

ARCHITECTURAL AND PRESERVATION COMMISSION RESOLUTION NO. 2025 - __**A RESOLUTION OF THE ARCHITECTURAL AND PRESERVATION COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF CLAREMONT, CALIFORNIA APPROVING ARCHITECTURAL AND SITE PLAN REVIEW #25-A04, REVIEW OF PROPOSED PHOTOVOLTAIC SOLAR PANEL SYSTEM MOUNTED TO NEW CARPORTS IN PARKING LOTS LOCATED AT 101 SOUTH MILLS FOR THE CLAREMONT COLLEGE SERVICES COMPLEX. APPLICANT – MBL ENERGY**

WHEREAS, on February 26, 2025, the applicant, MBL Energy applied for design approval for construction of a series of solar carports with a total area of approximately 39,054 square-feet to be located over the parking lots of the Claremont Colleges Services Building – immediately south of East First Street and west of South Claremont Boulevard; and

WHEREAS, on May 14, 2025, notice of public hearing was mailed to surrounding property owners within 300 feet of the project site; and

WHEREAS, the Architectural and Preservation Commission held a public hearing on May 28, 2025, at which time all persons wishing to testify in connection with said proposal were heard and said proposal was fully studied.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE CLAREMONT ARCHITECTURAL AND PRESERVATION COMMISSION DOES HEREBY RESOLVE:

SECTION 1. The Architectural and Preservation Commission finds that the proposed project is excluded from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 21080.35 Exclusions regarding installation of solar energy systems for existing facilities, in that the project consist of the installation of a solar energy system at an existing parking lot and does not contain any of the specified conditions that would disqualify the use of this exclusion. Therefore, no additional review is required at this time.

SECTION 2. The Architectural and Preservation Commission finds that the required criteria contained in Section 16.300.060.A of the Claremont Municipal Code can be made in regard to the above-described project as follows:

- A. **Conformity with Development Standards:** The proposed development is in conformity with the standards of the Municipal Code and other applicable ordinances and regulations. The development standards of the IE zone apply to the project location as follows:
1. Minimum setback from East First Street Boulevard: **25 feet** plus one foot for each one foot of building height above 30 feet.
 2. Maximum Building Height: **25 feet** based on distance of less than 100 feet to the nearest boundary of the IE district that fronts a public street.
 3. Maximum lot coverage: **60%** for entire campus or project site. Surface parking areas are already accounted for in lot coverage and therefore the addition of the solar arrays over the existing parking lots will not increase the lot coverage for the site.

4. Maximum floor area ratio (FAR): **1.0** for an institutional campus or project site if not part of a larger campus. The subject site is appropriately sized to accommodate the proposed structures and the use and proposed solar shade structure are consistent with the intent of the Institutional Educational (IE) zoning district.
- B. **General Plan Consistency** - The project is consistent with the following goals/policies of the Claremont General Plan:
1. Sustainable development that incorporates green building best practices and involves the reuse of previously developed property and/or vacant sites within a built-up area (Policy 2-1.1) as the proposal utilizes existing parking lots to develop clean renewable electrical energy for use in campus academic buildings.
 2. Excellence in architectural design of new construction (Policy 2-5.1), as it is constructed of high-quality materials and creatively designed to blend with its surroundings to the greatest extent possible.
- C. **Compatibility of Form with Surrounding Development** – The design of the proposed solar shade structures will not visually dominate or interfere with the established development pattern of the neighborhood and is compatible with surrounding development on the property and in the surrounding area as the structures have been carefully designed to minimize their height and slope, designed to match the modern lines and geometry of the campus, located in a manner intended to preserve as many existing trees as possible on the site to help screen the building, and proposed installation of additional trees and shrubs to further screen the installation from the street.
- D. **Compatibility of Quality with Surrounding Development** – The exterior features and appearance of the proposed solar carports are well designed and of a quality and character that is compatible with the surrounding development. The structures have been designed to harmonize with existing TCCS campus facilities in terms of massing, horizontal lines, grid patterns, color, and exterior textures. In addition, extensive landscaping is proposed to be planted in the public right of way adjacent to the structures that will further soften the appearance of the structures and blend with surrounding development. Finally, the structures and use are consistent with the development standards of the Municipal Code.
- E. **Internal Consistency of Design** - All elevations of the proposed structures are architecturally treated in a consistent manner in that all elevations of the structures utilize the same materials, colors, and design features.
- F. **Privacy** – The proposed development is designed to respect the privacy of adjacent properties to the greatest extent possible in that the arrays are located in the center of existing surface parking lots on the Claremont Colleges Services Campus and will be surrounded with ample landscape screening.

- G. **Internal Circulation** - The site plan and the design of the carports and landscaping provide for adequate and safe vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle circulation by preserving the existing layout of the existing driveways and parking stalls. In addition, all existing fire access lanes are being preserved by the proposed site plan.
- H. **Sustainability** –The proposed improvements are energy efficient in that the proposal utilizes existing parking lots to develop clean renewable electrical energy for use in campus services buildings. In addition, the shade provided over the existing asphalt surface of the parking lot and cars will significantly cool the site; reducing the heat island impacts to surrounding development and the need for air conditioning in nearby buildings as well as shaded cars. The proposed improvements are water efficient in that the proposed landscape plan for existing planter islands in the parking lots will utilize highly efficient irrigation and drought-adapted plants.
- I. **Tree Preservation** – The applicant has provided a tree survey and disposition plan for all trees located on the project site as well as the adjacent public Right of Way along the south side of East First Street. The report, which was prepared by a certified arborist (Christy Cuba), identifies and maps the location of all existing trees. The report notes that the proposed carports necessitate the removal of 32 trees on the site. The 32 trees to be removed are planted in the interior of the parking lots and removal is necessary for the installation of the proposed solar arrays.
- J. **Light and Air** – The proposed development will not unreasonably impinge on neighbors' existing access to light or use of prevailing winds for natural ventilation or cast a shadow over an existing solar energy system (active or passive) as the closest neighboring, non-TCCS development is located over 80 feet away from the proposed 12- to 19-foot-high carport structures.
- K. **Environmental Protections** - The proposed development has been reviewed pursuant to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), for the reasons stated above in Section A.
- L. **Health and Safety** - The visual effect of the development as viewed from adjacent public streets will not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience, or welfare. The project features a high-quality design that is consistent with similar solar projects on the Claremont Colleges properties and will be further enhanced with the proposed landscape screening along East First Street and South Claremont Blvd. The project has been designed to harmonize with adjacent buildings and the surrounding streetscape. As such, the development does not have the potential to be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience, or welfare.

SECTION 3. The Architectural and Preservation Commission hereby approves Architectural and Site Plan Review File #25-A04 based on the findings outlined in Sections A and B above, subject to the following conditions of approval:

- A. This approval is for the construction of new carport structures for the purpose of providing photovoltaic solar energy for Claremont College Services. The structures shall be as depicted on the approved plans and limited to a maximum size of 39,054 square feet in area.
- B. This design approval shall be valid for two (2) years from the date of the Architectural and Preservation Commission action. If building permits are not issued or a time extension granted during this period, this architectural approval will automatically expire without further action by the City.
- C. The applicant shall submit within two (2) days of Architectural and Preservation Commission approval a check in the amount of \$75 payable to the Los Angeles County Clerk for filing a Notice of Exemption (NOE), as required by the California Environmental Quality Act.
- D. Plans submitted for plan check shall be in substantial compliance with the plans approved by the Architectural and Preservation Commission. If the plan check submittal is not in substantial compliance with the approved design review submittal, the plans may require further staff review and re-notification of the surrounding property owners, which may delay implementation of the project, and require additional fees.
- E. Prior to issuance of demolition, grading or building permits, the applicant shall provide to City staff a signed statement from the contractor, acknowledging receipt of these conditions of approval and any additional City reviews that have conditions of approval. The signed statement shall state that the contractor understands that violation of these conditions of approval is a misdemeanor under the Claremont Municipal Code.
 - 1. Provide City staff and receive approval from the City Engineer of a detailed plan regarding the construction fencing, contractor parking, construction truck routing, materials staging, and street, sidewalk, and bike route closures for the construction of the Project.
 - 2. Pay all applicable fees established by the most current User Fee Schedule, City ordinances and resolutions including, but not limited to, those set forth in the Municipal Code and the Claremont Municipal Code. These shall include, but not be limited to:
 - a. Permit, plan check, and inspections;
 - b. Transportation Impact;
 - c. Drainage;

- d. Sewer Connection;
- e. Street Resurfacing;
- f. Public Works Permit and Plan Check Fees;
- g. Grading/on-site Permit and Plan Check Fees;
- h. Consultant Review Fees and
- i. Cash Deposits/Surety/Bonds.

F. During grading and construction operations, the applicant shall:

- Implement best available control measures (BACMs) to minimize nuisance levels of construction activity emissions such as dust, emissions, and off-site impacts. BACMs shall include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - a. Water all active construction areas at least twice daily.
 - b. Cover all haul trucks or maintain at least two feet of freeboard.
 - c. Pave or apply water four times daily to all unpaved parking or staging areas.
 - d. Sweep or wash any site access points within 30 minutes of any visible dirt deposition on any public roadway.
 - e. Cover or water twice daily any on-site stockpiles of debris, dirt, or dusty material.
 - f. Suspend all operations on any unpaved surface if winds exceed 25 mph.
 - g. Hydro seed or otherwise stabilize any cleared area which is to remain inactive for more than 96 hours after clearing is completed.
 - h. Require 90-day low-NOx tune-ups for off-road equipment.
 - i. Limit allowable idling to 5 minutes for trucks and heavy equipment.
 - j. Encourage carpooling for construction workers.
 - k. Limit lane closures to off-peak travel periods.
 - l. Park construction vehicles off traveled roadways.
 - m. Wet down or cover dirt hauled off-site.
 - n. Wash or sweep access points daily.
 - o. Encourage receipt of material during non-peak traffic hours.
 - p. Sandbag construction sites for erosion control.

G. Prior to the issuance of building permits, the applicant shall:

1. Ascertain and comply with all requirements of the City's Building and Engineering Divisions, including the submittal of complete architectural, electrical, mechanical, and structural plans duly wet stamped and signed by a licensed architect or engineer. The construction documents submitted for plan check shall be in substantial conformance with the Architectural and Preservation Commission approval as well as show compliance with all applicable ADA related items. ADA improvements will need to show compliance with access to normal paths of travel, and where necessary to provide access, shall incorporate pedestrian ramps, curbs, etc. Access shall be provided within the boundary of the site from public transportation stops, accessible parking spaces, passenger loading zones, and public streets and sidewalks.

2. Ascertain and comply with the requirements of the Los Angeles County Fire Department.
 3. Pay all applicable permit and development fees including, but not limited to, fire facility, school, and plan check fees, as established by City ordinances and resolutions.
 4. Pay any/all outstanding development review fees related to Architectural and Site Plan Review Files #25-A04.
- H. Prior to final sign off on the Building Permit, the applicant shall:
- Install landscape materials in accordance with an approved landscaping plan on file with the Planning Division. All new plant materials shall be disease-free and shall be in vigorous condition at the time of installation.
- I. The applicant shall ensure that the following measures are honored during all construction related activities for the project:
1. The hours of construction operation are limited to 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Monday Saturday, as in effect in the Claremont Municipal Code. No construction activities are allowed on Sundays and National holidays.
 2. Staging areas shall be located away from existing residential structures.
 3. All construction equipment shall use properly operating and maintained mufflers.
 4. During the course of all on-site grading and construction activity, the applicant shall employ adequate dust control measures in accordance with the Uniform Building Code, SCAQMD, and City requirements to minimize fugitive dust.
- J. To ensure compliance with the provisions of this Architectural and Preservation Commission design approval, a final inspection is required from the Planning Division when work has been completed. The applicant shall inform the Planning Division and schedule an appointment for such an inspection.
- K. Upon final inspection, the City will commence a 30-day lighting level review of all exterior lights including under canopy lights, streetlights, driveway lights, pathway lights, and landscape lights. If illumination levels, glare, or other applicable issues are found to be excessive, the applicant will be directed to modify the lighting as necessary to achieve acceptable lighting levels.
- L. Noncompliance with any condition of this approval shall constitute a violation of the City's Municipal Code. Violations may be enforced in accordance with the

provisions of the administrative fines program of Chapter 1.14 of the Claremont Municipal Code.

- M. The applicant/owner by utilizing the benefits of this approval shall thereby agree to defend at its sole expense, any action against the City, its agents, officers, and employees because of the issues of such approval. In addition, the applicant/owner shall reimburse the City et al for any court costs and attorney fees that the City et al may be required to pay as a result of such action. The City may, at its sole discretion, participate at its own expense in the defense of any such action, but such participation shall not relieve the applicant/owner of its obligation hereunder.

- N. Failure to comply with any of the conditions, including design issues as shown on plans reviewed and approved by the City of Claremont, may result in failure to obtain a building final and/or a certificate of occupancy until full compliance is reached. The City's requirement for full compliance may require minor corrections and/or complete demolition of a non-compliant improvement, regardless of costs incurred, where the project does not comply with design requirements and approvals that the applicant agreed to when permits were pulled to construct the project.

SECTION 4. The Architectural and Preservation Commission Chair shall sign this Resolution and the Commission Secretary shall attest and certify to the passage and adoption thereof.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED this 11th day of June, 2025.

Architectural and Preservation Commission Chair

ATTEST:

Architectural and Preservation Commission Secretary