



Painter Preservation
HISTORIC PRESERVATION & URBAN DESIGN

September 22, 2023

Mr. Mike Jolly, SVP Construction
EKN Development Group
220 Newport Center Drive, Suite 11-262
Newport Beach, CA 92660

Re Historic Preservation Compliance Review for the EKN Appellation Hotel

Dear Mike,

Attached please find a revised Compliance Review for the proposed EKN Appellation Hotel (formerly the Hotel Weaver). This review is required of proposed projects within Petaluma's Downtown Commercial Historic District (note that the subject property, encompassing APN 006-063-008, 008-064-009, and 008-063-011, includes three parcels, two of which are in the District) and responds to the *Petaluma Historic Commercial Design Guidelines* (1999). The document includes guidelines that are tailored to the rehabilitation of properties within the city's Downtown Commercial District, a local historic district, and the National Historic Register District, a National Register district. Collectively they are called the Petaluma Historic Commercial District. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards that are applied to this project are the Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings.

This review is based on drawings for the hotel dated September 8, 2023, prepared for the city's SPAR review. The drawings were prepared by Page/ of San Francisco and associated sub-consultants. Photographs of downtown Petaluma and urban design analyses are found in this document, as well as architectural and landscape drawings for the project, augment the photographs in this Compliance Review, which additionally presents the same context from a pedestrian and driver's point of view and provides a narrative description of the buildings surrounding the development site.

Please do not hesitate to call if you have comments or questions.

Sincerely,

Diana J. Painter, PhD
Owner/Principal Architectural Historian

COMPLIANCE REVIEW FOR THE EKN APPELLATION HOTEL

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Building

The proposed EKN Appellation Hotel is a five-story building with a roof-top terrace and an underground parking garage. It is located at the southwest corner of Petaluma Blvd. South and B Street and addressed as 2 Petaluma Blvd. South, on a site that, until 2009, held a gas station.¹ Two of the three parcels that make up the project area are within the Petaluma Downtown Commercial District, a local historic district, and the Petaluma National Historic Register District. Collectively they are called the Petaluma Historic Commercial District, which is how they will be referred to in this document.

The first floor of the proposed EKN Appellation Hotel houses the hotel lobby, the back of house functions, mechanical rooms, and the restaurant. This level is surmounted by four stories of hotel rooms and a recessed rooftop terrace containing a public bar/restaurant, which is serviced in part by the ground floor restaurant via a service elevator. There is a small indoor even space on the terrace which can be closed off from the elements in inclement weather. This small space on the terrace will primarily be used for restaurant and bar seating. It can also be used for small functions such as meetings and birthdays. The subterranean parking garage provides for 58 parking spaces, loading spaces, and storage.

The building is a rectangular volume as viewed from Petaluma Blvd. South and B Street, with an open space extending from the second-floor terrace on the back of the building to the roof, as viewed from 4th Street. Three of the interior rooms on levels three through five have balconies overlooking this terrace. The building is close to or at the property lines on the north, south, east, and west sides. At the main public corner at Petaluma Blvd. South and B Street the ground floor level is open with an L-shaped cutaway which allows opportunity for indoor-outdoor dining. The outdoor eating area is separated from the public sidewalk by freestanding planters and differentiated from it with contrasting pavers. The interior of the building is separated from the outdoor eating areas by folding panels ("stackable operable storefront panels"). A small open terrace is located at the corner of Petaluma Blvd. South and B Street at the fifth-floor level. A recessed entryway of the same depth as the outdoor eating area is located at the southeast corner (the right side as viewed from Petaluma Blvd. South), which serves the main entry. It is clad in cast concrete pavers and is surmounted by an open metal canopy whose design echoes the decorative patterns seen throughout the building in finishes and features, which is a curvilinear pattern within a repeating geometric framework.

The building will be clad in flush porcelain panels in a bone or grieger color (called Maker Rope). Contrasting cladding, seen primarily at the fifth level, where the building face is set back from the main body of the building, is also clad in porcelain panels in a color called "Smoke." Accent panels are placed at the sliding glass doors and windows on the main body of the building, composed of laser cut metal panels in a decorative pattern. Balconies are placed at the second through fourth levels of the building. They are recessed as well as projecting beyond the main building plane. Balustrades are constructed of metal in an open, curvilinear pattern echoing the patterns found in the etched glass panels on the storefront at the ground floor level.

¹ Directions in Petaluma are referred to in this report as follows. North is toward Petaluma Blvd. North and Santa Rosa; east is toward the Petaluma River (from the project site) and East Petaluma; south is toward Petaluma Blvd. South and San Francisco; and west is toward the Pacific Ocean.



Figure 1: Rendering of the EKN Appellation Hotel from Petaluma Blvd. South and B Street

Windows and doors will have clear glass and dark bronze metal frames. The proportions of the storefront and upper story windows will repeat the patterns of the surrounding traditional storefronts and windows but will be proportionate and appropriate for this infill building (see SPAR 2.3). The overall color palette for the hotel is shades of pale, warm gray to dark charcoal, and warm tones of bone, tan and pale brown or wood tone. Lighting fixtures will be in a complementary blue color.

Storefront windows at the ground floor of the building are narrow with one-over-one-lights, the upper light having the appearance of a transom. Curvilinear patterns are etched in the glass panels, repeating motifs found elsewhere on the building and creating visual interest at the pedestrian level. The bulkheads are finished with two-tone decorative tiles in a triangular motif.

The fifth floor is occupied by executive and deluxe suites around the perimeter on the Petaluma Blvd. South and B Street sides. There are narrow balconies on these same facades and an open terrace at the public corner, above the ground floor restaurant. The bays are marked by two sliding glass doors each, separated by metal accent panels, similar to the treatment of the balconies on floors two through four.

The rooftop terrace, which is pulled back from the Petaluma Blvd. South and B Street faces, features outdoor eating areas on the open terrace around the north and east perimeter of this floor and a covered, interior event space centered close to Petaluma Blvd. South. Behind the event space is a pantry and other support spaces. Windows and doors on the meeting room consist of full-height clear glass with dark bronze metal frames, of similar proportions as those on the ground level.

Landscaping

Landscape elements for the EKN Appellation Hotel augment the design of the building by providing complementary colors and patterns to the materials and finishes of the building and supplying elements that enhance public and private spaces within the hotel property, as well as blending them where appropriate. The softness of the landscape materials complements the hard surfaces of the building materials themselves.

Treatments at the ground floor include enhanced pavement and the provision of a variety of planters. Several types of pavers are utilized, helping to denote the different spaces. Three new street trees with decorative grates are added to the Petaluma Blvd. South and B Street frontages, while one existing tree is retained. The terrace at the second floor level and the rooftop terrace are also landscaped with plantings, hardscape, and special furnishings (see SPAR 1.4 and 1.8).

REGULATORY CONTEXT

Development at the proposed building site is governed by the *Petaluma Historic Commercial District Design Guidelines* (1999), among other regulations. It is partially within the Petaluma Historic Commercial District. As such it is also subject to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, with a particular emphasis on Standard #9, which reads, "New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historical materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment." Standard #10 also refers to new construction, stating that, "New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired." The boundary of the Central Petaluma Specific Plan (CPSP) (2003) is on Petaluma Blvd. South, across the street from the project site; standards from the plan do not apply to this project.

URBAN DESIGN CONTEXT

The urban design context in the area immediately surrounding the proposed hotel site differs from that in other portions of the district, in that it is less cohesive, but it is important because it anchors the south end of the historic districts, which are significant gateways to downtown Petaluma. The spatial qualities of the urban fabric in the vicinity of Petaluma Blvd. South and B Street are more amorphous than that which exists in the heart of the district, due to parking lots and the wide street frontages that occur when Petaluma Blvd. North curves and heads north-northwest from its formerly northwest/southeast direction. In other words, when Petaluma Blvd. briefly splits into two streets in this location, separated by Center Park, the right-of-way becomes uncharacteristically wide. This open space, which was historically open and used for parking, is now planted with Redwood trees.

There is an atypical number of surface parking lots immediately around the proposed building site, including parking in front of The Great Mill, north of the Sanderson Ford Motor Company building, and south of the proposed project. Bank of the West, south of the project site, assumes a more modern urban development pattern, with parking on the north and west sides of the building.

Further south, the Theatre District assumes a more traditional development pattern, with buildings that meet the property lines. These buildings, however, are contemporary and do not display the richness of materials and design that is characteristic of the Petaluma Historic Commercial District as a whole. The Theatre District is designed in a contemporary pastiche of historical styles.

Views and vistas in this area of downtown Petaluma include views of the hillsides to the east and west, as viewed down B Street. Note that there is not a view of the river, since the Petaluma River is significantly lower than the banks that hold it. Equally important are views to the north, which focus on Petaluma's cast iron district and specifically, the Masonic building. Views to the south are primarily of Petaluma's new urbanist Theatre District, a relatively recent development.

HISTORIC DESIGN CHARACTER

The buildings in Petaluma's Commercial Historic District represent most periods in late 19th and early 20th century design and many architectural styles, but the core buildings are from the Victorian era and range in style from the ornate cast-iron-front buildings to relatively simple one-and-two-story commercial buildings. In urban design terms, they generally extend to the lot lines of their urban lots and are partywall structures, located immediately in back of the public sidewalk. Architecturally, both late 19th and early 20th century historic structures generally display the following characteristics. They have simple forms, often reflecting the rectangular lot on which they are situated. Windows and doors are emphasized with architectural detailing. The three-dimensional modulation of traditional historic structures results from the architectural detailing, which projects from the face of the building, and the fact that doors and windows are set back slightly from the building plane. Further visual interest results from the fact that the materials and detailing look different in different lights and weather conditions. They also tend to wear well, as compared to many modern materials. The building forms are often embellished with shaped or articulated parapets and distinctive cornices. Windows above the ground floor assume a regular rhythm, are typically vertically aligned, and at the ground floor, retail storefronts create pedestrian interest.

COMPLIANCE REVIEW

The following evaluation is based on the Guidelines for New Construction contained in the *Petaluma Historic Commercial District Design Guidelines* (p. 38) and the Secretary of Interior's Standards that apply to new construction, which are standards #9 and #10. In the following sections quotes from the guidelines appear in italics, followed by the response based on the proposed building and associated landscape design.

7.0 Guidelines for New Construction

The construction of new buildings on vacant lots in the Downtown is strongly encouraged. The design of a new infill building, particularly its front façade, is a special challenge. The new façade should be designed to look appropriate and compatible in the midst of the surrounding buildings.

There is no definitive answer as to what constitutes good infill design. Good design will vary according to the surrounding setting. Because an infill building is new, it should look new. However, its appearance must always be sensitive to the character of its neighbors without mimicking them.

The EKN Appellation Hotel will look new. Its design also contrasts with its immediate neighbors primarily through building height. The buildings immediately surrounding the building do not provide a strong context for the building because of their varied ages, styles, and relatively low scale. The cast iron and masonry buildings that begin a half block north of the proposed project provide a context with which to assess this building. A point of comparison is the three-story Masonic building at the corner of Petaluma Blvd. North and Western Avenue. The EKN Appellation Hotel is two stories taller. However, the floor-to-ceiling ratio of the Masonic building is greater, de-emphasizing this difference. The Masonic building also has large windows, but the ratio of wall area to window area is greater. The EKN Appellation Hotel, in contrast, features more glazing and smaller wall areas. The Masonic building also has more variation and dimension in its architectural details, which is typical of a historic building of its era, in contrast to the modern EKN Appellation Hotel. In general the two buildings share a building form that extends from the back of sidewalk and fill their respective urban lots. The EKN Appellation Hotel gains its architectural interest from its materials, finishes, and their decorative treatments, in contrast to a building like the Masonic Lodge, which gains its architectural interest and meaning from its architectural details. The contrasting expressions befit the respective ages of the buildings while providing an equally rich architectural treatment.

7.1 Proportions of the façade

The average height and width of the surrounding buildings determine a general set of proportions for an infill structure. The infill building should fill the entire space and reflect the characteristic rhythm of facades along the street.

Note that the illustration on p. 38 of the *Guidelines* assumes an infill structure that occurs within a block, so that the surrounding buildings are partywall structures, or directly abut the new building. The EKN Appellation Hotel fills its lot area (with the exception of the outdoor areas noted in the building description) and in this sense is consistent with other buildings (both historic and non-historic) in the immediate area, by respecting the street wall. It is taller than surrounding buildings, which are one-to-three stories in height but reflects key horizontal demarcations that strengthen the relationships between the existing buildings (both historic and non-historic) and the proposed hotel. See the 9-8-2023 SPAR application package for analyses of how the proportions found in the new building reflect building proportions found in the heart of the historic district and street wall patterns that exist in the historic district (see SPAR 2.1 and 2.3).

If the site is large, the mass of the façade can be broken into a number of small bays, to maintain a rhythm similar to the surrounding buildings.

The public facades of the EKN Appellation Hotel are broken into vertical bays, as noted above, to maintain a rhythm similar to surrounding historic buildings (see Project Description).

7.2 Composition

The composition of the infill façade (that is, the organization of its parts) should be similar to that of surrounding facades.

Rhythms that carry throughout the block (such as window spacing) should be incorporated into the new façade.

The size and proportion of window and door openings of an infill building should be similar to those on surrounding facades. The same applies to the ratio of window area to solid wall for the façade as a whole.

As noted above, this infill situation for the EKN Appellation Hotel differs from that illustrated on p. 38 of the *Guidelines*. There is no prevailing pattern in the buildings closest to the project site. The size and proportions of window and door openings in buildings in the surrounding area and the ratio of window area to solid wall for the buildings vary based on their age, their style, and their use. The regular rhythms assumed by each building, including the EKN Appellation Hotel, is appropriate to the age, style and proportions of the building itself. Nonetheless attempts have been made in the design of the EKN Appellation Hotel to relate the overall proportions of the new building to historic buildings in the historic districts through relating horizontal lines such as the heights of the retail storefronts and respecting the proportions of openings, such as the ratio of width to height in the windows (see SPAR 2.3).

7.3 Detailing

Infill architecture should reflect some of the detailing of surrounding buildings in window shapes, cornice lines, and brickwork.

The detailing on the EKN Appellation Hotel differs from that seen in the majority of the historic district (see Historic Design Character above). Again, there is no prevailing pattern in the immediate area surrounding the EKN Appellation Hotel. Surrounding buildings are stucco-finished, painted brick, or horizontal wood; there is no typical pattern. The three cast-iron-front

and brick masonry buildings to the north, which set the tone for the historic district in this area, vary in their level of detailing from relatively simple to very ornate. However, the EKN Appellation Hotel reflects the proportions of windows in the district and respects prevailing proportions of these design features. The setback lines on the upper level of the EKN Appellation Hotel respects the prevailing cornice lines of the larger historic buildings in the district.

7.4 Materials

An infill façade should be composed of materials complimentary to the adjacent facades. The new buildings shall not unduly stand out as inappropriate or disconnected from the scheme of the surrounding buildings.

Again, there is no overriding historic character in the area immediately surrounding the EKN Appellation Hotel with which to blend. Surrounding buildings are not historic, for the most part (see Attachment A: The Historic Setting of the EKN Appellation Hotel) and do not reflect the historic materials present in other parts of the district. Considering the more distinctive historic buildings in the district, however, the materials of the EKN Appellation Hotel, such as the porcelain panels, reflect their own distinct richness and character. Accents consist of laser cut, perforated metal panels and decorative tile. The prevailing colors will be shades of bone, tan and brown (wood-tone) and bronze, and grays, from pale gray to charcoal, earth tones that reflect the many of the earth tones of historic structures in the historic districts (see SPAR 2.4).

7.5 Colors

The colors chosen for the face of an infill building shall compliment the colors of the neighboring buildings.

There is no cohesive color scheme in this area of the historic district, as there is a wide variety of colors and finishes on the immediately surrounding buildings. The neutral tones of the proposed EKN Appellation Hotel, however, will relate to the other more neutral building colors seen in the district (see SPAR 2.4), as well as provide a visual counterpoint to the more vividly colored buildings in the Theatre District. See above for a description of the proposed colors, as well as the descriptions and photographs of proposed building materials in the 9-8-2023 SPAR Application package by Page/ and the materials sample board.

7.6 Building setback

The new façade should be flush with its neighbors. If this cannot be achieved, the façade should be located such that it will present a natural break in the rhythm of the buildings along the street.

The EKN Appellation Hotel is built to the property line, with the exception of the narrow, L-shaped outdoor eating area at the northeast corner of the building site, which accommodates an indoor/outdoor eating area. This will improve the urban design character in this area of the district, which is now very amorphous in spatial terms, with several surface parking lots. It will fill in gaps in the street wall on Petaluma Blvd. and B Street and re-establish the tone for this type of urban development at this intersection.

Secretary of the Interior Standard #9

New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historical materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

The addition of the EKN Appellation Hotel to the historic district will not destroy any historical materials that characterize the property, as the property is currently vacant. The new work is differentiated from other buildings in the district, in that it is a modern building in design with contrasting but compatible building materials. As discussed above, the environment in the immediate setting of the hotel is fairly eclectic. The new building is less than a half a block, however, from the significant south end of the Petaluma Downtown Commercial District and Petaluma's National Register of Historic Places Commercial District, which contain its regionally important concentration of cast-iron-front buildings. The building contrasts to a degree with its existing environment in scale, but certain design features, such as the indoor/outdoor public area at the intersection of Petaluma Blvd. South and B Street, helps mitigate this effect. In terms of the larger urban design character of the south end of the district, this building will be a visual counterpoint to the Masonic building and buildings of the cast-iron district, as well as the Hotel Petaluma a few blocks away. In urban design terms, it will provide additional cohesion to this end of the district where it is now lacking and will set the tone for more traditional urban development here in the future.

Secretary of the Interior Standard #10

New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

It is the intention that this building is permanent. However, it could be removed from the district in the future without a loss of integrity as the site is now a vacant lot and the majority of immediately surrounding buildings are not contributing to the district.

Summary

The historic setting for the EKN Appellation Hotel in the south end of the historic district has seen some loss of integrity in the last ten-to-twenty years. Buildings have been demolished for parking over time, and this has led to a loss of cohesiveness in this area. As a result, there is not a strong context for a new building to respond to. Nonetheless, the proposed EKN Appellation Hotel will provide a solution by a building design that seeks to repair some of this loss by meeting the street edge and providing strong visual interest at the street level with quality materials and detailing and active uses that contribute to the public realm. The design, detailing, and materials of the building will 'wear' well, as they provide the traditional components of a street frontage in natural colors, with visual interest being provided by the materials, colors and textures. The upper floors of the building will continue to contribute to the public environment with building modulation, neutral colors, and quality materials and detailing. The upper terrace will contribute to an active public environment that is nonetheless pulled back from the street edges to minimize the height of the building. As an urban design solution, the building will enhance the downtown by providing continuity at the street edge, supplying a strong gateway to the south end of the historic district, and contributing to the public realm by increasing active uses and pedestrian interest on this site where none exists now.

ATTACHMENT A

The Historic Setting of the EKN Appellation Hotel

Two of the three parcels on which the proposed hotel will be located are within Petaluma's Downtown Commercial District, a local historic district, and the National Register Commercial District, a National Register District (APN 008-063-008 and APN 008-063-009 is within the district; APN 008-363-011 is outside the district). The hotel project is at the south end of the district, which encompass most of Petaluma's downtown core. A general overview of the downtown from the *Petaluma Historic Commercial District Design Guidelines* is as follows:

The downtown commercial buildings represent a remarkable architectural tapestry. Characterized by two- and three-story commercial buildings, the downtown area has a rare sampling of commercial architecture representing different styles from the 1870's to the 1950's.

The most striking of these are the outstanding collection of late 19th Century cast iron storefront buildings. The iron fronts of these buildings were cast in elaborate pieces by San Francisco foundries, laid out and numbered at the factory, then shipped up the river to be assembled at the building site by local builders. The pieces were placed over masonry structures to embellish what would otherwise have been fairly conventional facades.²

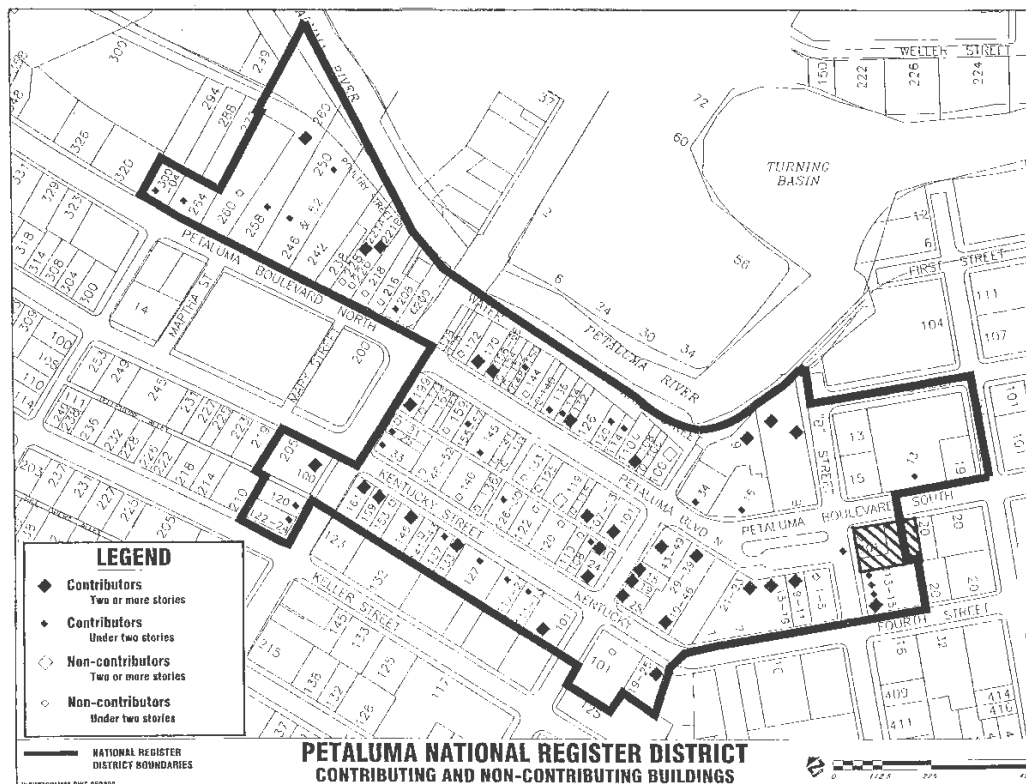


Figure 2: Petaluma National Register District Contributing and Non-Contributing Buildings

(Note that the contributing/non-contributing notations are outdated)

² City of Petaluma, *Petaluma Historic Commercial District Design Guidelines* (Petaluma, CA: City of Petaluma, 1999).

Architectural historian David Gebhard in his *The Guide to Architecture In San Francisco and Northern California* called the iron fronts unmatched in California architecture.³ The ensemble is arguably the most important grouping of historic buildings in the city, which is relevant here because they are close to the project site, signal the beginning of the historic district as one approaches the city from the south, and are an important urban design feature as one travels north on Petaluma Blvd., due to their location on a curve in the Boulevard.

The following describes the context of the EKN Appellation Hotel with respect to surrounding properties and its urban design context in general. The sites correspond to the numbers below in Figure 2. (Note that the project site does not strictly relate to the cardinal directions. For the purposes of this discussion, the site is bounded on the north by B Street and on the east by Petaluma Blvd. South. Rex Hardware is to the west, and Bank of the West is to the south.



Figure 2: Key to building photos and descriptions

³ David Gebhard, *The Guide to Architecture In San Francisco and Northern California*. (Salt Lake City: Gibbs-Smith Publisher, 1985 (1973)) 373.



Photo 1: Sanderson Ford Motor Company, looking east

Sanderson Ford Motor Company (Peet's Coffee)

To the east is the Sanderson Ford Motor Company building (housing Peet's Coffee today) by architect Brainerd Jones.⁴ It has been rehabilitated and in the course of that, many retail storefronts have been punched into the north side façade and a significant amount of signage added to what was once a solid brick wall. Despite these changes the building is still considered a contributor to the historic district and its front façade is intact and important in the streetscape. Its parking lot on the north side of the building detracts from the district.

⁴ Katherine J. Rinehart, *Petaluma, A History in Architecture*. (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2005), 30.



Photo 2: Theatre District, looking south

The Theatre District

To the southeast is Petaluma's Theatre District. This is a new "New Urbanist" district that imitates various architectural styles in contemporary materials. Southeast of the proposed hotel is a theater that is within the historic district and part of this development, at the corner of Petaluma Blvd. South and C Street. It is a ca 2005 concrete building with Art Deco/Streamline Moderne styling. The majority of the buildings within this development are southeast of the project and outside the historic district. They are typically three stories in height and are designed in various historicist styles.



Photo 3: Bank of the West, looking east

Bank of the West

To the south of the proposed hotel is the 1974 Bank of the West, located at the corner of Petaluma Blvd. South and C Street. It is a wood-frame building with a complex building footprint and multiple roof forms. To the north and west sides of the building are parking areas. It is outside the historic district. This building is currently vacant.



Photo 4: Rex Ace Hardware, looking southeast

Rex Ace Hardware

To the west of the proposed hotel is Rex Hardware. Rex Ace Hardware was a vernacular, wood-frame building with a false-front on B Street. It burned in 2006 and was replaced “in kind” with a contemporary imitation of the historic building, built in contemporary building materials, including Hardiplank. The complex, which evolved over time in an organic manner, is now a modern building. The small gabled building in the southwest corner of the lot is original. This property is no longer contributing to the district, with the exception of the gabled structure southwest of the main building.



Photo 5: Carnegie Library, looking northwest

The Carnegie Library

To the southwest of the proposed hotel, at the corner of Fourth and B Streets, is the Petaluma Museum. It is in a Classical Revival Carnegie Library designed in 1916 by Petaluma architect Brainerd Jones. It is set back from its property lines on the Fourth and B street sides and sited above the street. It is outside the historic district but is a historic resource.



Photo 6: 1 Petaluma Blvd. N., looking north

The Nelson Building

To the immediate north of the proposed hotel, across from Rex Hardware, is a one-story contemporary retail building called the Nielsen Building. It has a flat roof with a tall, unadorned parapet, a deep canopy over the sidewalk, and a glass curtain wall with aluminum-frame doors and windows on the retail storefronts, which are located on all three facades (it is a partywall structure with the neighboring building to the north). The façade of the 1950 building that faces the proposed hotel has a row of large, horizontally oriented windows under the canopy above a stucco-finished wall. The building, designed by architect Lloyd A. Rasmussen, is a non-contributor to the district, due to age.



Photo 7: Cast-iron-front buildings, looking northwest

The cast-iron-front buildings

To the north of the Neilson Building is a 1903, two-story vernacular commercial building. To its north begins Petaluma's collection of iconic cast iron buildings, which establish the tone for this south end of the historic district. These are tall, two-to-three-story masonry buildings with cast iron facades with Victorian detailing, often colorfully painted. They display intricate detailing, with retail storefronts at the ground floor and regularly spaced, one-over-one-light windows above, and decorative cornices, and parapets. The Masonic Building, at the corner of Western and Petaluma Blvd., is the most prominent in this location, due to its height, the clock tower on the building, and its placement. Of the buildings in the south end of the historic building, this one will be seen most prominently in juxtaposition to the proposed hotel (see Photo 11).



Photo 8: Center Park, looking south

Center Park

Also north of the proposed building is what is today known as Center Park. A narrow park, more akin to a wide median, separates the buildings described above from Petaluma Blvd. Historically this was a place to park horses and buggies. Today it is planted with Redwood trees. They are slowly dying and the northernmost tree was recently removed. The space is contributing to the district.



Photo 9: The Old Post Office Building, looking north

The Old Post Office

North of The Great Mill is the Old Post Office, another Brainerd Jones structure. This one story, brick masonry building follows the curve in the street at this location and so is an important building as part of the urban design context for the proposed project. It is constructed of blond brick and has a central shaped parapet and continuous storefronts with multi-light transoms along the street. It is contributing to the district.



Photo 10: The Great Mill, looking northeast

The Great Mill

Northeast of the proposed hotel is “The Great Mill,” the historic G. P. McNear Feed Mill. A portion of the complex was demolished in the mid-1970s and the remainder rehabilitated for commercial space. It is fronted by a parking lot on the Boulevard, partially screened by fig trees, where McNear’s offices historically stood. Some alterations to its historic appearance have been made. It is contributing to the district.



Photo 11: Center Park on left, Masonic Building in center, Old Post Office on right

View north on Petaluma Blvd.

This view north-northwest from Petaluma Blvd. South is a key view of the Masonic Building and its clock tower and other historic buildings in the downtown historic district. As the driver or pedestrian continues, the heart of Petaluma's shopping district on Petaluma Blvd. North unfolds up. Pictured is the view that a pedestrian crossing from corner of Petaluma Blvd. South and B Street at the outdoor eating area for the EKN Appellation Hotel to Center Park will see.