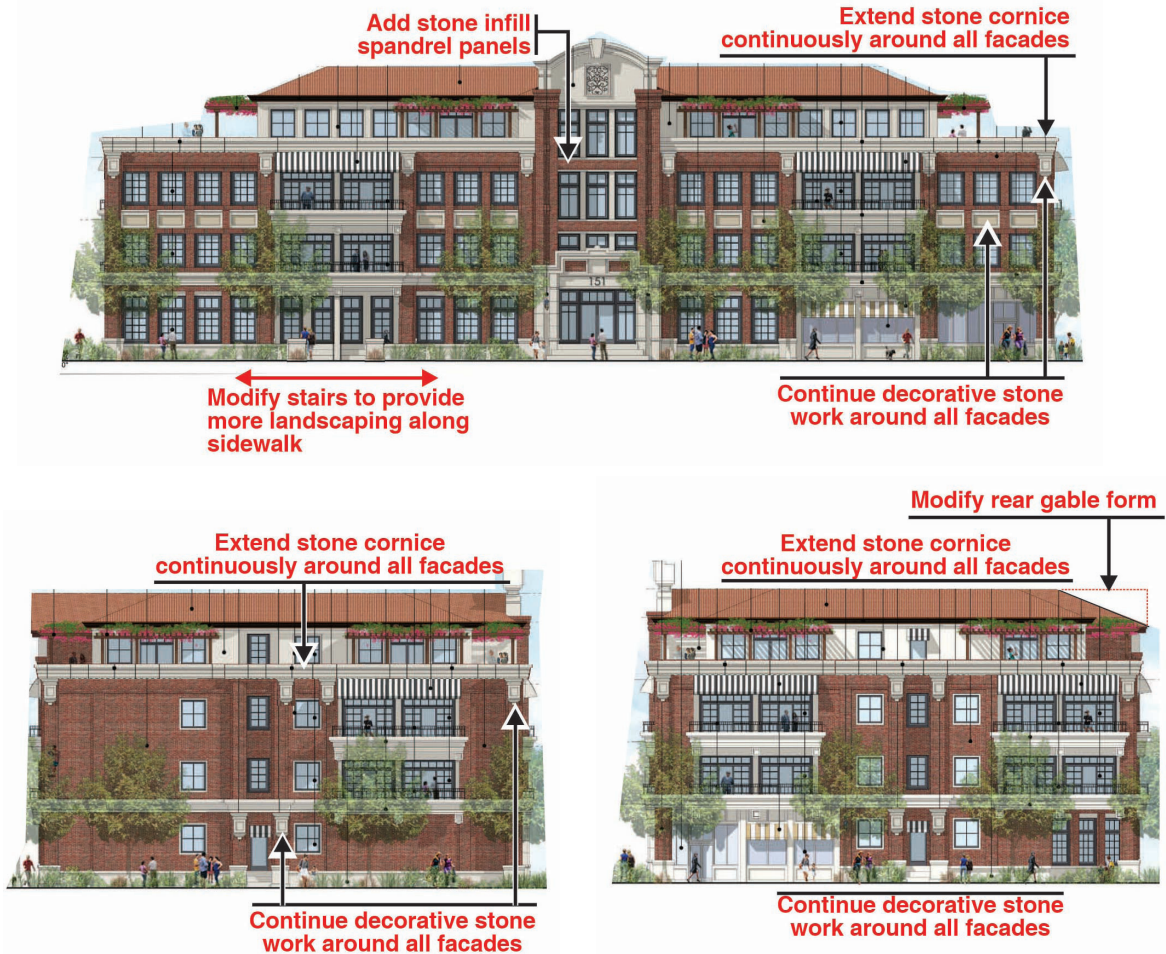


RECOMMENDATIONS

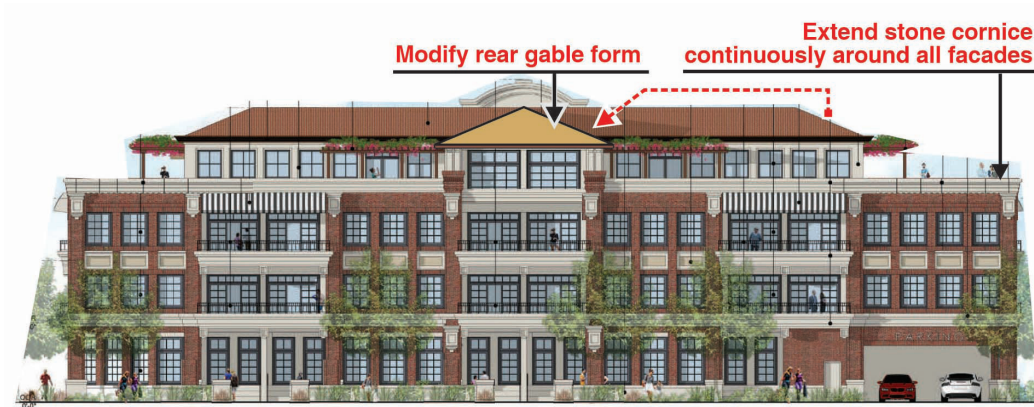
1. Maximize the amount of landscaping along the East Main Street frontage. One example of a similar patio entry along the sidewalk is shown in the photo below.



2. Extend the stone cornice and decorative stone work consistently around all sides of the building.
3. Add brick spandrel infill on the four story tall wall over the primary East Main Street entry to reduce its vertical emphasis.



4. Modify the gable roof form on the rear facade to blend in better with the overall building design.



Ryan, please let me know if you have any questions or if there are any issues that I did not address.

Sincerely,
CANNON DESIGN GROUP

Larry L. Cannon