

# Shape Our Fremont

## **HARB Review of New Development In Historic Mission San Jose**

On April 7, the Historical Architectural Review Board (HARB) will review a proposal for a mixed-use project at the corner of Washington Boulevard and Ellsworth Street in the heart of the Mission San Jose Historic District. The project, known as Mission Paradise, would include eleven three-story townhouses and a large commercial building on the corner with two residential flats above it. The existing buildings on the site would be demolished.

The purpose of the HARB review is to determine if the proposal complies with the Mission San Jose Historic Overlay District Design Guidelines and Regulations, which include standards for architectural styles, heights, massing, and other details to ensure that new construction does not have a negative impact on the historically sensitive area. This document also defines the terms used in the regulations and guidelines, as well as the conditions under which exceptions may be granted.

### **Layout and Surroundings**

Seven of the proposed townhouses would be arranged in rows facing the streets -- four on Washington and three on Ellsworth. Four other townhouses would be clustered in the back corner of the lot with their front doors facing the walls of a two-story building on an adjacent lot. The commercial building would face both streets with entrances at the corner. The flats above it would have separate entrances at the rear of the building. The intended use of the commercial space is retail, which would allow small shops or specialty stores, but would not allow some other uses such as medical offices, schools, or restaurants.

All of the proposed buildings would have three-story white stucco walls and flat roofs with simulated roof eaves added around the upper edges of the buildings. An elevated courtyard between the commercial building and the townhouses on Ellsworth would serve as the required common open space for the project.

The lot on which the project would be built is one block from the historic crossroads of Mission and Washington Boulevards, and the project would be visible from one of the remaining original buildings of the old Mission San Jose. The site is also surrounded by several historic or potentially historic buildings in the old downtown area. All of these older buildings are two-stories tall with sloped gable or hip roofs. HARB will have to consider these details when making its recommendation to the Planning Commission.

### **Looking Ahead**

Another thing HARB will have to consider is that any decision on this proposal may serve as a precedent for future projects in the area. For example, the same developer is also proposing a separate project diagonally across Ellsworth on the site of the former Mclvors hardware store. This proposal would have the same architectural style, same heights, same flat roofs, and even more townhouses. A third mixed-use development proposal on Ellsworth by another developer is currently under review and may also be affected by this HARB decision.

The HARB meeting is scheduled for April 7 and will be held via teleconferencing. Residents may express their comments and concerns about the Mission Paradise proposal before the meeting by contacting Fremont Staff Team Lead Mark Hungerford at [mhungerford@fremont.gov](mailto:mhungerford@fremont.gov)

For more information and links to the Mission San Jose Design Guidelines and the H.A.R.B. agenda when posted, visit [www.ShapeOurFremont.com](http://www.ShapeOurFremont.com)