



Project Narrative

603 Sutter Street

December 10, 2020

SITE

The proposed 603 Sutter Street project (“Project”) is located on the corner of Sutter and Scott Streets within the commercial portion of the historic district. The Project is located on a 0.19 acre described as APN# 070-0111-010 and consists of one Historic District Lot approximately 74 x100 (7,400 sq./ft.) within the commercial district of Folsom and is zoned as HD/C-2 within Sutter Street Subarea of the Historic Commercial Primary Area, with an underlying zoning of C-2, Central Business District. The proposed building is located on the south side of Sutter Street, West of Scott Street. The subject lot is a corner lot on the upper end of Sutter Street. To the North is Sutter Street with the Folsom Electric and Lighting Company Building directly across the Street. To the East is a commercial zoned lot with two residential structures (Cohn Mansion). The south side of the property backs up to a residence on Scott Street that is commercially zoned and sits directly across from the Cohn Mansion. To the West is the original historic library that is now Studio 605 Salon. The site drops approximately 24ft. from the back side to Sutter Street and approximately 9ft. along Sutter Street from the lower to upper end traveling from West to East.

ADJACENT LAND USES AND ZONING

North: Sutter Street and Folsom Electric and Lighting Company Building HD-C2.

South: Residential use with HD/C-2 Zoning.

East: Scott Street Residential use (Cohn Mansion) with HD/C-2 Zoning.

West: 605 Sutter Street (Salon) HD/C-2 Zoning.

APPLICANT/OWNER

The applicants and the owners are Ziad and Deborah Alaywan. Ziad and Deborah own three properties on Sutter Street, 510, 512 and the proposed 603 Sutter street. In 1996, the State of California Passed a new law, Assembly Bill 1860, to form a nonprofit organization to take over the operation of the California electric grid from Pacific Gas and Electric, Southern California Edison and San Diego Gas



electric. Ziad was selected by the Governor's office to lead a team to find a suitable location and oversee the development of the facilities needed to operate and monitor the California electric grid and place it into operation on March 31, 1998. Subsequently, Ziad was instrumental in selecting Folsom as the headquarters of the California Independent System Operator¹, the agency that now operates the California Grid.

Ziad, as the first employee of this newly formed organization in 1997, built the organization to 600 employees with the initial headquarters located at 193 Blue Ravine Road in Folsom. Subsequently, a new building was constructed at 250 Outcropping Way in Folsom.

The owners have strong ties and a deep respect for Folsom, and particularly the Historic District and Sutter Street. Not only is their business located at 604 Sutter Street, two of their three children now live and work in the Folsom Historic District. Ziad and Deborah are the owners of ZGlobal Inc., an engineering firm located at 604 Sutter Street which employs over 30 professionals. It is their hope to move the office and occupy 40% of the proposed building at 603 Sutter Street.

ZGlobal currently manages the electricity needs for Marin and Napa Counties in addition to 28 city agencies throughout California,² and various generating facilities across California, Arizona, Utah, Nevada and New Mexico.

BACKGROUND

After several initial feasibilities dated back to 2012, the Project was formally submitted in May of 2017. The applicant's submission included an application for approval of Variances (Building Height Variance and Parking Variance) and Design Review for development of a three-story, 23,486 -square-foot mixed use building with underground parking at the southwest corner of the intersection of Sutter Street and Scott Street within the Historic District. The proposed project was evaluated by the Historic District Commission at its September 6, 2017

¹ The California Independent System Operator (**CAISO**) is a non-profit Independent System Operator (ISO) serving California. It oversees the operation of California's bulk electric power system, transmission lines, and electricity market generated and transmitted by its member utilities.

² This include the cities of Anaheim, Campbell, Cupertino, Corona, Concord, Danville, Benicia, El Cerrito, Lafayette, Gilroy, Lost Altos, Lost Altos Hills, Los Gatos, Martinez, Moraga, Milpitas, Monte Sereno, Morgan Hills, Mountain View, Oakley, Richmond, San Ramon, San Pablo, Pinole, Pittsburg, Saratoga, Sunnyvale and Walnut creek



meeting as on informational item only. At this meeting, the Commission, representatives of the Heritage Preservation League, and members of the public provided comments and feedback regarding the proposed project.

In addition to the feedback received from the Historic District Commission in September the Applicant received a Letter from the Heritage Preservation League noting their concerns. The Applicant also solicited feedback from neighboring residents by hosted several meetings between August and September of 2017.

Listed below are some of the most notable comments from the Historic District Commission, the Heritage Preservation League, and residents:

- Concern regarding building height (57-feet, 6-inches tall)
- Concern regarding the size and scale of building
- Concern regarding architecture and design of building – recommended to be redesigned to be more reflective of buildings constructed prior to 1900
- Concern regarding limited parking provided by project (15 parking spaces)
- Concern regarding pedestrian safety in the underground parking garage
- Concern regarding building encroachment into Scott Street right-of-way

On March 14, 2019, the applicant submitted a revised development application to the City in response to the above-stated concerns. The most significant changes to the proposed project included reducing the size of the building from 23,486 square feet to 14,811 square feet, reducing the height of the building from 57 feet, 6-inches to 50 feet, 6 inches, modifying the building footprint to not encroach into the Scott Street right-of-way, eliminating the underground parking garage, and updating the architecture and design of the building.

Leading up to the scheduled Historic District Commission hearing on August 19, 2020, the applicant received several written comments from neighbors and members of the public. To better understand the concerns the applicant hosted two public outreach sessions conducted on August 12th and 13th. Subsequent to the public outreach meetings the Applicant requested a continuance of the Commission hearing to provide the design team additional time to consider comments and feedback. Still with concerns to address, the Applicant prepared two



alternative solutions to solicit feedback from the Historic District Commission via an informal workshop hearing on October 21st of 2020.

Notable feedback from the HDC commissioners and members of public included:

- Regarding architecture and design of building – References to pre-1900 architecture was greatly improved.
- Concern regarding building height (42-feet, 0-inches tall) – suggest proposing a solution with no height variance required.
- Concern regarding limited or no parking provided by project (0-7 parking spaces) – suggest proposing a solution with no parking variance required.

REVISED PROJECT DESIGN

The Applicant and their design team heavily considered the suggestions of the City, HDC, HPL and neighbors. The proposed responses are summarized as follows:

1. **BUILDING HEIGHT:** The building height was reduced from the 2019 proposed height of 50'-6" to 35'-0." The project now conforms to the District's height limitation for buildings fronting Sutter Street.
2. **PARKING:** Parking solutions were considered – detailed description of studies can be found on the provided Variance Request. Due to site constraints and subsurface conditions on-site parking is not provided in the revised design. However, the Applicant is willing to participate in a "Parking Assessment District" once established.
3. **HISTORIC CONTEXT:** The Historic Preservation League challenged the team to justify the building design relative to pre-1900's architecture. "California Gold Rush Commercial" was the chosen precedent. This style is found throughout the District characterized mostly by brick masonry buildings. The team also drew reference from regional architecture built during the same time period. The resulting proposed solution incorporates characteristic brick detailing, cornice work, storefront and window design.



4. **DESIGN SOLUTION:** The revised building proposes a building mass which has been broken in to two chunks along the length to adhere to the scale and proportions of other buildings along Sutter St. In consideration of heights and massing, the building is also stepped back at the third level. Given the subsurface conditions and steep terrain of the site, the building is also stepped in section to avoid excessive need for excavation. There is a small retail footprint which allows for multiple tenant divisions along Sutter Street to promote a pedestrian-friendly walkable experience.

The resultant design is appropriate in both its use and size providing added character to the beautiful existing fabric of the Historic District. Both the scale and attention to detail evoke a timeless architectural character underscored by high quality materials.

PROJECT TIMELINE

Once approved, the hope is to immediately work on finalizing plans and submit for building permits; the estimated timeline for submittal will be December of 2020. Building plan approval and permitting estimated April of 2021 with construction starting June/July of 2021. Completion is estimated to be December of 2022.



The Table below provides a summary of the project evolution of key project elements from the initial proposal in 2017 to the current 2020 proposals.

Project Components	2017 Project Proposal	2019 Project Proposal	2020 Proposal (Current)
Building Square Footage (Occupied)*	23,486	14,811	12,316
Building Square Footage (Gross)	17,436	14,811	13,900
Building Height**	57' - 6"	50' - 6"	35'-0"
Height Variance Request	22' - 6"	15' - 6"	none
Off Street Parking (Required)***	50 stalls	43 stalls	35 stalls
Off Street Parking (Provided)	15 stalls	0 stalls	0 stalls
Parking Variance Request	35 stalls	43 stalls	35 stalls
Key Design Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking provided represents maximum quantity of spaces achievable within site constraints utilizing an underground garage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Underground parking was removed to address concerns regarding building height and pedestrian safety. • Project materials and design elements were reselected to better address historic design criteria • Building footprint was modified to minimize encroachment into Scott St. right-of-way 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building height was reduced meet the District's height standards. • Project program was reduced to address concerns of mass / bulk. • Design emphasis is placed on Sutter/Scott street corner thought the use of a rounded corner ground floor entrance. • Building design details refined to address the selected pre-1900's Historical style – California Gold Rush



Other Considerations		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Various parking solutions were studied. A 2-Level underground parking scheme was identified as the only potential solution to meet the parking requirements. Underground parking was ruled out due to heavy excavation work due to on-site bedrock conditions and applicable height maximum requirements.
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