



Duquesne Townhomes – Project Narrative

RE: Project site 4180 Duquesne Avenue, Culver City, CA 90232

Project Team Information:

Development Team:
Mia Lamar, LLC
301 N. Canon Dr. Suite E
Beverly Hills, 90210

Site Information:

Lot size is 6,750 sf. Post dedication, lot size is 6,250 sf.

There is an existing 1,038 sf. Single family residence on the property. The site is a part of the Residential Medium Density (RMD) zoning per the Culver City Municipal Code (Zoning Code).

The proposed project is a 2-story, 4-unit residential condominium building, over a semi-subterranean parking garage that accommodates 9 parking spaces.

The building has been prepared in accordance with the Culver City Municipal Code as well as the “Gateway Neighborhood Multi-Family Residential Design Guidelines”.

The proposed building has undergone several iterations from the initial concept design presented to the client. The design team has met multiple times with the Culver City Planning Department and has also had a meeting with the community members. These meetings reinforced that the design teams plans are in overall compliance with the Municipal Code as well as with the Neighborhood Guidelines. There were minor design corrections requested by the Planning Department as well as from the community meeting.

Following is a brief review of the different iterations of the building as it has been critiqued and refined in order to best fit within its surrounding context and best meet the Neighborhood Guidelines.

Initial Architectural Concept Design: January 15, 2016

The Culver City Planning Department Neighborhood Guidelines in conjunction with the Municipal code stress the importance of maintaining the existing neighborhood fabric for any remodel or new construction.

On this particular block of Duquesne approximately one-third of the lots have a lot coverage of between 61-80%, the average lot coverage is 46%.

The design of the project began with the intent to maximize landscape area at the front of the building, as a means of providing a visual and physical buffer from street to building. The concrete at the front yard setback will be as minimal as possible.

The initial concept design focused on maximizing the square footage allowed to be built by the Municipal code. The windows were to be recessed into the building, and the second story windows had a steel window frame around the windows to provide additional shading and a distinctive design feature.

The Client was receptive to the design proposal and we scheduled a design meeting with the Culver City Planning Department.

Refer to Exhibit A

Design for Submittal to Project Planning Review: February 18, 2016

Prior to the official meeting with the Planning Department, Culver City requested some minor front elevation design tweaks.

As a result the windows at the front and second floor of a portion of the building were grouped together. The window frames were removed to not intrude into the setbacks. The height of the building to the top of the parapet was at 29'-0" and 34'-0" to the top of the stair roof.

During the PPR meeting the Planning Department requested that we study more the entire building elevations, in particular the front of the building. The general idea of the design was sound but more articulation was desired. The overall building height was strongly encouraged to be reduced. The location of the windows on the neighboring buildings were asked to be shown in plan in order to compare the proposed window locations with the buildings on the adjacent properties. The roof deck was requested to be reduced and to bring in the roof deck railing to maximize neighbors privacy.

Total Residential Area: 6,785 sf

Unit – A: 1,493 sf

Unit – B: 1,660 sf

Unit – C: 1,815 sf

Unit – D: 1,817 sf

Refer to Exhibit B

PPR Re-Submittal: March 28, 2016

In response to the main criticism of a monolithic building design, the design team decided to break the building façade by receding two of the building corners and changing its color. The idea was to visually highlight the importance of the corners with their corner windows. The building articulation carries around the entire building elevations. The roof deck was reduced in square footage and the building parapet height was reduced to 26'-4"; this helps reduce the size of the building perceived from the street.

These design considerations were appreciated by the Planning Department, and the project was allowed to proceed to the Community meeting.

Total Residential Area: 6,741 sf

Unit – A: 1,472 sf

Unit – B: 1,660 sf

Unit – C: 1,799 sf

Unit – D: 1,810 sf

Refer to Exhibit C

Community Meeting: May 26, 2016

The community meeting was a productive meeting, it provided the design team to present the project and the community members present to voice their opinions concerns. Concerns of privacy were brought up, with the design team highlighting the mitigating measures that the Planning department had previously brought up: proposed window locations to not align with existing neighboring windows, reduced roof deck area, planting in the side and rear yards to help provide screening.

Another major concern was of mitigating construction nuisances: noise, road congestion, parking issues. Community member were assured this building will be constructed per Culver City guidelines.

An elevation rendering was produced to show the proposed building in context to the neighboring properties to illustrate that it's building height fits within the neighborhood.

Total Residential Area: 6,741 sf

Unit – A: 1,472 sf

Unit – B: 1,660 sf

Unit – C: 1,799 sf

Unit – D: 1,810 sf

Refer to Exhibit D

Site Plan Review Submittal: July 21, 2016

As the design of the building progressed some minor design touches reduced the overall building square footage, the building color was modified, and the roof access stairs will be painted white to reduce their visual impact from Duquesne Ave.

Bringing the Landscape Architect on board, their design increased the amount of landscape area by bringing the patio entry to Unit-A off of the main pedestrian walkway; a design solution that provides a friendlier front yard for both pedestrian and residents alike.

The design process, with input from the City Planning Department and from Community Members has led us to a more holistically considered building that is very much a part of the Culver City residential building fabric.

Total Residential Area: 6,591 sf

Unit – A: 1,425 sf

Unit – B: 1,629 sf

Unit – C: 1,759 sf

Unit – D: 1,778 sf

Refer to Exhibit E









