



**STAFF REPORT
CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS**

**For the Architectural
Commission Meeting of
August 13, 2008**

TO: Architectural Commission

FROM: Michele McGrath, Senior Planner

SUBJECT: **9200 Wilshire Boulevard**
44-unit Residential/Commercial Mixed-Use Development
(PL 077 0715)

STATUS

Revised Plans have been submitted by Newman Garrison Gilmour + Partners on behalf of the property owner, HDS Group, for architectural review of a residential-commercial mixed-use project with 44 residential condominium units and approximately 19,000 square feet of ground floor commercial/retail space in a six-story building (60' high) with rooftop uses (up to 70' high) and subterranean parking on the vacant lot at **9200 Wilshire Boulevard**. The project was approved by the City Council in October, 2007.

The project was reviewed by the Architectural Commission at its May 14, 2008 meeting. The Commissioners expressed support for the tower element on the façade and concurred that the project was moving in the right direction although there was at least one request to see a model of the project and requests of the applicant to provide additional details of specific project elements and materials. Staff reviewed the proposed tower element and was able to make the finding that the tower is in conformance with the City Council approval of the project; as a result the building envelope remains unchanged from the design presented in May. In response to the other Commission requests, the applicant has provided plans that are more detailed and additional digital modeling of the project. The interior of the project has undergone a few changes that do not affect the building exterior except along the rear elevation adjacent to the alley. The previous landscape plan showed continuous landscaping along the alley; however, due to the need to provide substantial mechanical equipment in a location that can be easily accessed for service, large mechanical doors are now located at the rear of the building at the alley. Landscaping cannot be located in front of the doors. The Commission may wish to discuss whether there are any other design solutions that may provide the residents across the alley from the project some relief since this building has a smaller setback from the alley than fully commercial projects that meet the Zoning Code.

Other than the changes notes above, the project design is essentially the same as that reviewed in May and it is the applicant's hope that the additional details and modeling provided will give the Commission a better understanding of the project design.

ARCHITECTURAL CRITERIA

The discussion in the previous staff report accurately reviews the architectural criteria as they relate to this project (see previous staff report).

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the foregoing criteria and pending the information and conclusions that may result from testimony received during the Architectural Commission deliberations, staff recommends that the Architectural Commission review the information and materials provided, and, if the proposed changes are minimal, grant preliminary approval to the project with final plans to be returned to the Architectural Commission for approval.



Michele McGrath, Senior Planner



**STAFF REPORT
CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS**

**For the Architectural
Commission Meeting of
May 14, 2008**

TO: Architectural Commission

FROM: Michele McGrath, Senior Planner

SUBJECT: **9200 Wilshire Boulevard**
44-unit Residential/Commercial Mixed-Use Development
(PL 077 0715)

STATUS

Plans have been submitted by Newman Garrison Gilmour + Partners on behalf of the property owner, HDS Group, for architectural review of a residential-commercial mixed-use project with 44 residential condominium units and approximately 19,000 square feet of ground floor commercial/retail space in a six-story building (60' high) with rooftop uses (up to 70' high) and subterranean parking on the vacant lot at **9200 Wilshire Boulevard**. The project was approved by the City Council in October, 2007.

The project was previously owned by Legacy Partners which sold it to HDS Group. HDS Group is developing the project as approved by the City Council. The Architectural Commission was presented a preview of the Legacy Partners' proposed design in January 2007 and expressed concern that the design did not reflect its signature location in Beverly Hills. New owner HDS Group decided to redesign the building and hired Architects Newman Garrison Gilmore + Partners to prepare a new design to present to the Architectural Commission.

The new design was previewed at the Architectural Commission's January 9, 2008 meeting. The Commission indicated general approval with the direction of the project design but did not discuss the details of the design such as finish materials.

The subject site is located on the south side of Wilshire Boulevard between Maple Drive and Palm Drive. Wilshire Boulevard is zoned for commercial development and the multi-family residential area directly south of the subject site is zoned for the City's highest residential densities, with an allowed height of five (5) stories, fifty-five feet (55'). Wilshire Boulevard currently has a mix of older and newer commercial development with some buildings at heights above the current Code limit of three stories or 45 feet for commercial development. Parking will be provided in a four-level subterranean garage with access from Maple Drive for self-parking residents and access from Palm Drive for commercial patrons and valet parking, including residents. Truck loading areas are provided on Palm Drive.

The project reflects City Council recommendations that the upper floors should be set back and the building shifted west so there would be a greater setback along Palm Drive to accommodate additional landscaping thereby minimizing the impact of the loading areas on Palm Drive.

Code Compliance

The project is designed in compliance with the City Council approvals except for the tower element directly west of the entrance canopy (represented on the plans as a six-story space with an outdoor area on top). The new design includes greater front setbacks and modulation than the previous design seen by the City Council and the new architects hoped to create architectural interest by designing one element of the façade to extend to the 60-foot maximum height limit. However, the City Council emphasized the importance of minimizing the appearance of height and requested the sixth floor of the building be set back at least 9'-6" from the front property line. As a result, this tower element must be revised to meet the City Council's setback requirement. The applicant will present a revision to this element at the meeting.

The following describes the proposed project design elements:

PROJECT ELEMENTS

The project is a six-story building with a two-story ground floor commercial-retail area and four floors of residential units. The plans currently show a gym and club facilities for the residents on the sixth floor as well as the roof although the applicant is still considering an all-residential sixth floor with common recreational facilities on the roof only. The required useable open space is on the roof along with rooftop mechanical elements. There is a public pedestrian entrance to the building on Wilshire Boulevard with setbacks that provide an opportunity for outdoor dining. There are also pedestrian entrances and exits on either side of the building to allow residents convenient pedestrian access to the building. The residential lobby is along Palm Drive. Retail patrons and those drivers using valet will enter the garage on Palm Drive adjacent to the alley and residents will enter on Maple Drive, also adjacent to the alley.

The project includes the following elements:

❖ *Building Modulation*

The building has been designed so as to appear as several buildings with different but complimentary designs in three sections: east, center and west facades. The east and center facades could appear as separate buildings and the western section is further articulated as three separate buildings. The maximum building height and minimum building setbacks and modulation are set out in the project approval and mixed-use zone regulations (BHMC 10-3-19.9, the M-PD-4 Zone) but there is some flexibility as set out below.

Maximum 60-foot height limit (to 70 feet for allowed rooftop elements such as gym, restrooms)

Approximately 49 feet above grade (6th floor) the building should be set back from 9'-6" to 27'-6" from the front property line

Rear setback of 5'-8" to allow for substantial landscaping along the rear

Minimum three-foot setback at Maple Drive and nine-foot setback at Palm Drive to widen Palm Drive by 5-feet to allow truck maneuvers and additional landscaping around the loading docks to approve their appearance (commercial buildings along Wilshire are not usually required to have setbacks)

The project is intended to provide pedestrian-friendly amenities along the street level including retail/commercial uses and setbacks that are generally consistent with other development along Wilshire Boulevard as well as setbacks along Maple Drive and Palm Drive that are more generous than typically provided for a commercial development to allow for more landscaping in keeping with the largely residential uses of the building.

It is noted that all dwelling units must be constructed with double glazed glass windows.

❖ ***Materials and Finishes***

The design includes a variety of materials and finishes to evoke a variety of styles all in a contemporary idiom with the main elements consisting of glass in different shades (pale green, smoky grey, ice blue and clear glazing), stone finishes in lighter earth tones (split face travertine in soft ivory, gold sandstone veneer), light sand finish stucco in almond and metal elements including a copper entrance canopy powder coat painted decorative metal and steel metal screen railings in a polish finish.

Center Building Section

The center of the building would be defined by a curved metal entry canopy in a copper color with a brush finish that defines the building's main entrance. Palm trees planted at grade would grow through openings in the canopy. Above the canopy would be a section composed of solar control glazing in a pale green color broken up by vertical elements finished in a split face travertine in a soft ivory color; below would be clear glazing typical of storefronts with flexible signage opportunities above the storefronts, depending on the ultimate number of tenants. This section of the building would be set back a minimum of 21 feet from the property line at the first and second floors with the upper floors set back substantially and curved away from Wilshire to cause the upper floors to recede from the street. The rooftop amenities would be directly above and both the sixth floor and rooftop facilities facades would consist largely of glass framed by split face travertine in a soft ivory color, matching the vertical elements directly below.

East Building Section

The east building section along Palm Drive is an integrated piece, located close to the Wilshire property line and defined by horizontal strips of smoky grey glazing with balconies at the corners, storefront glazing at the first and second floors and a recessed terrace at the sixth floor, overhung by a decorative steel metal awning in a brush finish.

West Building Section

The west building section would be set back a minimum of 19 feet from the property line with the intention that outdoor dining would occur in this location. This section of the building is divided into three distinct vertical elements, appearing as separate buildings, with different glazing colors and finishes. It is this section where the tower element nearest the center would need to be reduced in height or set back further from the property line to meet the City Council's approval requirements. The applicant will provide information about intended outdoor furniture at the meeting for Commission input.

The applicant will be providing a complete presentation of the materials, with several boards and many samples, at the meeting.

❖ **Sign Program**

The applicant has proposed signage locations for the ground floor tenant spaces above the clear glazing along Wilshire Boulevard. No signs, other than parking signs, are proposed along Palm Drive or Maple Drive and no building identification sign is proposed at this time.

❖ **Landscaping**

Landscaping along Wilshire would be more spare and sculptural including three palm trees in the center at the entrance (the Wilshire street tree is also a palm tree) that would grow through openings in the front entrance canopy, planter boxes containing shrubs to define the proposed outdoor dining area and additional potted shrubs along the eastern façade of the building. The front corners would be delineated by a sycamore street tree on the west side and new small trees on the east side along Palm Drive where the building has the additional setback to provide more landscaping. The applicant was informed that additional landscaping should be provided on the Palm Drive elevation and additional information will be presented at the meeting. The Maple Drive elevation would include a variety of shrubs and small trees. New paving would be introduced on the applicant's property along Wilshire Boulevard and Palm Drive to indicate entrances. Staff is reviewing with the Public Works Department the use of special paving in the public right-of-way (sidewalk). The rear elevation is proposed to have extensive landscaping facing the multi-family residential area south of the project site including palm trees and extensive shrubbery to create a green wall.

ARCHITECTURAL CRITERIA

With regard to any architectural elements reviewed in conjunction with the above, pursuant to Municipal Code Section 10-3.3010 the Architectural Commission may concurrently or separately approve, approve with conditions, or disapprove the issuance of a building permit in any matter subject to its jurisdiction after consideration of the following criteria:

(a) The plan for the proposed building or structure is in conformity with the good taste and good design and in general contributes the image of Beverly Hills as a place of beauty, spaciousness, balance, taste, fitness, broad vistas and high quality.

The building design grows out of the philosophy that the large site should be broken up by creating one building that feels like several smaller buildings along the lines of the Two Rodeo project in Beverly Hills; however, in this case, the various designs incorporated in the building are more contemporary. This results in a number of different shapes, colors and materials on the façade and the Commission may wish to discuss whether this successfully achieves the design goal or whether some of the materials and colors should be more consistent. Other than that, the building appears to be of a thoughtful design and exhibits high quality materials so as to contribute to the image of Beverly Hills as a place of beauty, spaciousness, balance, taste, fitness, broad vistas and high quality.

(b) The plan for the proposed building or structure indicates the manner in which the structure is reasonably protected against external and internal noise, vibrations, and other factors which may tend to make the environment less desirable.

The proposed building is in conformance with the City's code requirements regarding external and internal noise, vibrations, and other factors and the City Council required double glazed windows for all dwelling units due to the building's location along the Wilshire Boulevard commercial corridor. The building is reasonably protected against external and internal noise, vibrations and other factors which may tend to make the environment less desirable.

(c) The proposed building is not in its exterior design and appearance of inferior quality such as to cause the nature of the local environment to materially depreciate in appearance and value.

As stated previously, the applicant will be providing additional information about the materials and landscaping; however, based on the information provided, the proposed new building appears to be of good quality and execution and it is not anticipated that the building would cause the nature of the local environment to materially depreciate in appearance and value.

(d) The proposed building or structure is in harmony with the proposed developments in the General area, with the General Plan for Beverly Hills, and with any precise plans adopted pursuant to the General Plan.

This is a proposal to construct a new residential/commercial mixed-use project. The subject property is currently adjacent to commercial properties and backs-up to multi-family residential properties. All construction and final build-out, either in height or density has been conditioned under a previous approval to be in substantial conformance with the City's Municipal Code. As approved by the City Council, the project is consistent with the prevailing uses and development in the area, the General Plan and with any precise plans adopted pursuant to the General Plan.

(e) The proposed building or structure is in conformity with the standards of this Code and other applicable laws insofar as the location and appearance of the buildings and structures are involved.

Subject to review of the final construction documents, and with the condition that the aforementioned tower element on the façade must be revised, the proposed new building is in conformity with the standards of the Municipal Code and other applicable laws insofar as the location and appearance of the buildings and structures are involved.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the foregoing criteria and pending the information and conclusions that may result from testimony received during the Architectural Commission deliberations, staff recommends that the Architectural Commission review the information and materials provided, and, if the proposed changes are minimal, grant preliminary approval to the project with final plans to be returned to the Architectural Commission for approval.


Michele McGrath, Senior Planner