



Town of Mammoth Lakes Advisory Design Panel Staff Report

Date:	June 8, 2018	File No.:	Major Design Review (DR) 17-002
Place:	Council Chambers, 2 nd Floor Minaret Village Shopping Center Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546	Project:	Mammoth Arts and Cultural Center
Time:	After 10:00 a.m.	Location:	114 College Parkway
Appeal Status:	Not Applicable	General Plan:	Institutional Public (IP)
Applicant / Owner:	Rich Boccia / Mammoth Lakes Foundation	Specific Plan:	Not Applicable
Environmental Review:	Initial Study / Mitigated Negative Declaration (in process)	Zoning:	Public and Quasi-Public (P-QP)

TITLE: Mammoth Arts and Cultural Center Design Review.

A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Advisory Design Panel (ADP) is requested to review the proposed Mammoth Arts and Cultural Center project, located to the east of the existing Edison Theater and north of College Parkway. The Mammoth Arts and Cultural Center (MACC) project includes a new performing arts theater, an outdoor amphitheater, a storage building, a new parking lot, and other site improvements such as walkways and rebuilding the existing parking lot.

The project is subject to the Town's General Plan, Zoning Code, Design Guidelines, and Color Handbook, all of which are available for review on the Town's website (<https://www.townofmammothlakes.ca.gov/>). Staff requests that the ADP review, discuss, and provide comments on the site and building design, based on the analysis provided in this staff report and the standards and recommendations provided for in the guiding documents.

B. DESIGN REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

1. Background

All new commercial construction projects require approval of a Major Design Review application by the Planning and Economic Development Commission (PEDC), pursuant to Municipal Code Section 17.88.020. The purpose of the design review is to implement the General Plan policies related to community design and character, to promote excellence in site planning and design to complement the natural environment and enhance the image of the town as a mountain resort community, and ensure that

Report Prepared By:
Ruth Traxler, Associate Planner

Report Approved By:
Sandra Moberly, Community and
Economic Development Director

the architectural design of structures and their materials and colors are appropriate to the function of the project, the climate, and natural vegetation.

Projects which are deemed significant by the Community and Economic Development Department also require review by the ADP prior to review and a decision by the PEDC. The role of the ADP is to provide impartial and professional advice to Town staff and the PEDC on site planning and building design based on the same guidance that staff uses in their analysis. Those recommendations are then typically used to make changes to the project that improve conformity with the guiding documents, which include the Town's General Plan, Zoning Code, Design Guidelines, and Color Handbook.

A Major Design Review application for the MACC project was submitted to the Town in August 2017 in order to initiate the environmental review process (no building or site plans were submitted). By April 2018, the materials required for the ADP design review had been received and after staff analysis of the submittal was complete, a meeting of the ADP was scheduled.

2. Project Proposal

The MACC is the result of a partnership between the Mammoth Lakes Foundation, Cerro Coso Community College, Town of Mammoth Lakes, and private donors. The project includes a new performing arts theater, an outdoor amphitheater (and portable toilet area), a storage building, a new parking lot, and other site improvements such as walkways and rebuilding the existing parking lot. The existing Edison Theater will remain.

The MACC is intended to be a year-round venue for performing arts events, including live theater, musical performances, films, lectures, conferences, and community activities. There is also the option for other special events to be scheduled. The performing arts theater will have 298 seats and the outdoor amphitheater will accommodate approximately 500 people.

3. Design Review and Analysis

The design review and analysis in this report is organized following the organization of the content in the Design Guidelines. The Design Guidelines are used as the primary reference in this report, as the guidelines were written to represent the goals and policies provided for in the General Plan and Municipal Code. Comments have been provided to address consistency and conformity with the Design Guidelines.

a. Site Design Guidelines (Design Guidelines, pages 3-1 to 3-9)

- i. In general, the site has been designed to integrate well with surrounding natural features and adjacent properties. To the extent feasible, the buildings and parking lots are oriented to take advantage of solar exposure and to avoid shadows. Pedestrian and vehicular circulation has been designed to minimize potential conflicts and provide functional access to the various buildings. The buildings are sited at lower elevations on the property, reducing visual impacts to adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- ii. The outdoor amphitheater is oriented to the west, which may present visual conflicts during sunset hours (e.g. the sun shining into the amphitheater area). The natural contours of the property also lend themselves to a more southern orientation.
- iii. Parking areas should be located in areas least visible from the street, to the extent possible, and where visible, screened from view by landscaping. Additional landscaping is required along the south and eastern sides of the new parking lot for screening purposes. Additional shrubs should be included on the south side and trees considered on the east side.

- iv. As required by the Guidelines, utilities and mechanical equipment are all proposed to be enclosed or interior to the main buildings. Rooftops will be free of equipment clutter. The hardware associated with the proposed solar panels will be consistent with the color scheme of the building.
 - v. The materials used for the site retaining walls are represented differently in the landscaping plans (granite boulders) and the civil plans (Redi-Rock) and this will need to be clarified.
- b. Architectural Guidelines (Design Guidelines, pages 4-1 to 4-9)
- i. Unless otherwise specified, the comments in this section apply to the new performing arts theater.
 - ii. In large buildings, the design should ease the effect of a single large mass. The building form, as seen from the south and west elevations, includes variation and an appropriate scale and proportions to achieve this goal. These elevations present a comfortable and interesting perspective for the pedestrian environment. This should be considered as it applies to the north and east elevations and the upper sections of the building.
 - iii. Flat roofs and long, uninterrupted roof forms are generally not permitted. The applicant has noted that a flat roof is proposed to address potential issues with snow shedding and snow removal and that those may create hazardous conditions for the public.
 - iv. The roof has many changes in height, which is encouraged, and variation in eave lines. Exposed rafter tails have been incorporated on the south elevation, under the sloped roof supporting the solar panels. Deep overhangs have been provided on the south and east entry areas.
 - v. The building design should be composed to provide variation and visual interest and provide an aesthetic appeal to all sides of a building where visible from adjacent properties or public spaces. The east facing elevation is oriented towards the amphitheater, a significant public outdoor space, but has little visual interest other than the stage itself. In several other locations, there are large expanses of surface material with little articulation.
 - vi. The building base is the lower part of the building where it meets the ground. A clear distinction between the building base and wall material should be present, but has not been provided for in the design. The building base shall be of adequate size and scale, in proportion to the building, to ensure that buildings have substance where they meet the ground. The materials and textures used should help to create a pedestrian scale.
 - vii. The façade, the face of the building, should have visual interest, character, and personality through the use of materials and scale. Features such as windows and doors shall be designed to create scale on the building façade. A limited number of doors and windows have been included in the design and may either be increased or further articulated (i.e. using molding, frames, paneling, hardware, recessed windows, bay windows, etc.) to create additional interest at the pedestrian level.
 - viii. Buildings should be designed to maximize use of natural light. While theaters are unique with regards to the need for darker interiors, there may be additional opportunities for light in the lobby and other gathering locations within the building.

- ix. Buildings should be oriented towards the street. The primary exterior patio area is oriented towards the parking lot to the west. There is a secondary entry plaza located adjacent to the street on the south elevation, but the building is not generally oriented towards the street.
- x. Buildings should respect the character of the neighborhood, or in this case, of Cerro Coso Community College. The architecture and materials used on the MACC are not representative of the architectural style and materials used throughout the rest of the college campus.
- xi. Materials should be of natural, renewable, and indigenous where possible. Exterior siding materials shall be appropriate for the neighborhood or regional area and harmonize with the site and surrounding structures. The use of wood or wood-like materials and natural stone is strongly encouraged. Wall materials of horizontal wood or wood-like siding, vertical board and batten, and stone shall be the primary materials at pedestrian levels. Heavy members such as timber, logs, and steel with matte finish are encouraged as framing or design accent materials.

The primary material used is vertical metal siding, from the building base to the roof. There are limited accent materials proposed which include stained cedar siding, raw steel columns and beams, wood fascia and beams, and board-formed concrete. While metal siding is not prohibited, the extent to which metal siding is proposed for this building is not representative of the architectural style of the area and is not in keeping with the recommendations in the Design Guidelines. In addition, there is no building base material and no use of wood (or wood-like) or stone materials at the pedestrian level (up to 12 feet).

- xii. Color choices should consider colors on neighboring buildings and taken from the natural setting of Mammoth Lakes. They should have low reflectivity and be subtle, neutral or earth-tone colors. On large planar surfaces, select a color that is slightly darker than surrounding natural colors. Roof colors should be dark and muted rather than bright.

The colors selected for the metal siding, taupe and hemlock green, are natural and neutral. The taupe color, however, as represented on a large surface, is brighter and lighter than is recommended.

c. Landscape and Public Space Guidelines (Design Guidelines, pages 5-1 to 5-13)

- i. Several trees are proposed to be removed along the south elevation of the performing arts theater to improve solar access. However, in that same location, new evergreen trees are proposed to be planted. Other shrub or perennial plantings may be more appropriate if solar access is the reason for tree removal.
- ii. Seating should be provided in the primary exterior patio and the secondary entry plaza areas. This could be provided in the form of informal seating by way of low walls, long horizontal steps, and / or large boulders and rocks.
- iii. Portable toilets to serve a permanent event facility, the outdoor amphitheater, may not be allowed. Staff will coordinate with the Building Official to determine restroom requirements. The Design Guidelines state that outdoor gathering areas shall provide restrooms within surrounding buildings at an appropriate quantity and location.

d. Lighting Guidelines (Design Guidelines, pages 6-1 to 6-3)

- i. Lighting has been designed in conformance with the Guidelines. The parking lot lighting is pole-mounted and located, where possible, in landscaped areas. There is a difference between the lighting provided for in the building, pedestrian, and parking areas. Lighting fixtures use energy efficient sources (LED) and the fixture design is complementary to the architecture. All lighting proposed meets the dark sky requirements.

4. Agency Comments

Staff routed the application to the Mammoth Community Water District and the Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District. Comments from those agencies have been incorporated into the design review analysis.

5. Next Steps

The ADP's comments will be documented in meeting minutes by the Secretary and distributed to the panel members and the applicant. As a part of their comments, the ADP may request that the applicant return to a subsequent meeting of the ADP to review any changes made to the project. After review of the project by the ADP has concluded, and any applicable staff and agency comments have been addressed, the environmental review process will continue. The Planning and Economic Development Commission will ultimately approve or deny the Major Design Review application after completion of the environmental review.

C. RECOMMENDATION

Staff requests that the ADP review, discuss, and provide comments on the site and building design, based on the analysis provided in this staff report and the standards and recommendations provided for in the guiding documents. The ADP may request that the applicant return to a subsequent meeting of the ADP to review any proposed changes to the project.

Attachments

Attachment 1: Mammoth Arts and Cultural Center project plans and visual simulations