

## STAFF REPORT

**TO:** Design Commission  
**FROM:** Richard J. Bruckner, Director of Planning and Development  
**SUBJECT:** Application for Advisory Design Review of Changes to an Approved Project  
3051 East Foothill Boulevard  
Pasadena Ice Skating Center  
PLN2008-00359 Council District No. 3  
**DATE:** Meeting of August 11, 2008

---

### RECOMMENDATION

The staff recommends that the Commission:

#### Environmental Determination

Find that the **Mitigated Negative Declaration** adopted on July 5, 2006, by the Zoning Hearing Officer applies to this action.

#### Findings for Compliance with the Tree Protection Ordinance

**Acknowledge** that there are no protected landmark, native, or specimen trees proposed for removal from the site.

#### Findings for Approval of Changes to an Approved Project

1. Find that the **modified design** is consistent with the Citywide Design Principles in the General Plan.
2. Find that there are **changed circumstances** (i.e., direction from the City Council to redesign the project in response to construction bids that significantly exceed the approved budget) that justify the application for changes to the project.
3. Based on these findings, recommend **approval** of the revised design to the City Council, as submitted.

#### **BACKGROUND:**

On January 8, 2007, the Design Commission provided advisory comments (Attachment D) on an application for advisory concept design review of new construction of a two-story, 60,000 square-foot ice-skating facility at 3051 E. Foothill Boulevard. On March 12, 2007, the Commission reviewed the Final Design and submitted eight additional comments (also in Attachment D). In December, 2007, the City sent construction documents out for bid. The bids were more than the engineer's estimate and the available budget, and City Council rejected all bids on March 10, 2008, with the directive to staff and the architect to redesign the project to reduce the cost.

Revised plans for the redesigned project are still subject to design review by the Commission. According to PMC §17.10.030 (E), however, this review is "grandfathered" under the rules in place when the project was first considered in 2007 instead of the new procedures now in place for design review of public projects. The Commission's role, therefore, is to review the design and forward recommendations to the City Council.

#### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Major changes to the exterior elevations are shown in Attachments A and B (current redesign) in comparison with Attachment C (elevations submitted to the Design Commission for Final Design Review in March, 2007). Attachment A also shows the comparison between the elevations submitted for construction bids and the current redesign. Significant changes

are the use of Polygal (a translucent multi-wall glazing) in six vertical bays and adding two curtain wall bays on the main elevation, simplification of the design on the side and rear elevations, bringing the greenscreens down to planters at ground level, and streamlining the entry tower.

## **DESIGN ANALYSIS**

### **Site Design**

The building and its parking lot are in the same location as in the previous designs. The building is oriented parallel to the Eaton Wash and the Southern California Edison electric towers, with the main entrance facing east. The proposed building will be approximately 500 feet long and 116 feet wide. The building is set back from both the E. Orange Grove Boulevard and the E. Foothill Boulevard street frontages by several hundred feet and is only visible at a distance from these streets.

### **Massing and Height**

The overall height, the flat roof and the basic rectangular form have not changed. However, the new design proposes that the main glazing features be vertical elements rather than the previous horizontal clerestory windows. The rectangular (almost square) canted elements that break up the façade are now translucent windows; originally (in the Concept Design) they were canted metal boxes projecting from the building with glazing. These elements, among others on the building, achieve the Citywide design guideline that promotes *“buildings that are inviting and sustain interest.”*

The revised elevation drawings show how the floors are at three levels to follow the grade of the property (as recommended by the Commission at the Concept Design review). The north and south elevations have been redesigned to be nearly identical forms dominated by glazed openings surrounded by a stucco canopy. External exit stairs have been added to the north and south side.

### **Fenestration**

There are three main types of glazing. The storefront system at the main entry on the east elevation has four vertical curtain walls that are double the previous size. The double-glazed vision glass windows have clear anodized aluminum framing. Six projecting boxes on each side of the entry are enclosed in Polygal, a solar-grade polycarbonate multi-wall system mostly used for glazing in sports arenas and in industrial and agricultural buildings. These panels are set within clear anodized aluminum framing. A significant function of the glazing on the east elevation is to break up the overall horizontality of the building.

The north and south elevations each have a single large window opening with a storefront system. On the south elevation the glazing is Polygal, which will reduce the heat that enters the rink areas, in part in response to a Commission recommendation to reduce heat gain.

### **Exterior Surfaces and Colors**

On the main elevation, the primary wall is black smooth--face concrete block (8 x 8 x 16). Attached to the block walls are vertical “Greenscreen” trellises mounted between the projecting Polygal window boxes on the primary (east) elevation. The area below the Polygal boxes is highlighted with a different concrete block material (split-face) and a band of random groupings of glass block. On the other elevations, the smooth block is predominant.

The rear (west) elevation, which is not visible from any prominent locations, has been simplified by deleting a previous horizontal smooth stucco band at the top of the building. This elevation is largely a blank wall with slight modulation, with the exception of a metal

mechanical equipment screen. However, significant existing and new landscaping behind the building will mitigate the appearance.

On the north and south elevations, the single large window openings (Polygal on the south side and clear double-glazing on the north) are surrounded by projecting elements clad in smooth-troweled stucco (brick color) and Polygal. Smooth stucco (painted in a brick accent color) is also used on the tower, and egg-shell painted stucco is used on the sign feature at the main entry. A stainless-steel and glass canopy overhang is located at the door north of the main entry to highlight the entry to spectator events.

### **Design Details**

The use of details such as planters in front of the building, the random placement of glass blocks under the canted Polygal projections, and greenscreens with a design that abstractly spells "Pasadena Ice Rink" by leaving out certain panels in the greenscreens. These features all contribute to giving the building a *"human scale' design"* and *"add interest and variety to the surroundings."*

### **Landscaping**

The landscaping palette is consistent with option A (the native plant palette) of the Final Design submittal and meets the design guideline of *"promot[ing] environmental sustainability."* Sheet LP1.1 of the landscape plans depicts groundcovers and trees to be planted throughout the parking area, including 36-inch box Chinese flame trees throughout the parking lot and coast live oaks along the western property line (near the wash). Twenty-four-inch box Australian willows are in planter islands at every fifth parking space. Sheet LP1.2 details other plantings (e.g., shrubs), including pyrocanthus, ceocanthus, and raphiolepis along the western property line as a headlight buffer for the rear yards of the residential lots across the wash. .

The "green screen" features along the east elevation have been lowered closer to the ground than the previous proposal, as was suggested by the Commission. Sheet LP1.2 details the planting of five-gallon violet trumpet vines in raised planters along the base of the building.

A substantial number of existing trees in Eaton Canyon Wash as well as new 36" box oaks will block views of the building and glare from residences to the west.

### **Exterior Building and Parking Lot Lighting**

Parking lot lighting is unchanged from Final Design: shielded rectangular aluminum light. A catalog cut-sheet of the fixture is shown in Attachment E. No light fixtures are shown on the building itself.

### **Signage**

The building has a large non-illuminated sign signifying "Pasadena Ice." This sign is integrated within the entry element on the east elevation. It is comprised of nine-foot high perforated stainless-steel letters bolted to the support structure. A mezzanine-level vision glass window wall is located directly behind the sign. The Conditional Use Permit includes a condition requiring a Master Sign Plan for all signage.

### **CONCLUSION:**

The proposal clearly satisfies the City's overarching Objectives from the Citywide Design Guidelines. It has *"enduring quality"* and will *"make a positive contribution to the City and its surroundings."* Even though the purpose of the redesign is to reduce the cost of construction, the architects successfully responded to several recommendations from the

Commission and included these changes in the current design of the project: reducing the heat gain from the south elevation glazing, restudying the east entry element, enclosing spectator seating, connecting the green screen to the ground, adding trees at the rear of the building, and enhancing the screening at the perimeters of the parking lot to minimize lights spillage to neighboring properties).

Respectfully submitted,

\_\_\_\_\_  
Richard J. Bruckner,  
Director of Planning and Development

Prepared by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Darrell Cozen, Senior Planner

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jason Wasmund, Assistant Planner

Reviewed by:

Reviewed by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jeff Cronin, Principal Planner

\_\_\_\_\_  
John R. Poindexter,  
Planning Manager

Attachments:

- A. Rendered Elevations with revised site plan and elevations, including old scheme submitted for bids
- B. Progress Documents for new design (plans, elevations, sections, landscape, etc.)
- C. Elevations from Final Design submittal
- D. Advisory comments by Commission
- E. Landscape materials

W:\Design-hp\Staff Reports\2008 Staff Reports\Advisory\Foothill\_E3051\_081108-chgs\_sr.doc