



Building A Better Long Beach

February 2, 2009

REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY BOARD MEMBERS

City of Long Beach
California

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive and file a presentation on the proposed "Art Exchange" and authorize staff to move forward with conceptual plans, site plan review, and CEQA clearance for the project. (Downtown – District 2)

DISCUSSION

The Art Exchange concept, initiated in 1994, established the goal of generating a vibrant place for the development and production of art by local artists. In 1996, the Redevelopment Agency (Agency) joined forces with the East Village Arts District to commission the East Village Arts District Guide for Development. This document covered short, near, and long-term strategies to shape the district, specifically calling for emphasis of the area's walkable scale, artistic residents and business owners, and penchant for community gatherings and festivals. The work also highlighted the desire by residents to improve the physical fabric of the streetscape and buildings via public art. Residents, Agency staff and consultants alike viewed the Art Exchange as a catalytic force for the potential revitalization of the newly designated arts district.

In 2004, the Agency and the Art Exchange Task Force commissioned the Art Exchange Feasibility Study. This report included an analysis of market support for rental studio space, arts education, galleries, and event venues, and concluded with a financial feasibility analysis. The Art Exchange Task Force continued their efforts to move forward, culminating in the group incorporating in 2006 and registering The Art Exchange Visual Art Center, Inc. as a 501c(3) nonprofit organization.

At the same time, the Agency was acquiring the property that comprised the Broadway Block – bounded by Broadway, Long Beach Boulevard, 3rd Street and Elm Avenue – for future mixed-use development with a primary goal of creating a transition from the Pine Avenue/Promenade core to the East Village. One of the properties on the Broadway Block is the historic Acres of Books building, which was acquired by the Agency in April 2008. The acquisition of this important historic resource provided the catalyst for discussions about the reuse of the building for the Art Exchange.

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In late 2008, Studio One Eleven was retained by the Agency to prepare conceptual plans for the Art Exchange, which is proposed to be located on an 11,250-square-foot parcel on the southeast corner of Long Beach Boulevard and 3rd Street (Exhibit A and Exhibit B). As currently proposed, the facility would incorporate the front 75 feet of the Acres of Books building and re-utilize materials such as the roof trusses from this historic structure.

The Art Exchange would be a phased development, with the initial phase being the retrofit of a portion of the existing Acres of Books building. The building would be developed to meet LEED standards, preferably at a higher certification level. The Agency would retain ownership of the land and lease the site long-term to the Art Exchange non-profit corporate entity.

Staff is seeking authorization to move forward with additional conceptual plans, site plan review, and CEQA clearance for the project. Staff will also engage a series of meetings with interested stakeholders, including the historic community, East Village residents and the business community, to refine the concept further.

SUGGESTED ACTION:

Adopt recommendation.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'C. Beck', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

CRAIG BECK
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

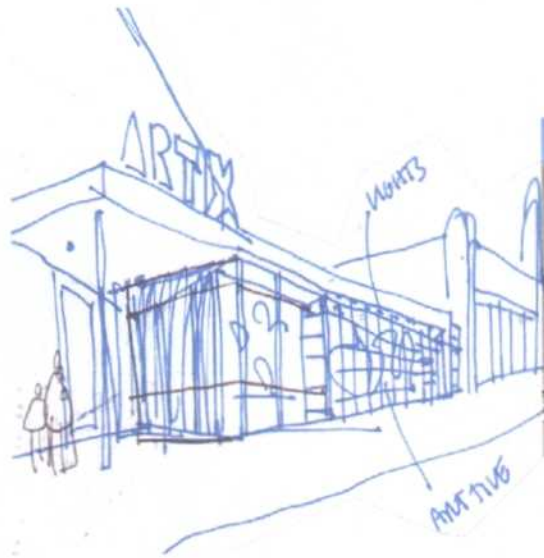
CB:AJB:CSM:BEC

Attachments: Exhibit A – Site Map
Exhibit B – Conceptual Plan

EXHIBIT A

PROPOSED ART EXCHANGE SITE





model views
1. exterior
2. courtyard
3. corner



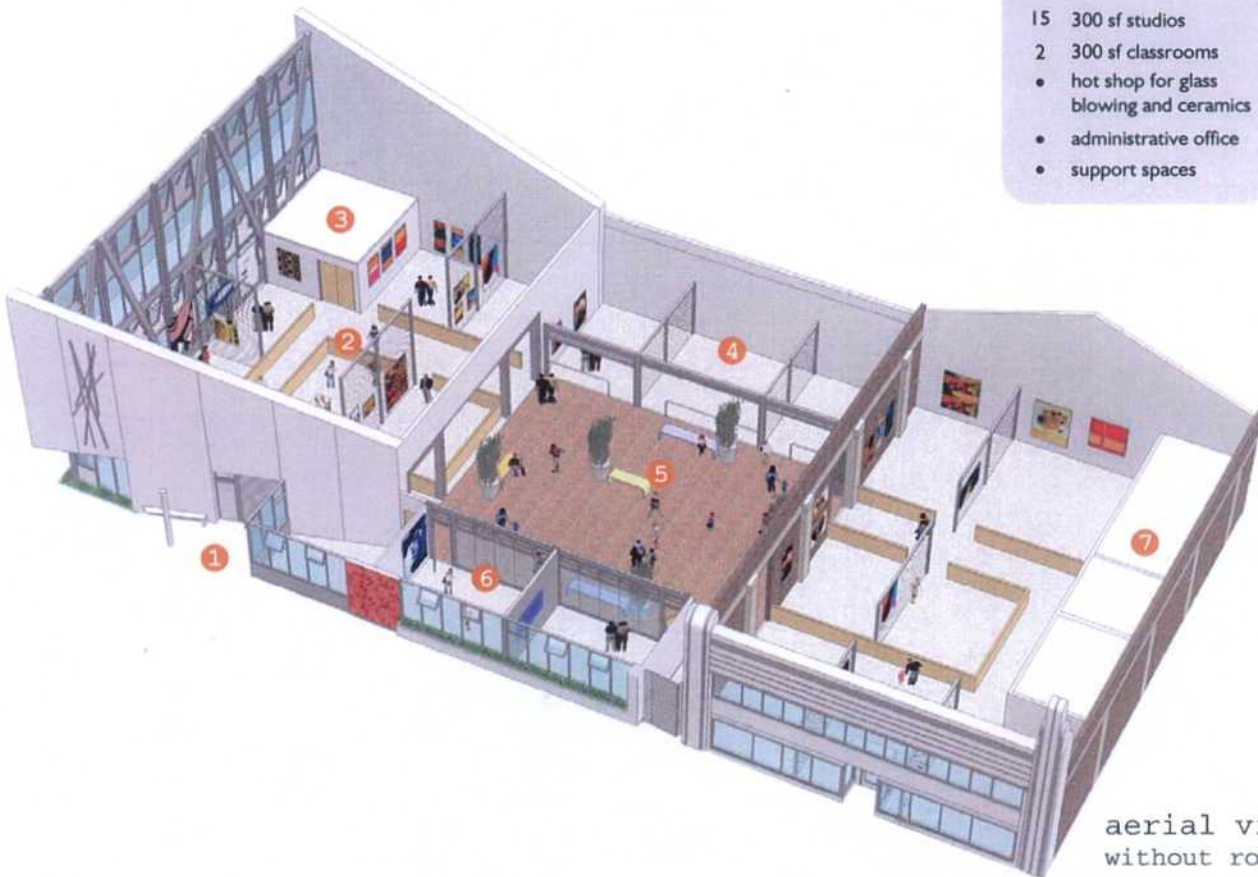
elevation

studio eleven

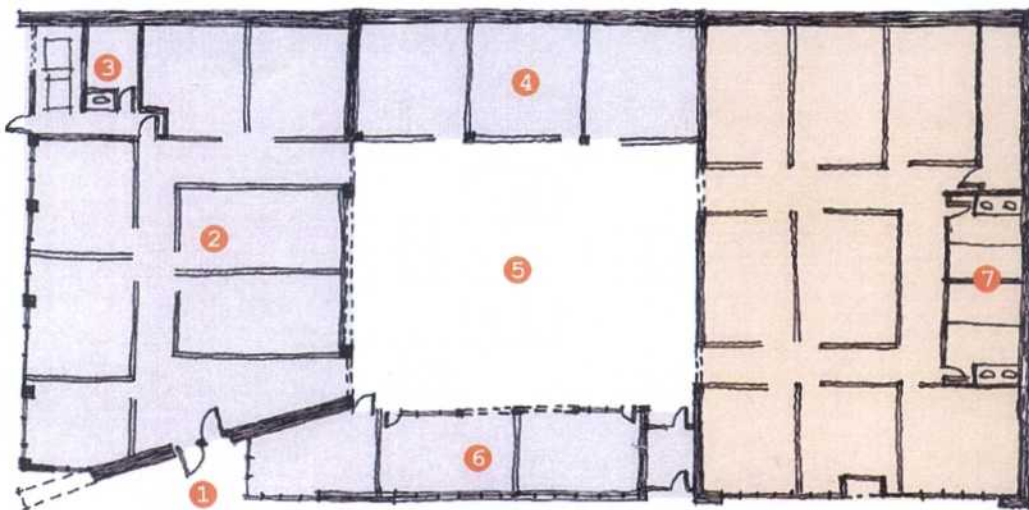
Exhibit B

program

- 15 300 sf studios
- 2 300 sf classrooms
- hot shop for glass blowing and ceramics
- administrative office
- support spaces



aerial view
without roof

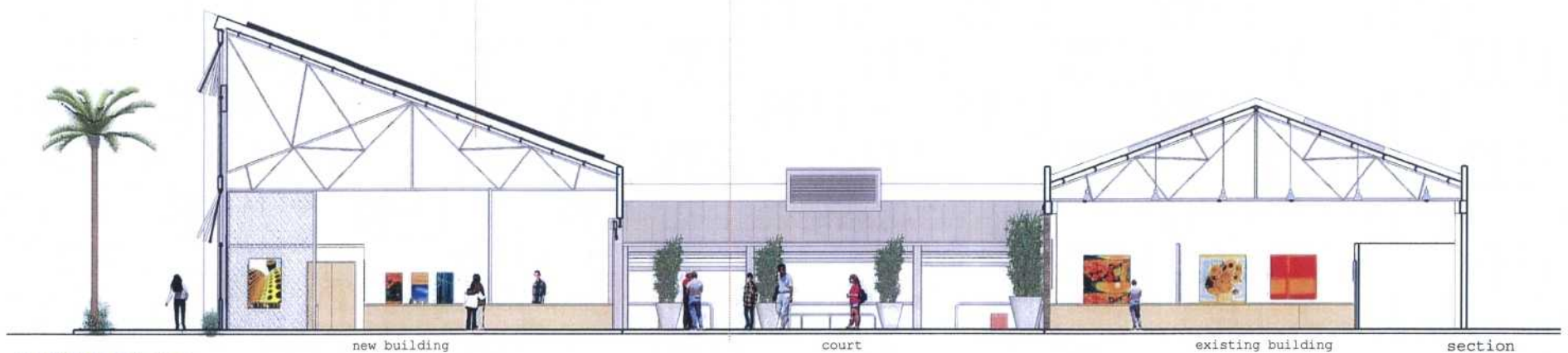


building plan

- 1 entry
- 2 studio
- 3 service
- 4 hot shop
- 5 outdoor court
- 6 office/classroom wing
- 7 restrooms



aerial view



studio eleven

new building

court

existing building

section