

**ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMISSION
CITY OF PALM DESERT
STAFF REPORT**

MEETING DATE: September 24, 2024

PREPARED BY: Carlos Flores, AICP, Principal Planner

SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE A DESIGN REVIEW FOR A FAÇADE RENOVIATION TO AN EXISTING SPA BUILDING FOR THE BIGHORN DEVELOPMENT AT 256 PALOWET DRIVE

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Architectural Review Commission find the project satisfies all findings for design review approval and approves the project as presented.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:

Executive Summary:

- **Case No.: Design Review 24-0008**

The Applicant (KHA Architects) on behalf of the property owner (Bighorn Golf Club) is requesting design review approval for a remodel and addition to an existing Spa and Wellness Center facility (Spa) located at 256 Palowet Drive (Project Site) for the existing Bighorn residential development (Bighorn).

On January 12, 1989, the Palm Desert City Council adopted Ordinance No. 564 which approved the “Villages of Bella Vista” master plan (Master Plan): an approximately 675-acre master planned residential development including over 1,000 residential units of various types, open space, golf course, sports courts, clubhouse, and amenities buildings, located at the southern edge of the City of Palm Desert city limits, to the west of Highway 74. Subsequent to approval, the development was constructed and re-named Bighorn. In 2001, the Spa was constructed as a complimentary building to the main Bighorn clubhouse building, consistent with the originally approved Master Plan.

Project Summary:

A. Property Description

The project site (Site) includes the existing two-story, 14,815 square foot (sf) Spa building, that is surrounded by existing amenities (sport courts, buildings, clubhouse, and parking) for the Bighorn development. The site is located on Palowet Drive, just west of Highway 74.

Exhibit 1 – Site Plan



B. Zoning, General Plan and Adjacent Uses

Table 1 – Adjacent Land Use and Land Use Designations

Location	Existing Use	General Plan	Zoning
Project Site	Existing Residential	Golf Course & Resort Neighborhood	Planned Residential (PR) - 5
North	Existing Residential	Golf Course & Resort Neighborhood	Planned Residential (PR) - 5
South	Existing Residential	Golf Course & Resort Neighborhood	Planned Residential (PR) - 5
East	Existing Residential	Golf Course & Resort Neighborhood	Planned Residential (PR) - 5
West	Existing Residential	Golf Course & Resort Neighborhood	Planned Residential (PR) - 5

C. Project Description

The Applicant is proposing an exterior and interior renovation to the existing Spa to do the following:

- Remodel and add to the first and second story of the Spa
- Enclose existing outdoor courtyard in the middle of building
- Extend front entry to add a vertical circulation to 2nd story
- Interior renovations

The renovation would increase the building square footage by 10,718 sf, from 14,815 sf to 25,533 sf, which includes the addition of 7,655 sf on the second story. The renovation occurs on the front half of the building, facing the existing parking lot. The project adds new fitness related areas, laundry, and accessory related uses.

Site Plan

The Spa site plan is being revised to bring the building closer to the parking lot, including a revised roof that overhangs the entry way (Attachment 1, Sheet A.02). The existing frontage is being revised with a new curb, new hardscape, and new landscaped planter area. The landscaping within the new landscaped area would include the currently installed and approved desert landscaping palette, including Yucca rostrata, agave, barrel cactus, ocotillo, Madagascar palm, sage, fairy duster, bougainvillea, and lantana. There are no revisions to the parking lot as part of this project.

Architecture

The proposed renovation to the Spa continues the existing contemporary architecture of the Spa. The entry way will be characterized with a new standing seam, snap-on batten roofing system with a medium bronze finish. The roof includes a central “faux crown” detail with decorative vertical caps. The rest of the renovation will utilize colors and materials that match the existing Spa, including smooth hand troweled finished stucco walls, “Travertine” stone veneer, and medium bronze finished metal panels, flashing, columns, and eaves. Outdoor areas would include glass railings.

Exhibit 2 - Renderings



Zoning Ordinance Summary:

The subject property is zoned Planned Residential, and is within an approved Master Plan, which allows this building as a permitted use. The project, including the additions, meets all the development standards of the original master plan development standards.

Findings

Revisions to facades are subject to review and approval of a design review by the Architectural Review Commission (ARC) pursuant to Palm Desert Municipal Code (PDMC) Section 25.68.020 (A)(1). Findings for ARC decisions of design review applications are listed under Palm Desert PDMC Section 25.68.040 as follows:

- A. That the proposed development conforms to any legally adopted development standards.

The proposed project is in conformance with the legally adopted development standards set forth through Ordinance 564. The proposed modifications comply with all applicable development standards, including height and setbacks. The proposed project will not create non-conforming conditions for this existing development. The proposed building incorporates a contemporary design with varying wall and roof planes, aluminum architectural elements, desert contemporary color palette, and a uniform look to match the existing Bighorn buildings.

- B. That the design and location of the proposed development and its relationship to neighboring existing or proposed developments and traffic is such that it will not impair the desirability of investment or occupation in the neighborhood; and that it will not unreasonably interfere with the use and enjoyment of neighboring existing or proposed developments and that it will not create traffic hazards or congestion.

The proposed design is compatible with surrounding developments and will not create additional traffic which would impair investment in the neighborhood. The proposed use is an existing spa building for existing residents and therefore, a substantial increase in traffic generation is not anticipated.

- C. That the design and location of the proposed development is in keeping with the character of the surrounding neighborhood and is not detrimental to the harmonious, orderly, and attractive development contemplated by this title and the General Plan of the City.

The proposed façade is compatible with the development pattern within Bighorn. This is an existing building surrounded by existing amenity buildings, including a clubhouse, and keeps in character with the existing Bighorn development.

- D. That the design and location of the proposed development would provide a desirable environment for its occupants, as well as for its neighbors, and that it is aesthetically of good composition, materials, textures, and colors.

The proposed project utilizes a good composition of new materials, textures, and colors for quality visual aesthetics, enhancing the front entries with consideration of the compatibility to the existing building. The design and materials and colors match the existing and surrounding Bighorn development buildings.

- E. That the proposed use conforms to all the requirements of the zone in which it is located and all other applicable requirements.

The proposed project conforms with legally adopted development standards set forth by the Planned Residential zone and master plan approved via Ordinance 564. As proposed, there are no substantial changes which would impact the site or its surroundings and it is consistent with the master plan, Title 25 Zoning Code, and General Plan regulations.

- F. That the overall development of the land shall be designed to ensure the protection of public health, safety, and general welfare.

The proposed project does not alter existing parking areas, site access, nor the original site layout. The site plan has been reviewed to confirm the design provides protection for the public's health, safety, and general welfare.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Project Plans
2. Color Board
3. Renderings
4. Existing Site Photographs (Reference Only)