



Agenda Item

Design Review Committee

Item #: 4.1.

9/4/2024

File #: 24-0476

TO: Chair and Members of the Design Review Committee

THRU: Chad Ortlieb, Principal Planner

FROM: Ryan Agbayani, Associate Planner

1. SUBJECT

A request to construct a new three-story office building for MS International, Inc. (MSI) at 2011 N. Batavia Street (Design Review No. 5139-24).

2. SUMMARY

The applicant proposes to construct a new three-story office building and other associated site improvements to accommodate the new MSI corporate headquarters.

3. RECOMMENDED ACTION

Recommend approval to the Planning Commission.

4. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Applicant: M S International, Inc. (MSI)

Property Owner: 2015 N. Batavia Street, LLC

Property Location: 2011 and 2015 N. Batavia Street; 715 and 845 W. Grove Avenue

General Plan Designation: Light Industrial Max. 1.0 FAR (3-story height limit) (LI)

Zoning Classification: Industrial Manufacturing (M-2)

Existing Development: Existing detached industrial buildings, paved surface parking, and outdoor storage areas

Associated Application: Conditional Use Permit No. 3220-24; Major Site Plan Review No. 1165-24

Previous DRC Review: December 5, 2018 (DRC No. 4899-17) *different design

5. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant proposes to demolish an existing 1,526 sq ft one-story office building located at 2011 N. Batavia Street and an existing 6,530 sq ft warehouse building located at 715 W. Grove Avenue, and construct a new 40,510 sq ft, three-story office building at the northeast corner of N. Batavia Street and W. Grove Avenue. Additionally, the applicant proposes tenant improvements to the existing warehouse building located at 845 W. Grove Avenue to convert 3,300 sq ft of warehouse space to office. The new configuration of the buildings creates a central courtyard area that will be repurposed as a new outdoor area for employees. Lastly, an open roof terrace is proposed at the

northern edge of the new building.

The proposed building incorporates a modern aesthetic with a nod to the industrial heritage of the site. The building façade features a harmonious blend of glass and stone, paying homage to the industrial roots while exhibiting modern styling. Vertical fins adorn the façade, not only adding visual interest, but also serving a functional purpose by responding to the local climate and sun direction. Recycled materials and energy-efficient glazing systems will be prominently featured throughout the building. A complete narrative of the applicant's design approach is included as Attachment 3 to the staff report.

The proposed site plan includes a total of 181 designated off-street parking spaces configured along the northern property line and occupying the eastern third of the site. Access to off-street parking will be from a single two-way driveway on N. Batavia Street and from two two-way driveways on W. Grove Avenue. The eastern portion of the site for employee parking and loading will be secured by CMU block walls and mechanical vehicular gates.

New trees, shrubs, and groundcover are proposed along the property street frontages, along the western and southern edges of the two street-facing buildings, within the interior courtyard, and within the secured parking area. A total of 71 trees are proposed for the project including:

- 19 Lophostemon Confertus (Brisbane Box) trees along the eastern property line and within the secured parking area
- 15 Koelreuteria Bipinnata (Chinese Flame) trees along the northern drive aisle, within the secured parking area, and flanking the proposed trash enclosure
- 14 Eucalyptus Torquata (Coral Gum) trees within the public right-of-way as street trees
- 11 Quercus Virginiana (Coastal Live Oak) trees along the street frontages and at the northeast corner of the site
- 10 Cercis Canadensis 'Forest Pansy' (Forest Pansy Redbud) trees at the street intersection and within the internal courtyard
- Two Olea Europaea 'Swan Hill' (Swan Hill Fruitless Olive) trees flanking the southwest corner of the new building

Although the tree count does not meet the "benchmark" as outlined in the City's Landscape Standards and Specifications, staff believes that the quantities, types, and configuration of the trees are adequate and appropriate. The concentration of trees along the street frontages will improve the streetscape and soften the predominantly paved area of the industrial zoning district.

For exterior lighting, 24 rounded-head LED light poles are distributed along western and northern drive aisles and throughout the secured parking area. Four post top lights will be installed near the front entrance of the building. Bollard lights are also proposed at the front entryway of the new building, within the internal courtyard, and along walkways on the W. Grove Avenue street frontage. Wall sconce lights are proposed along the perimeter edges of the building. Tree uplights will be installed within the internal courtyard.

6. EXISTING SITE

The existing 3.5-acre site is currently developed with multiple detached industrial buildings, paved surface parking, covered canopies, and outdoor storage areas. The perimeter of the site is secured

with existing CMU block walls and mechanical vehicular gates on both street frontages. Access to the site is from a single two-way driveway on N. Batavia Street and three driveways along W. Grove Avenue.

7. EXISTING AREA CONTEXT

The subject property is located at the northeast corner of N. Batavia Street and W. Grove Avenue. To the immediate north is an existing rail spur as well as the MSI campus (including the customer showroom and current corporate headquarters). To the south are existing industrial buildings with surface parking and outdoor storage areas. To the east is an existing industrial building with surface parking and paved outdoor storage areas (5 Alarm Fire Corporation). To the west is the FXI campus which consists of existing industrial buildings, paved surface parking, and outdoor storage areas. The existing zoning designation of the subject property and all surrounding properties is Industrial Manufacturing (M-2).

8. ANALYSIS AND STATEMENT OF THE ISSUES

Issue 1 Maximum Building Height:

Maximum building height in the M-2 zoning district is 45 feet; however, the Municipal Code allows for building height to “exceed 45 feet provided that the building is setback from the nearest property line a distance equal to the height of the building.” Most of the new proposed building is 44 feet in height; however, there are some architectural projections and towers that exceed this height. The Code allows for screened mechanical and electrical towers, chimneys, and other integral parts of the building or structure occupying no more than five percent of the roof area to be excluded from the measurement.

The proposed dual elevator tower, rooftop trellis structure, rooftop access tower, and mechanical equipment screening are set back far enough from the nearest property line to still meet the required maximum building height standards. However, the proposed 49-foot-tall staircase at the southeast corner of the new three-story building is only set back 10 feet, 6 inches from the southern property line. This staircase is an integral part of the building and does not occupy more than five percent of the roof area. Therefore, it is allowed per the Code. Staff has no concerns with the building height.

Issue 2 Covered Canopies:

Per City records, there is an expired building permit application to “install four canopies for exterior storage at 715 W. Grove Avenue. The permit was applied for on May 6, 2019, and went through four rounds of plan check; however, no permit was issued and no inspections were conducted.

As part of this project, the applicant will demolish the existing canopies and convert that area to required off-street surface parking that is open from ground to sky. No additional action is recommended.

9. ADVISORY BOARD RECOMMENDATION

On April 3, 2024, and June 26, 2024, the City’s interdepartmental Staff Review Committee (SRC) reviewed the proposed plans and supplemental documents and provided corrections. On July 31, 2024, the SRC deemed the project complete to proceed to DRC review.

10. PUBLIC NOTICE

On August 22, 2024, public notices were mailed to a total of 46 property owners and occupants within

a 400-foot radius of the project site. Two public notices were posted at the site on that same date.

11. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The proposed project is categorically exempt per State CEQA Guidelines Section 15332 (Class 32 - In-Fill Development Projects) because the project is consistent with the applicable general plan designation and all applicable general plan polices as well as with the applicable zoning designation and regulations, the proposed development occurs within city limits on a project site of no more than five acres substantially surrounded by urban uses, the project site has no value as a habitat for endangered, rare, or threatened species, approval of the project would not result in any significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality, and the site can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services.

12. STAFF RECOMMENDATION AND REQUIRED FINDINGS

Findings for DRC applications come from four sources:

- The Orange Municipal Code
- The Infill Residential Design Guidelines
- The Historic Preservation Design Standards for Old Towne (commonly referred to the Old Towne Design Standards or OTDS)
- Orange Eichler Design Standards (or OEDS)

The Findings are applied as appropriate to each project. Based on the following Finding and statements in support of such Finding, staff recommends the DRC recommend approval of the project to the Planning Commission.

- The project design upholds community aesthetics through the use of an internally consistent, integrated design theme and is consistent with all adopted specific plans, applicable design standards, and their required findings (OMC 17.10.07.G.3).

The subject property is not located within a specific plan area or an established district with applicable design standards. The proposed industrial building improves the appearance of the site and the N. Batavia Street and W. Grove Avenue streetscapes by bringing in a new contemporary three-story office building with new landscaping to the site, which is currently utilized as industrial buildings with surface parking and outdoor storage areas. The exterior design, materials, and colors of the new office building establish a prominent contemporary aesthetic that may influence future development within the area, particularly the greater MSI campus. Notable features include a harmonious blend of glass and stone and vertical fins adorning the façade, which both add visual interest and also serve a functional purpose by responding to the local climate and sun direction. Recycled materials and energy-efficient glazing systems will be prominent features throughout the building. The proposed landscaping including trees, shrubs, and groundcover complement the project design and soften the predominantly paved areas of the existing industrial development in the area.

13. CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

The approval of this project is subject to the following conditions of approval:

General:

1. All construction shall conform in substance and be maintained in general conformance with the plans and exhibits included in the staff reported dated September 4, 2024, including any modifications required by conditions of approval, and as recommended for approval by the

Design Review Committee.

2. Except as otherwise provided herein, this project is approved as a precise plan. After any application has been approved, if changes are proposed regarding the location or alteration of any use or structure, a changed plan may be submitted to the Community Development Director for approval. If the Community Development Director determines that the proposed change complies with the provisions and the spirit and intent of the approved action, and that the action would have been the same for the changed plan as for the approved plan, the Community Development Director may approve the changed plan administratively.
3. Subsequent modifications to the approved architecture or color scheme shall be submitted for review and approval to the Community Development Director or designee. Should the modifications be considered substantial, the modifications shall be reviewed by the Planning Commission (final approving body).

Lighting

4. Any new lighting on the premise shall be installed in such a way to direct, control, and screen the lighting to prevent off-site light spillage onto adjoining properties and shall not be a nuisance to any point beyond the exterior boundaries of the property.
5. Prior to issuance of Certificate of Occupancy, the applicant shall schedule a light reading inspection with the Crime Prevention Bureau. The lighting shall be tested and confirmed to determine if the lighting meets or exceeds the exterior boundary standards. The applicant shall use shielding so as to ensure that the light standards meet the requirements of OMC Section 17.12.030 for areas beyond the property's exterior boundaries. Light spillage or pollution to surrounding residential areas shall not exceed a maintained minimum of 0.5 foot-candles.
6. The intensity of exterior lighting fixtures shall be limited to 3000K or less. This shall be noted on the construction documents prior to issuance of building permits.

Signage

7. Final sign plans shall be approved by the Community Development Director or designee prior to building permit issuance. Sign plans shall comply with OMC Chapter 17.36 Sign Regulations. Should a sign program be required in the future, the Design Review Committee shall review and approve the sign program.

Landscaping

8. Prior to building permit issuance, final landscaping plans for the project shall be designed to comply with the City's Water Efficient Landscape Guidelines as described in Section IX et al of the City of Orange Landscape Standards and Specifications.
9. Prior to building permit issuance, the applicant shall prepare a final landscaping and irrigation plan consistent with the site plan, grading plans, and the conceptual landscaping plan as proposed for the project for the review and approval by the Community Development or designee.
10. Landscape maintenance shall be performed in such a manner as to allow all trees to retain their full canopy height for screening and full canopy breadth for shade at point of maturity, except as required for public safety purposes.

Perimeter Fences and Walls

11. The applicant shall coordinate with all adjacent property owners to achieve the Code requirement that there are no two parallel walls or fences within five feet of each other, unless approved by the Community Development Director.

14. ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 - Vicinity Map
- Attachment 2 - Project Plans
- Attachment 3 - Applicant's Design Approach Narrative
- Attachment 4 - Digital Color and Material Board
- Attachment 5 - Site Photos
- Attachment 6 - Development Standards Reference Table