



# Agenda Item

## Design Review Committee

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**Item #:** 3.3.

**4/21/2021**

**File #:** 21-0195

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**TO:** Chair and Members of the Design Review Committee

**THRU:** Anna Pehoushek, Assistant Community Development Director

**FROM:** Kelly Ribuffo, Associate Planner - Historic Preservation

### 1. SUBJECT

Design Review No. 5017-20, East Katella Commercial Center, 232 E. Katella Avenue

### 2. SUMMARY

Final determination by the Design Review Committee

The applicant proposes to construct a new 6,856 square foot commercial building with an associated surface parking lot and landscaping.

### 3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Applicant/Owner: Katella Commercial, LLC

Property Location: 232 E. Katella Avenue

Architect: DSE Architects, Inc.

General Plan Designation: General Commercial (GC)

Zoning Classification: Commercial Professional (C-P)

Existing Development: vacant lot

Property Size: 23,841 square feet

Associated Application: Minor Site Plan Review No. 1022-20 and Administrative Adjustment No. 0279-20

Previous DRC Project Review: None

### 4. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant proposes to construct a new 6,856 square foot commercial building with an associated surface parking lot and landscaping. Design features of the project include:

- Contemporary architectural style with flat roofline
- Integral color cement plaster and metal panel siding systems
- Anodized aluminum storefront system

- Slatted aluminum screens for mounting tenant signage
- Aluminum sunshades over tenant space entrances

The project includes a request for an 8% Administrative Adjustment for drive aisle width and a 10% Administrative Adjustment for parking space count.

Proposed plans, including construction details, landscaping, and sign program, are included as Attachments 2 and 3 of this report. The applicant's letter of explanation is included as Attachment 4.

Orange Municipal Code Chapter 17.18 sets out development standards for all developments within the Commercial Professional (C-P) zone.

#### Development Standards

	Required	Proposed	Code Section
<i>Building Height</i>	32 feet, 2 stories	25 feet, 1 story	Table 17.18.120
<i>Fence/Wall Height</i>	6 feet	6 feet	17.18.140
<i>Floor Area Ratio (FAR)</i>	1.0	0.28 (6,554 gross floor area)	General Plan Land Use Element
<i>Landscaping (non-residential)</i>	Setbacks, parking area, and trees	Setbacks met. See Issue 2	17.18.160
<i>Loading area (non-residential)</i>	10 feet x 40 feet	10 feet x 40 feet	Table 17.34.160
<i>Parking (non-residential)</i>	32	29 spaces, See Issue 3 Admin Adjustment	17.34.070
<i>Bike Rack</i>	1	1	17.34.080
<i>Motorcycle Parking</i>	50 square feet	Met	17.34.080
<i>Setback, Front</i>	10 feet	10 feet 4 inches	Table 17.18.130
<i>Setback, Rear</i>	10 feet	70 feet 1 inch	Table 17.18.130
<i>Setback, East Side</i>	0 feet	5 feet 3 inches	Table 17.18.130
<i>Setback, West Side</i>	0 feet	52 feet	Table 17.18.130

As proposed, the design of the project meets the minimum development requirements for the zoning district except as noted. Parking Space Count and Tree Count are discussed further in the Analysis section of this report.

## 5. EXISTING SITE

The site is currently a vacant lot with a mix of dirt and asphalt surface. The property was previously developed with a small commercial building that was demolished by the property owner between June and August of 2020.

## 6. EXISTING AREA CONTEXT

The subject property is located on the south side of E. Katella Avenue between N. Glassell Street and N. Shaffer Street. Katella Avenue is one of the City's primary commercial corridors, including retail, restaurant, and office uses. The property is bordered to the north by the Katella Plaza commercial shopping center (C-1), to the east by another small commercial center (C-P) and the

west by Tulsa Rib Company (C-P). The property is bordered to the south by single-family residences (R-1-6) along E. Hoover Avenue.

## 7. ANALYSIS AND STATEMENT OF THE ISSUES

Overall, it is the opinion of staff that the proposed project is of an appropriate mass, scale, and design to complement existing development along the E. Katella Avenue commercial corridor. However, staff has identified one issue item specific to the design of the east elevation of the building that prevents staff from recommending approval of the project as presented at this time.

Staff has also provided analysis related to the tree count and proposed Administrative Adjustments for drive aisle width and parking count, which staff supports for this project.

### Issue 1. East Elevation

The proposed commercial building is oriented with the narrowest sides of the building facing north and south and the “front” of the building facing west. Given existing development to either side of the property, this means that the east and west elevations of the building are highly visible from E. Katella Avenue.

It is the opinion of staff that the “rear” or east elevation of the building requires additional design attention in order for the project to meet the required findings for design approval. Though the east elevation is technically the “back of house” operationally for the building, it is highly visible from E. Katella Avenue, and therefore needs to be treated like a primary elevation for the purposes of design completeness. The east elevation lacks any of the features of the other elevations, such as the metal panels or sunshades, which provide architectural interest to the building.

Staff brought up this concern with the applicant during the staff review process, and the applicant asked to bring the design as presented in Attachment 2 to the DRC for consideration.

### Issue 2. Tree Count

Orange Municipal Code (OMC) Section 17.18.160.B.1.a states that the number of trees required for projects in commercial zoning districts shall be calculated as follows:

“... add together the total length of all the perimeter property lines (all sides), the total length of the perimeter of the buildings, and the total length of all parking rows on the site, and divide by 36.”

Per this calculation, 35 trees are required for the project site. The proposed landscape plan includes seven trees, consisting of Pink Crepe Myrtle and India Hawthorne. The project is also required to provide two Saratoga Laurel street trees in the public right-of-way, in compliance with the City’s Street Tree Master Plan.

Staff supports a reduced number of trees on the project site, as the code required number of trees is not a sustainable number given the other development requirements for the site, including parking, fire lane access, and a screening hedge at the south property line.

### Issue 3. Administrative Adjustments for Drive Aisle Width and Parking Count

The applicant is requesting two Administrative Adjustments of development standards for this project. The first is an 8% adjustment to drive aisle width, reducing the required drive aisle width from 25 feet to 23 feet.

Staff supports the reduction in the required drive aisle width for this project. The minimal reduction in width allows for accommodation of the required boarder planter along the west property line without reduction in the size of the building or adjacent parking spaces. The Fire Department did not have any issues with the request, as the minimum fire lane width of 20 feet is clear of obstructions.

The second request is a 10% adjustment to required parking count, reducing the required number of parking spaces from 32 to 29 spaces. Parking requirements were calculated at five spaces per 1,000 square feet gross floor area, based on a retail occupancy, which may include take-out restaurants with limited seating.

Staff supports the request for the reduction in total parking spaces. Development of the property is constrained due to an existing access easement on the west property line and a required right-of-way dedication from the Public Works Department. During the staff review process, a ten-foot right-of-way dedication was required to bring E. Katella Avenue to ultimate width per the City's Master Plan of Streets and Roadways. Therefore, it is the opinion of staff that the proposed 10% adjustment is reasonable for the particular site.

## 8. ADVISORY BOARD RECOMMENDATION

Staff reviewed the project for compliance with city standards on September 9, 2020, December 9, 2020, February 17, 2021, and March 24, 2021. Staff recommended approval of the project to the DRC with conditions on April 14, 2021.

## 9. PUBLIC NOTICE

None required.

## 10. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

**Categorical Exemption:** The proposed project is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per State CEQA Guidelines 15303 (Class 3 - New Construction and Conversion of Small Structures) because the project consists of the construction of a new commercial building under 10,000 square feet in size in an urbanized area of the city. No public notice is required.

## 11. STAFF RECOMMENDATION AND REQUIRED FINDINGS

The Findings are applied as appropriate to each project. Based on the following Findings and statements in support of such Findings, approval of the proposed project must be made based on the following Findings, with conditions as deemed appropriate by the DRC.

### Design Review

- 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 17.10.070.F.3).

### Minor Site Plan Review

- That the project design is compatible with surrounding development and neighborhoods (OMC 17.10.060.H.1).
- That the project conforms to City development standards and any applicable special design

guidelines or specific plan requirements (OMC 10.12.060.H.2).

- That the project provides for safe and adequate vehicular and pedestrian circulation, both on- and off-site (OMC 17.10.060.H.3).
- That City services are available and adequate to serve the project (OMC 17.10.060.H.4).
- That the project has been designed to fully mitigate or substantially minimize adverse environmental effects (OMC 17.10.060.H.5).

#### Administrative Adjustment

- That the reduction in standards will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, and general welfare of persons residing or working on the subject property or in the vicinity (OMC 17.10.050.E.1).
- That issuance of the permit does not compromise the intent of this code (OMC 17.10.050.E.2).

## **12. CONDITIONS**

Since staff has not made a recommendation of approval on this project, no conditions of approval have been provided. Should the DRC approve the project, conditions of approval have been provided for reference as Attachment 5 from all city departments.

## **13. ATTACHMENTS**

- Attachment 1 - Vicinity Map
- Attachment 2 - Architectural and Landscape Plans date stamped April 13, 2021
- Attachment 3 - Sign Program
- Attachment 4 - Letter of Explanation
- Attachment 5 - Potential Conditions of Approval from All City Departments
- Attachment 6 - Color and Material Board