

MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION



October 13, 2022

To: State Clearinghouse
State Responsible Agencies
State Trustee Agencies
Other Public Agencies
Interested Parties and Organizations

From: Matt Pruter
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Introduction

This Mitigated Negative Declaration has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970 and its applicable Guidelines, as amended. It is an informational document prepared to inform the decision-makers and the general public of the potential environmental effects associated with the proposed project at 3723 Haven Avenue.

The City of Menlo Park will use this Mitigated Negative Declaration in its decision-making process on the proposed project.

The conclusion of this Mitigated Negative Declaration is that the proposed project, with mitigation measures, would not generate any significant direct or primary physical impacts on the environment.

Project Description and Location

The proposed project would involve the demolition of an existing commercial building and construction of a new 163-room hotel at 3723 Haven Avenue. The property is located in the O-B (Office - Bonus) zoning district. The eight-story building would contain three stories of podium parking, five levels of hotel rooms, a ground floor lobby space, and a coffee shop, which would be open to the public, and a fourth floor bar and restaurant area, which would include an outdoor rooftop garden and would also be publicly accessible (regardless of coffee shop and bar/lounge patronage) from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. Hotels are a conditional use in the O-B zoning district, thus requiring a use permit. The proposed project also includes a use permit request to allow modifications to the Zoning Ordinance requirements for modulations and setback design standards, which can be permitted through a use permit. For the coffee shop and bar and restaurant, the applicant is also requesting a use permit to allow outdoor seating.

The project site currently has two vehicle access points on Haven Avenue, with the first connecting to a service road running along the northern portion of the property and servicing neighboring properties. The other curb cut is near the southern edge of the property and located within the Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) easement, with high voltage overhead power lines above. Both of these curb cuts are proposed to remain, and the proposed project would maintain the 40-foot easement within the southern portion of the property and provide a 20-foot-wide fire lane for emergency vehicle access along the northern portion of the proposed building.

The proposed development includes 124 parking spaces, and apart from six surface level spaces wrapped around the building, 119 of the parking spaces would be provided within the three-level podium parking structure within the hotel. The applicant is proposing that parking would utilize a valet system for the podium parking structure, and 40 of the spaces within the podium would be serviced by stacker spaces (specifically on the first floor). In total, 48 spaces are proposed on the first floor, 37 spaces are proposed on the second floor, and 39 spaces are proposed on the third floor.

The applicant is proposing 10 short-term bicycle parking spaces within the outdoor area in the front of the property, one long-term bicycle locker within the second floor of the podium, and one long-term bicycle locker within the third floor of the podium, for a total of 12 bicycle parking spaces. The bicycle parking proposed on site is in compliance with the Zoning Ordinance requirements.

The proposed architectural style utilizes various contemporary and modern forms. Details include smooth-troweled stucco walls and faux wood and horizontal and vertical metal panels for accents. Along with the rooftop garden space as publicly accessible open space, a ground level open space area, between the front of the hotel and Haven Avenue, would include tables, chairs, short-term bicycle racks, and large planters.

The proposed hotel would have a parallelogram-shaped footprint with a landscaped courtyard along the front of the building, facing Haven Avenue. The front and left sides of the building would be eight stories in height, with the

exception of some building breaks along both of these sides, while the rear and right side (generally the southwest corner of the building) would step down to four stories to provide an open area and outdoor rooftop garden, directly above the podium parking. A portion of this level would be publicly accessible open space.

Construction is estimated to span 24 months, which is typical for a project of this size. Demolition is likely to commence in Fall 2022, pending Planning Commission action on the proposed project and the building permit plan check process. The work would include construction of the building, on-site improvements, and required off-site improvements near the frontage with Haven Avenue. Demolition would take place over a period of approximately 60 days, and grading is proposed to span 98 days. The proposed project is anticipated to be fully operational and occupied by February 2024. The applicant has indicated that no pile driving would occur and instead auger cast piles are proposed to be used. The proposed project would be subject to the City of Menlo Park requirements for allowable noise and hours of construction contained in Chapter 8.06 of the Municipal Code.

Findings and Basis for a Mitigated Negative Declaration

The Planning Division has reviewed the Initial Study for the project and finds the following:

1. The project will not generate significant adverse effects on the water or air quality, greenhouse gases, or increase noise levels substantially.
2. The project will not have any significant adverse impacts on the flora or fauna of the area.
3. The project will not significantly degrade the aesthetic quality of the area.
4. The project, with mitigation measures, will not have any significant adverse impacts on traffic, land use, population and housing, public services, and infrastructure.
5. In addition, the project will not:
 - a. Create impacts that have the potential to significantly degrade the quality of the environment.
 - b. Create significant impacts that achieve short-term, to the disadvantage of long-term, environmental goals.
 - c. Create impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable to a significant degree.
 - d. Create environmental effects that will cause significant adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly.

It may, therefore, be determined that the potential environmental impact of the project will be less than significant.

Initial Study

A copy of the Initial Study, on which the findings for a Mitigated Negative Declaration have been based, is available on the City web page (menlopark.org/HotelMoxy). To request a hard copy of the IS/MND, please call 650-330-6702 or email mapruter@menlopark.org.

Review Period

The review period is from Oct. 13, 2022 through Nov. 14, 2022. All written comments regarding this Negative Declaration must be received by the City of Menlo Park Planning Division, 701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, California 94025, no later than 5:30 P.M., Nov. 14, 2022.

California Environmental Quality Act

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Contact Person

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