

DYAR ARCHITECTURE

June 30, 2023

Mayor Potter and Members of the City Council
City of Carmel-by-the-Sea
P.O. Box CC
Carmel-by-the-Sea, California, 93921

RE: Proposed Pine Inn Cottage Suites and Garage Project Description

Dear Mr. Mayor and Council Members,

This letter is to give an introduction and description of what we are calling the Pine Inn Cottage Suites and Garage project, located at Block 54, Lots 18 and 20 at the NE corner of Monte Verde Street and Sixth Avenue, directly across the street from the Pine Inn.

BACKGROUND

The property was rezoned for a commercial Pine Inn parking structure back in 1960 and has been utilized consistently from then until today for this use. While having a parking structure adjacent to the 49-room, historic Pine Inn has been functionally important, a large, open parking area with parked cars and exposed asphalt has really been an *eye-sore* for this area of town. The current condition provides a poor relationship to the adjacent First Murphy Park to the East, with tall retaining walls dropping to asphalt; does not provide a proper transition from the downtown core to the residential district; and certainly does not contribute to the design sensibilities of the town nor comply with the commercial design guidelines.

Over the years since the purchase of the property in the 1980's, City officials, Staff and the owner, Richard Gunner, have discussed remedying this condition by creating a covered parking structure here with a few hotel units above. Mr. Gunner, in fact, did successfully pursue and construct a project to cover an open asphalt parking lot with hotel units and green roofs for the directly adjacent Tally Ho Inn to the West. It can be said there was, for many, a general consensus that a project on this parcel which maintained the same amount of parking spaces, covering them with a structure which also had green roofs, open space and hotel units above would be a significant improvement over the existing condition.

The existing zoning (R-1) is a strange aberration and is not consistent with the existing use nor the current community design objectives which would discourage large, open parking areas in R-1 district.

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This property is directly adjacent to the very large Pine Inn structure and across the street from the Tally Ho Inn, both zoned Commercial and up against the large, Christian Science Church. It has never made sense to have this island of R-1 in the middle of this kind of density. The way Carmel-by-the-Sea has developed and been planned is clearly based on having the most density and mass at the central commercial district centered along Ocean Avenue with the gradual reduction of density, transitioning this out toward the residential neighborhoods—Central Commercial, Service Commercial, Residential Commercial, R-4, then R-1. The zoning of our Pine Inn parking lot property has always seemed some sort of mistake from the beginning. There are virtually no other examples of Central Commercial being directly up against R-1 zoning, except at the Carmel Plaza which is separated by the wide Junipero Street boulevard from the First Presbyterian Church.

A change in the zoning and planning designation of this property is the only way to solve a currently highly unsatisfactory situation for the City. Having an empty, open asphalt parking structure in this wonderful part of downtown Carmel is not only under-utilized and inappropriate, but really a waste of what could provide a much more vital and important contribution to the City. We can do much better

Our proposal addresses the following:

1. It maintains the number of existing parking places while covering and obscuring the parked cars and asphalt from public view, while adding one additional street parking space along Sixth Avenue.
2. It enhances the pedestrian path from First Murphy Park down to Monte Verde while providing a subtle, easy transition from park into the project.
3. It dramatically improves the transition from the commercial downtown core to the residential district with a more natural and consistent reduction of mass and scale from Ocean Avenue to the residential neighborhood, as well as, enhancing the visual quality of this property with the elimination of the inappropriate parking lot from public view, and replacing it with a structure with beautiful natural materials, forms and scale that are generated from the residential character of Carmel.
4. It creates a **new workforce/employee housing unit** on the property.

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5. It maintains all the existing trees on the site, including the planter along Sixth Avenue and provides open space through the use of terraces, the open courtyard and the “landscape buffer” between First Murphy Park and the cottage site.
6. It provides a landscaped courtyard which is open to the public and does provide an intra-block walkway through the property from the SE corner on Sixth to the NW corner on Monte Verde.
7. The project upgrades a portion of the current hotel room stock in the Pine Inn, while not increasing the number of rooms.
8. The project follows and exemplifies the Commercial Design Guideline which states, “new buildings should not imitate styles of the past but strive to achieve compatibility with the old.”

Parking

The project keeps the same number of parking spaces as the existing structure while meeting current accessibility and EV regulations. In order to do this, while maintaining the existing trees and planters, the spaces need to be in the approximately same existing location. This does require the parking structure, in order to cover the spaces, to extend to the property line at Monte Verde. Please note, even while the lower stone form extends to the front property line, the hotel rooms above are setback 11’-4” from this front property line. The existing parking area entrance and curb cut is maintained on Monte Verde, while the curb cut along Sixth Avenue is eliminated thereby adding one additional public parking space.

Water Use, Number of Hotel Rooms and Workforce/Manager’s Unit

The water for the project is provided by consolidating and upgrading 18 of the hotel rooms in the existing 49-room Pine Inn, reducing the number of rooms in the existing Pine Inn to 40. The project proposes transferring (7) hotel rooms to the adjacent parking lot property (which is considered by MPWMD to be the same site, is owned by the same entity, and is currently used as part of the Pine Inn for their parking). The additional water provided by the (2) other rooms eliminated will be used for a workforce/employee housing unit and landscaping. The MPWMD has verified that this is consistent with their rules and regulations.

Enhancing the Pedestrian Path

As discussed above, First Murphy Park currently abruptly terminates into the subject property with retaining walls dropping to asphalt. The meandering path through First Murphy just meets an unimproved concrete sidewalk. This project has its courtyard level and landscape “buffer” at the approximate same elevation at the property line as the park. This allows for the much subtler, easy transition from

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park to hotel property. In terms of building mass, only the smaller elevator form is near this corner; the rest of this area on our parcel is given to landscape which creates the perception of a merging of park with the new development. As a pedestrian walks down the path through the park, they look towards landscape plantings and trees within the development site and then meet, instead of swaths of concrete like the existing condition, another path of permeable pavers which meanders downhill with Carmel stone planters and garden/park-like landscaping toward Monte Verde.

After walking through the park, pedestrians can also stroll up the steps and walk through the open, landscape courtyard. They can turn back or can also take the steps down exiting to Monte Verde Street, thus providing another of Carmel's intra-block walkways. Many hotels have these open courtyards and this design continues this tradition exemplified with such properties as the Pine Inn, Lobos Lodge, Lamp Lighter Inn, and Cypress Inn.

Transition from Central Commercial

This project proposes a relatively modest density, only using 7 rooms of the 49-rooms in the main hotel structure (with 1 new workforce housing unit) and uses forms and materials derived from the residential character of the town, stays within the residential 24-foot height limit, and allows for generous open space with the courtyard, the terraces and landscape buffer toward the park. All this while providing a new structure that is of an appropriate use and Per General Plan Policy I-60: enhances the visual quality of the area and improves the transition between the commercial and R-1 districts. The large stone planters are maintained and enhanced on Sixth Avenue, as well as, on the North and East property lines to preserve trees while greatly improving the landscaping.

The Architecture

Rather than the rooms being within a larger solid like the adjacent Pine Inn, this project breaks down the mass so that the individual rooms are expressed in form, as a way to connect more to the human scale and aid in transitioning to the residential neighborhood. The rooms along Monte Verde Street use gable forms with slate roofs and wood ceilings revealing the warm interior, while the rooms facing Sixth Avenue are stone with flat green roofs. These forms will seem to emerge from the existing stone planters and, with a flat roof, stay low so the view from the First Murphy Park deck is maintained and enhanced. This deck will now look out beyond our site toward a peek of the ocean as it did before, but instead of looking at parked cars and asphalt, people will look down on green roofs, garden courtyards and slate roofs.

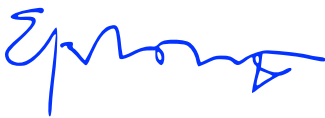
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The stone two-story structure at the NE corner of the property, pulls back from the existing terraced planters, but still stays clear from interfering with the views from the First Murphy deck. This stone form will still be very much screened by the existing trees. The 2nd story, room no. 7, is clearly above the underground portion of the garage and thus cannot be considered a 3rd story. While still under the 24-foot height limit, it is the most vertical form proposed and we see it as inspired by Jeffer's Tor House and Hawk's tower.

In many ways, the proposed design is inspired by the historic architecture of Carmel. The gable forms of the front room relate to the town's myriad of cottages and the nearby Seven Arts building and the Lamp Lighter Inn. The use of the slate roofs to the English and Storybook architecture in the village. The use of stucco connects to the Pine Inn, the Tally Ho Inn addition and the Lobos Lodge, but also to the Cypress Inn and the many Spanish colonial buildings. The use of the stone connects the building back to the existing site with its stone retaining walls and planters, as well as, to the wonderful tradition of stone masonry seen throughout Carmel—the Fire Station, the garden walls of the Art Association, the Tor House and Frank Lloyd Wright Walker house. The window design incorporates narrow muntins creating rectilinear window lights which can be seen across the street at the Pine Inn; custom wood shutters will be integrated into the street-facing doors and windows to provide warm privacy screening.

As explained, the architecture is indeed inspired by the history and context of Carmel making a new interpretation and striving for, yes, compatibility, but more to the point, creating a rich dialog with the past while creating something new and appropriate for the present and future.

Sincerely,



Erik D. Dyar, AIA

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June 28, 2023

Pine Inn Cottage Suites and Garage Data:

Proposed Building Coverage

Garage Level Above Ground**	=	2,858 sf
Main Hotel Structure Above Underground garage	=	1,739 sf
Workforce Unit and Room 7	=	608 sf
<u>Elevator</u>	=	<u>80 sf</u>
Total Proposed Building Coverage	=	5,285 sf or 66%
Max. Allowable Building Coverage in R-4	=	5,440 sf or 68%***

** Per Section 17.14.210.F.1. The maximum height of the finished floor level above an underground parking garage facing any public street, way, place or park, shall not be higher than five feet above the existing grade or the official street grade, whichever measurement results in the lower height.

***Per Section 17.14.130

Proposed Floor Area

Rooms 1-6	=	3,701 sf
Upper Level Room 7	=	390 sf
Workforce/Employee Unit	=	518 sf
Elevator	=	80 sf
<u>Garage Area Above Grade</u>	=	<u>2,507 sf</u>
Total Proposed Floor Area	=	7,196 sf or 89.9%
Max. Allowable Floor Area ****	=	7,200 sf or 90.0%

**** Per Section 17.14.140.B. Courtyard and Intrablock Walkway bonus

