



10/6/2017

VIA EMAIL

Garrett Norman, Assistant Planner
City of Sacramento Community Development Department
300 Richards Blvd., 3rd Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Crocker Village Flex Zone (DR16-329) Revised

Dear Mr. Norman:

WALKSacramento has reviewed the Crocker Village Flex Zone (DR16-329) Revised project routing. The revised project is essentially unchanged, although an important walkway has been added. The principal streets on which the project is sited, Crocker Drive and 10th Avenue, do not play much of a part in the building's siting and function. The Crocker Drive and 10th Avenue intersection, which is practically a gateway to Crocker Village commercial areas and the City College bridge, doesn't play a part in the project. While the project may need to serve customers arriving via autos, the project should have a major focus of serving those arriving on foot and bike, but it doesn't.

The project site is designated Traditional Center by the 2035 General Plan. The guidelines for the urban form of traditional centers identifies the eleven following characteristics. We've evaluated the project for how it meets each of the characteristics, indicating whether the project does (✓) or doesn't (✗) exhibit the characteristic, followed by a comment.

✗ **1. Small, rectangular blocks, allowing for convenient pedestrian access from adjacent areas**

The block is rectangular but not small. However, the addition of the walkway between Road E and 10th Avenue on the west side of the project site would allow convenient pedestrian access as envisioned by this characteristic if shops fronted the walkway.

✗ **2. Relatively small and narrow lots, providing a fine-grained development pattern**

The project consists of a single large and wide lot.

✓ **3. Building heights generally ranging from one to four stories (taller heights acceptable if supported by context and market)**

Building height is within the limits.

✗ **4. Lot coverage generally not exceeding 80 percent 5. Buildings sited at or near the sidewalk and typically abut one another with limited side yard setbacks**

The building is near the sidewalk, but the longest side is on Road E, a side street with connectivity to a limited number of residential lots. The shorter building side is on Crocker Drive, which is a main pedestrian route. 10th Avenue may be the most important street adjacent to the project site for pedestrian mobility, but it has parking lot, rather than the building, near it.

- ✘ **6. Building entrances set at the sidewalk with preference for corner entrances when buildings are located on a corner lot**

The building entrance is not at the street – it faces the parking lot.

- ✓ **7. Rear alleys and secondary streets providing vehicular and service access to reduce the need for driveways and curb cuts on the primary street**

Secondary streets (for vehicles) Road E and 10th Avenue provide vehicular access so the primary street Crocker Drive doesn't have any curb cuts.

- ✘ **8. Parking provided on-street as well as in individual or shared lots at the side or rear of structures, or in screened parking structures**

On-street parking is provided on 10th Avenue, but the parking lot is effectively at the front of the building.

- ✘ **9. Transparent building frontages with pedestrian-scaled articulation and detailing**

The buildings have no transparency on the walls facing the public sidewalks; even the "frontage" facing the parking lot has only around 50% transparency.

- ✘ **10. Moderately wide sidewalks (e.g., 6 to 10 feet) furnished with street trees, outdoor seating areas, and other amenities that create inviting streetscapes**

The sidewalks along the streets are 5' wide; there are no street trees on Road E; there are no outdoor seating areas; and the only amenity to create an inviting streetscape is the small plaza with steel trellis at the middle of the Crocker Village block.

- ✘ **11. Public streetscapes serving as the center's primary open space, complemented by outdoor seating, plazas, courtyards, and sidewalk dining areas**

Crocker Drive and 10th Avenue do not serve as the project's primary open space; there is a small plaza on Crocker Drive, but there are no streetscape elements such as outdoor seating, courtyards or sidewalk dining areas.

As mentioned above, the project has changed very little from the original routing, so we reiterate our previous comments regarding the PUD Guidelines followed by new comments in italics. Using the same symbols used above, we also indicate whether the project does or doesn't exhibit the guideline.

3.1 Site Design and Building Orientation

It is the intent of the Curtis Park Village PUD Guidelines to encourage the following:

1. The development of individual site plans to positively relate with neighboring properties

The long walls with no entrances and windows on Crocker Drive and Road E do not relate to the single-family homes on the opposite side of the streets.

✘ The revisions to the elevations appear to be climbing plants added to the trellises in the four recessed sections facing Crocker Drive, and four medallions added to the wall facing Road E. The revised elevations maintain the back-of-building appearance of the original elevations.

2. Design for lively pedestrian use

The building provides little use to the pedestrian along Crocker Drive and Road E.

** Lively pedestrian use would include elements such as gathering places that support the commercial use and building transparency that provides interesting views for pedestrians and invites pedestrians to enter the building. The revised plan incorporates a 45-degree orientation of the southwest corner of the building and a small plaza with a free-standing steel trellis, but since it is over 100 feet from the building entrance, it may have minor relevance or influence on pedestrian liveliness.*

3.2 Building Design Principles and Building Forms

10. Building Street Wall

E. Provide clear-glazed fenestration on approximately 50% of each building façade that abuts a pedestrian way.

The north-facing façade has one clerestory window about 10 feet above the sidewalk at one corner, and the east-facing façade has similar clerestory windows at each corner. The windows may provide some daylighting for the future tenant space and they add some interest to the walls, but they do little to provide the view between interior and street spaces that help to create a pleasant pedestrian space with natural surveillance (eyes on the street).

** The minor revisions to windows on the building does not increase the percentage of façade fenestration beyond 10%. In fact, because the new 45-degree corner creates one set of windows at the southwest corner rather than a set of windows at the south end of the west facade and an identical set of windows at the west end of the south facade, the change may be negligible.*

** The clerestory windows added to the north façade will do little to create a safe and interesting walkway because there is no relationship established between pedestrians and building occupants – there is no increase to “eyes on the street.”*

12. Building Entrances

B. Orient building main entrances to streets or public spaces wherever possible or practical

There appears to be only one entrance to the building and it's located near the middle of the south wall that faces the parking lot. Pedestrian access from Crocker Drive is provided by a wide sidewalk, but there's no direct access from 10th Avenue.

** The revised plan maintains the original single-point access facing away from Crocker Drive without a social-activity-based connection to the street.*

C. Multiple entrances or corner entrances are encouraged at street corners to activate both street frontages

The southeast corner of the building is highly fenestrated on both sides, but the door is on the south side facing the parking lot rather than being on the east side facing the street at the sidewalk, and it's not apparent whether the door would be usable by customers.

The northeast corner of the building at the intersection has fenestration on the Crocker Drive side but none on the Road E side. This is an ideal location to provide an entrance to the building as it's the most conveniently accessed point on the property.

** The revised southwest corner of the building is only windows; it appears that the door on the south side has been removed.*

D. Locate sidewalk entrances to accommodate ease of pedestrian movement

There are no entrances on either Crocker Drive nor Road E sidewalks.

** There are still no entrances on any of the streets – Crocker Drive, 10th Avenue and Road E.*

13. Building Corners

C. Consider increased pedestrian activity in the design of building corners

There appears to be very little consideration for increased pedestrian activity.

** The 45-degree corner that's been added to the southeast corner of the building will better facilitate pedestrian movement. The 45-degree corner added to the northeast corner will improve the aesthetics of the building at the corner of Crocker Drive and Road E, but because there's no connection between the building and the sidewalk, it won't impact pedestrian activity.*

3.5 SUSTAINABILITY

2. Siting and neighborhood fabric

B. Provision of pedestrian and bicycle linkages

Pedestrian access to the building entrance is provided from a mid-block point on Crocker Drive near the southeast corner of the building. There are no pedestrian access routes from Road E, Crocker Drive or 10th Avenue to building corners or mid-points.

✓ We are glad to see west side of the project site has a pedestrian connection between Road E and 10th avenue established by sidewalks in several north-south oriented planters and stamped concrete walkways in the parking lot and near the loading dock driveway.

3. Site improvements

B. Landscaping used to shade and cool buildings and spaces and reduce the 'urban heat island' effect (the temperature increase due to development)

The parking lot tree shading seems to be on the low side. The south, west and east walls do not appear to have any shading from trees – adding trees to these areas would not only improve sustainability but the pedestrian environment would be visually improved and less hot.

** The landscaped drawing that was provided with the revised plans shows the existing street trees on Crocker Drive that will shade sidewalk and the eastern side of the building, however there are still no trees in the landscape planters at the back of the Road E attached sidewalk.*

**/✓ Sixteen of the thirty-one trees in the parking area are shown as crape myrtles. If larger trees could be planted in their places, more of the parking lot would be shaded and heating of asphalt and parked autos would be reduced, thereby reducing urban heat island effects.*

4.1 STREETScape AND CIRCULATION

3. Tree canopy that is consistent and generous

There are no shade trees along the Road E and Crocker Drive sides of the building.

** Crocker Drive has street trees between the curb and sidewalk, but Road E still has no trees.*

✓ 10th Avenue has much better tree canopy with the addition of five trees to the original two trees at the back of the sidewalk.

4.3 PARKING AREA DESIGN

2. Parking areas designed as well-defined spaces with landscaping, decorative lighting, and pedestrian walkways

There are no pedestrian walkways in the parking lot.

✓ *Sidewalks in several north-south oriented planters, and stamped concrete walkways in the parking lot and near the loading dock driveway provide pedestrian walkways in the revised site plan.*

3. Generously landscaped parking areas with shade trees to meet or exceed City of Sacramento parking lot shade requirements

It appears the tree shading is below the 50% requirement and calculations are not provided to help the verify amount of shading.

✓ *Calculations were provided on the landscape drawing provided with the revised routing.*

5. Strong pedestrian linkage to parking areas.

There are no pedestrian linkages to 10th Avenue for use in the event shoppers park once but shop at several locations.

✗/✓ *The revised plan has added walkways between the parking lot and the 10th Street and Road E sidewalks.*

6. Convenient and attractive areas for bicycle parking

Bicycle parking is not identified.

✗ *Bicycle parking is still not identified.*

7. Public perception of delivery areas limited or obscured

The loading dock area may be visible from the adjacent multi-family development.

✓ *Three trees within the planter between the loading area and the driveway will provide screening.*

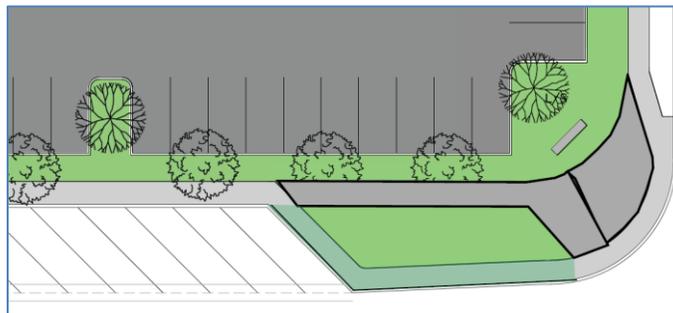
8. One or more of the following shall be used to buffer each parking area from a public sidewalk or street:

- A A minimum 6' wide planter planted with a combination of trees and shrubs
- B A fence shall be open with a minimum of at least 4' of landscaping in front
- C Trellis structures with vines

The landscape planter between the parking lot and the sidewalk on 10th Avenue appears to be less than 3' wide.

✓ *The landscape planter size has been increased and a row of trees with shrubs added between the sidewalk and the parking lot. This will provide a more pleasant walking path and shade for the sidewalk.*

We recommend realigning the sidewalk and expanding the pedestrian landing area at the corner to create a more direct path around the corner. See the diagram below.



WALKSacramento is working to support increased physical activity such as walking and bicycling in local neighborhoods as well as helping to create community environments that support walking and bicycling. The benefits include improved physical fitness, less motor vehicle traffic congestion, better air quality, and a stronger sense of cohesion and safety in local neighborhoods.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments and recommendations. If you have questions or need additional information, please contact me at (916) 446-9255.

Sincerely,

Chris Holm
Project Manager