



**Meeting Date:** September 18, 2019

**File No.(s):** PLN2019-13745

**Location:** **2175 Martin Avenue**, a 1.68 acre site located on the north and east of Martin Avenue, approximately 775 feet west of Scott Boulevard; APN: 224-10-115; property is zoned Light Industrial (ML).

**Applicant:** Scott Rynders, LVP Martin Avenue Associates

**Owner:** LVP Martin Avenue Associates

**Request:** Adoption of a **Mitigated Negative Declaration; Architectural Review** Architectural Review to allow construction of a new approximately 80,000 square foot 3-story (69'-9" high) data center building. The project includes demolition of the existing 31,500 square foot one-story office/warehouse building.

**CEQA Determination:** IS/MND

**Project Planner:** Nimisha Agrawal, Assistant Planner I

**Staff Recommendation:** **Approve**, subject to conditions

**Project Data**

<b>Lot Size:</b> 1.68 acre	73,386 sf			
	<b>Existing Floor Area (sq.ft.)</b>	<b>Demolish (sq.ft.)</b>	<b>Addition (sq.ft.)</b>	<b>Proposed Floor Area (sq.ft.)</b>
<b>Gross Floor Area</b>	31,500	31,500	79,356	79,356
<b>Lot Coverage</b>	31,500/73,386 = 42.9 %			26,452/73,386 = 36 %
<b>F.A.R.</b>	.4			1.08
<b>Parking</b>	80 spaces			20 spaces

**Points for consideration for the Architectural Committee**

**Mitigated Negative Declaration**

- The project proposes to demolish an existing one-story office/warehouse building and associated surface parking, and constructs a new three-story, approximately 80,000 square foot datacenter building and a paved surface parking lot.
- A Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) has been prepared for the project in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The MND and Notice of Availability were posted on the City's website at [www.santaclaraca.gov/ceqa](http://www.santaclaraca.gov/ceqa) and circulated for 20-day review on August 6, 2019 and closed on August 26, 2019, in accordance with CEQA requirements.
- The MND identified potentially significant quality, cultural resources, tribal resources, biological resources, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous material, and noise impacts with project development that with implementation of mitigation measures identified in the MND and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) would reduce the potentially significant impacts to less than significant.
- The Planning Division received agency and public comment letters in response to the MND from the Valley Water, VTA, Adams Broadwell Joseph & Mr. Suds Jain. Responses to comments received on the MND are being prepared at the time of preparation of this report and will be posted on the City's website and available for the Committee's review before the meeting.
- The Architectural Committee will need to make the determination that the project will not have a significant effect on the environment, that mitigation measures will be made a condition of the

approval of the project and adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting proposed for this project.

### Building Design

- The project site is currently designated Low Intensity Office/R&D in the City of Santa Clara 2010-2035 General Plan (General Plan) and is zoned Light Industrial (ML). The proposed use is consistent with the General Plan and zoning designations for the property.
- The proposed FAR for the project is 1.08, exceeding the base FAR of 1.0 set by the City of Santa Clara General Plan. However, it is within the 20 percent FAR increase allowance for data centers per the General Plan Discretionary Policy 5.5.1-P9.
- The height of the proposed building is approximately 70 feet, which is higher than the surrounding low to mid-rise structures. However, it is within the 70 foot maximum permissible height in the Light Industrial (ML) zone.
- The façades, the design, and materials for the proposed building consist primarily of articulated precast concrete panels with painted surfaces and includes use of decorative metal louvers.
- Screening of ground mounted and rooftop equipment with metal louvers from view along the public right-of-way are integrated into the site and building design. Rooftop structures would be concealed from view by an approximately 10-foot-high perforated metal screen along the rooftop perimeter.
- Three dumpsters for the collection of recyclable and waste material generated by the project is located within the proposed loading dock on the western portion of the site. The loading docks are screened from the public view by a precast concrete wall that is integrated into the building design.
- The project provides pedestrian connections to neighboring development with the construction of a complete street section (5' landscape strip and 5' sidewalk) along the project frontage.

### Parking

- A total of 20 on-site parking spaces will be provided along the northern sides of the building, consistent with the 1:4,000 parking requirement for data center uses in the zoning code.
- 10 Class I bicycle spaces and 4 Class II bicycle spaces are provided onsite.

### Trees and Landscaping

- Construction of the proposed data center and parking lot would require removal of 12 of the 20 non-protected species trees on-site;
- There are three Coastal redwood trees (*Sequoia sempervirens*) onsite and two on an adjacent parcel of the site that would remain in place.
- 15 new trees (evergreen magnolia trees) would be planted around the perimeter of the project site. In addition, shrubs and ground cover would be planted throughout the project site.
- Final tree removal and landscape plans, including potential off-site replacement, would be subject to review and approval by the Community Development Department with consultation with the City Arborist.

### Community Outreach

- A notice of development was posted on the property at least 10 days prior to the scheduled public hearing.
- The notice of public hearing for this item was posted within 300 feet of the site and was mailed to property owners within 500 feet of the project site.
- Two comments were received from Laborers International Union of North America in response to the Initial Study/proposed MND. One comment requested notices of CEQA actions and public hearings. The second comment suggests that the project may have significant environmental impacts and

should require an Environment Impact Report. The City acknowledges the receipt of the comments and has provided responses (attached).

- The City had received a call from the business across the street – Fujifilm Open Innovative Hub expressing concern about the noise from the project that may impact the sensitive equipment they use for their business. Applicant met with them to address their concerns and these have been addressed through the noise study for the proposed project and through the mitigation measures in the Mitigated Negative Declaration.

## **Findings**

- 1) *That any off-street parking area, screening strips and other facilitates and improvements necessary to secure the purpose and intent of this title and the general plan of the City are a part of the proposed development, in that;*
  - The development provides 20 on-site parking spaces consistent with the 1:4,000 parking requirement for data center uses SCCC 18.74.040 (d)(2) – Data Centers.
  - The project includes off-site public improvements along the public right of-way fronting the project site and on-site landscape improvements in the parking areas. A five-foot clear landscape strip adjacent to the curb with a five-foot sidewalk behind are proposed to link adjacent properties and provide pedestrian access to the site consistent with complete streets design. The project also includes landscaping within the front building setback and parking areas in conformance with the development standards for the ML zoning district. At grade outdoor equipment would be screened from the public right-of-way behind the proposed building and adjacent building on the property to the north. Roof mounted equipment would be screened from view along the public-right-way by high perforated metal screen along the rooftop perimeter.
- 2) *That the design and location of the proposed development and its relation to neighboring developments and traffic is such that it will not impair the desirability of investment or occupation in the neighborhood, will not unreasonably interfere with the use and enjoyment of neighboring developments, and will not create traffic congestion or hazard, in that;*
  - The development is generally consistent with the City's Design Guidelines. Exterior building materials would include articulated precast concrete panels with painted surfaces with use of decorative metal louvers for screening. Mechanical screen and equipment screens will be provided at the rooftop perimeter.
  - The project invests in the site improvements that will enhance the streetscape and increase property values by replacing derelict buildings, asphalt surface parking areas, and minimal landscaping on-the site and provide a catalyst for future investment for enhancement and development opportunities in the project area.
  - The project site is located within the ML zoning district. Data centers generate few employees and relatively infrequent delivery of materials; consequently, the Project is not anticipated to produce many vehicle trips. Moreover, a data center is a permitted use within the ML zoning district.
  - Sufficient parking is provided to accommodate employee parking demands on-site and prevent spillover parking onto the public right-of-way. Vehicle ingress and egress would be provided by two new gated driveways along Martin Avenue, located along the western perimeter and the southern perimeter of the project site enable efficient traffic flow along the street and site circulation on the property.

- 3) *That the design and location of the proposed development is such that it is in keeping with the character of the neighborhood and is such as not to be detrimental to the harmonious development contemplated by this title and the general plan of the City, in that;*
- The project site is developed with a single-story building that is currently vacant; it was previously used for industrial warehousing, manufacturing, and office purposes. The proposed development is a 2-3 stories higher than the surrounding low to mid-rise structures, but consistent to the adjacent industrial uses.
  - The proposal is to redevelop and improve the project site with construction of a three-story, approx. 80,000 square foot data center with a strong, contemporary urban design that would improve the visual character of the zone. The project would include ancillary equipment (backup generators and above ground fuel storage tanks), loading dock, circulation and parking, and landscape improvements in conformance with the ML zoning district development standards and consistent with the development of data centers throughout the City.
  - The project provides setback and landscaping along the street frontage consistent with surrounding properties.
- 4) *That the granting of such approval will not, under the circumstances of the particular case, materially affect adversely the health, comfort or general welfare of persons residing or working in the neighborhood of said development, and will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injuries to property or improvements in said neighborhood, in that;*
- The project is generally consistent with adjacent industrial and commercial development in terms of visual character and quality.
  - The data center use and associated parking are self-contained within the limits of the property. There are no residential developments immediately adjacent that would be impacted with privacy concerns.
  - The project site is currently vacant and is an attractive nuisance for graffiti, trespassing, and dumping of materials. The proposal is to invest in the redevelopment of the site and improve the property with construction of a data center and associated improvements, that includes on-site security and gated entries. The project includes conditions of approval and would be subject to the City Code and the mitigation measures set forth in the Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program with project development to minimize impacts of development on neighboring properties.
- 5) *That the proposed development, as set forth in the plans and drawings, are consistent with the set of more detailed policies and criteria for architectural review as approved and updated from time to time by the City Council, which set shall be maintained in the planning division office. The policies and criteria so approved shall be fully effective and operative to the same extent as if written into and made a part of this title, in that;*
- The development is a modern data center facility that is allowed in the ML Zoning District. The proposed development provides for an aesthetically attractive building, and ample employee parking.
  - The project supports high quality design in keeping with adopted design guidelines for industrial development and the City's architectural review process consistent with General Land Use Plan Policy 5.3.1-P3 as follows:
    - i. The building design avoids the orientation of equipment yard, service areas, and large expanses of blank walls facing toward the street.
    - ii. The bulk, scale and height of the building is appropriate for the industrial sector and approved data centers within the City.

- Façade elements and treatments are incorporated in the exterior building design to enrich the building appearance.
- Driveway entrances are appropriate in number and location and are emphasized by landscaping to provide a suitable focus and identification.
- The project provides pedestrian connections to neighboring development with the construction of a complete street section (5' landscape strip and 5' sidewalk) along the project frontage.
- Screening of ground mounted and rooftop equipment from view along the public right-of-way are integrated into the site and building design.
- The trash enclosure is incorporated within the loading dock with screening so as not to be visible from the public right-of-way and is accessible for service pick up.

**Attachments**

1. Conditions of Approval
2. Development Plans
3. Response to comments (to be provided at the hearing)