MEMO

**DATE:** January 12, 2012

TO: Architectural Review Committee (ARC) of the Historic

**Preservation Commission** 

FROM: Pilar LaValley, Preservation Planner, (415) 575-9084

**REVIEWED BY:** Tim Frye, Preservation Coordinator

**RE:** Review and Comment for 708 Davis Street (Better Place Electric

Vehicle Battery Changing Station)

Case No. 2011.0968AC

1650 Mission St. Suite 400 San Francisco, CA 94103-2479

Reception: 415.558.6378

Fax: 415.558.6409

Planning Information: **415.558.6377** 

The Planning Department (Department) and the Project Sponsor (Sponsor) are requesting review and comment before the Architectural Review Committee (ARC) regarding the proposal to construct a one-story building at 708 Davis Street (Assessor's Block 0140, Lot 008). The subject property, which is currently utilized as a surface parking lot, is a non-contributing resource to the Northeast Waterfront Historic District.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project involves construction of a one-story building for Better Place Inc., a company that will utilize the structure as an electric vehicle battery changing station and visitor center. The proposed project, based on architectural plans by Stantec Consulting Inc., would consist of a group of interconnected structures including a long, narrow building with roof deck, a drive-through garage bay, metal equipment containers behind screen walls, and several business signs. The proposed structure would be clad with ACM (aluminum composite) panels, channel glass (Bendheim), and corrugated metal. The building will be free-standing with a substantial setback from the street of between 16' and 26'. A one-way driveway will enter at the north side of the parcel and extend to the rear, where there will be several surface parking spaces, and will exit through the garage bay. Proposed signs consist of a large, free-standing, internally illuminated, double-faced sign and an internally illuminated wall sign.

## OTHER ACTIONS REQUIRED

The proposed project is being brought to the ARC for comment prior to review by the HPC of a request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for new construction in the Northeast Waterfront Historic District. The Planning Department is in the process of reviewing the proposed project's Environmental Evaluation application. The project also requires a General Plan Referral for transfer of City-owned property and Conditional Use Authorization from the Planning Commission for introduction of an automotive service station use in the Northeast Waterfront 3 Special Use District.

#### SURROUNDING CONTEXT

The project site is located at the southeastern edge of the Northeast Waterfront Historic District. Adjacent to the project site, to north and south, are two-story, brick buildings that are contributing resources to the historic district. On the opposite side of Davis Street (proposed future home of the relocated Teatro

Zinzanni), and to the rear of the project site, are surface parking lots.

# PROVISIONS OF ARTICLE 10, APPENDIX D

For the Certificate of Appropriateness, the HPC will be reviewing the proposal for conformance with Article 10, Appendix D of the Planning Code, and with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards*. Specifically, the HPC will make findings regarding compliance with Sections 6 and 7 of Article 10, Appendix D, which address the architectural and visual characteristics that define this district, including façade line continuity, fenestration and design elements for new construction, and appropriate roof treatments.

Section 6 of Appendix D, Article 10, identifies the character-defining features and typical elements of the Northeast Waterfront Historic District. According to this information, building heights are generally within a six-story range and are of typical warehouse design, large in bulk, often with large arches and openings. Fenestration generally consists of minimal, deeply recessed, windows that are rhythmically spaced. Larger industrial sash windows occur in structures built from the 1920's and onward. Standard brick masonry is predominant although there is also reinforced concrete and several brick facades that have been covered with stucco. Typical facing materials give a rough-textured appearance with red brick typical, with some yellow and painted brick. Muted earth tones predominate in shades of red, brown, green, gray, and blue.

Section 7 of Appendix D, Article 10, provides guidance regarding additional review provisions for certain features of projects proposed in the Northeast Waterfront Historic District. In short, setbacks and arcades at façade are not appropriate, new construction should reflect in design the predominant use of deeply recessed, limited fenestration where there is a concentration of older brick buildings or design elements of newer concrete or stucco industrial-style buildings where these predominate, and roofs characterized by numerous regularly spaced industrial skylights are preferred.

### REQUESTED ACTION

The Department and Project Sponsor seek comments on:

- Compliance of proposed design with Appendix D of Article 10, specifically the provisions of Sections 6 and 7.
- Conformance of the proposed design with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards*.
- Recommendations regarding any elements of the proposed design to bring such into compliance with Article 10 and/or the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards*.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Architectural plans and renderings Photographs

Center of Site, looking North



708 Davis St.

Front of site, Looking North



708 Davis St.



708 Davis St.



708 Davis St.



708 Davis St.



708 Davis St.



708 Davis St.



708 Davis St.



708 Davis St.



708 Davis St.



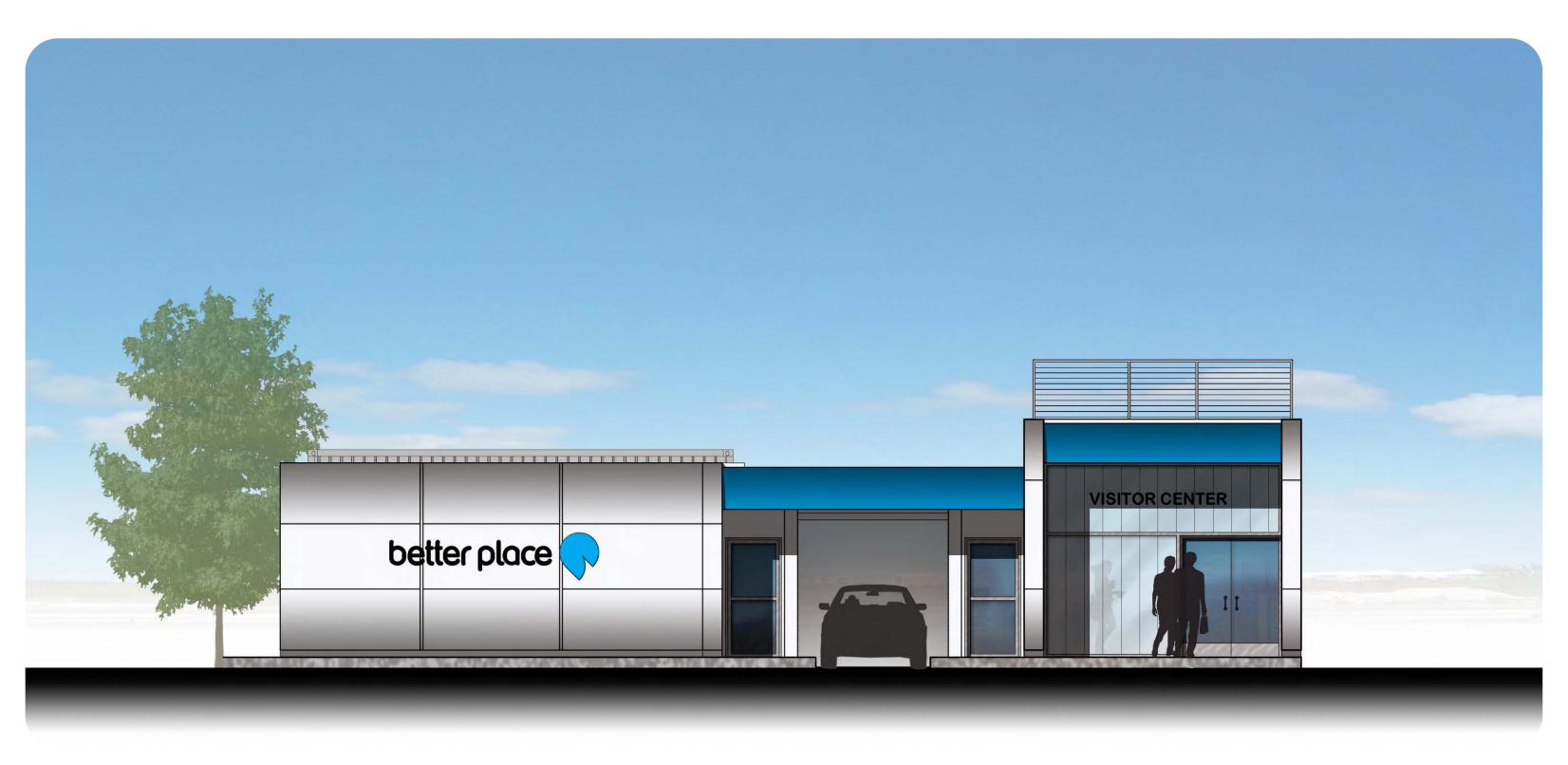
Proposed Improvements - View From Davis St.





Detail - Glass material





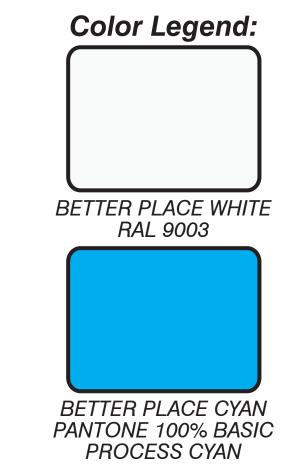


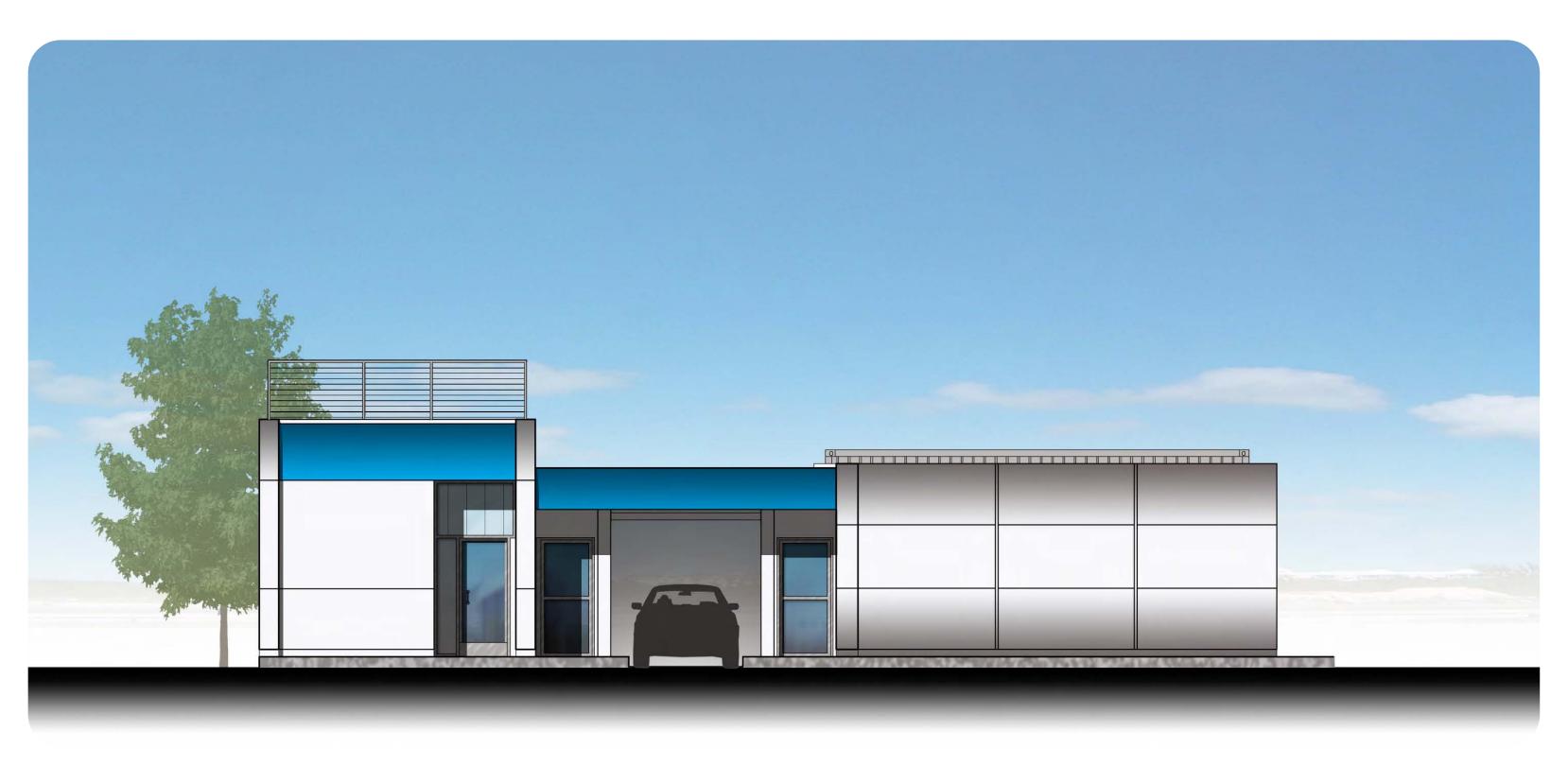


East Elevation

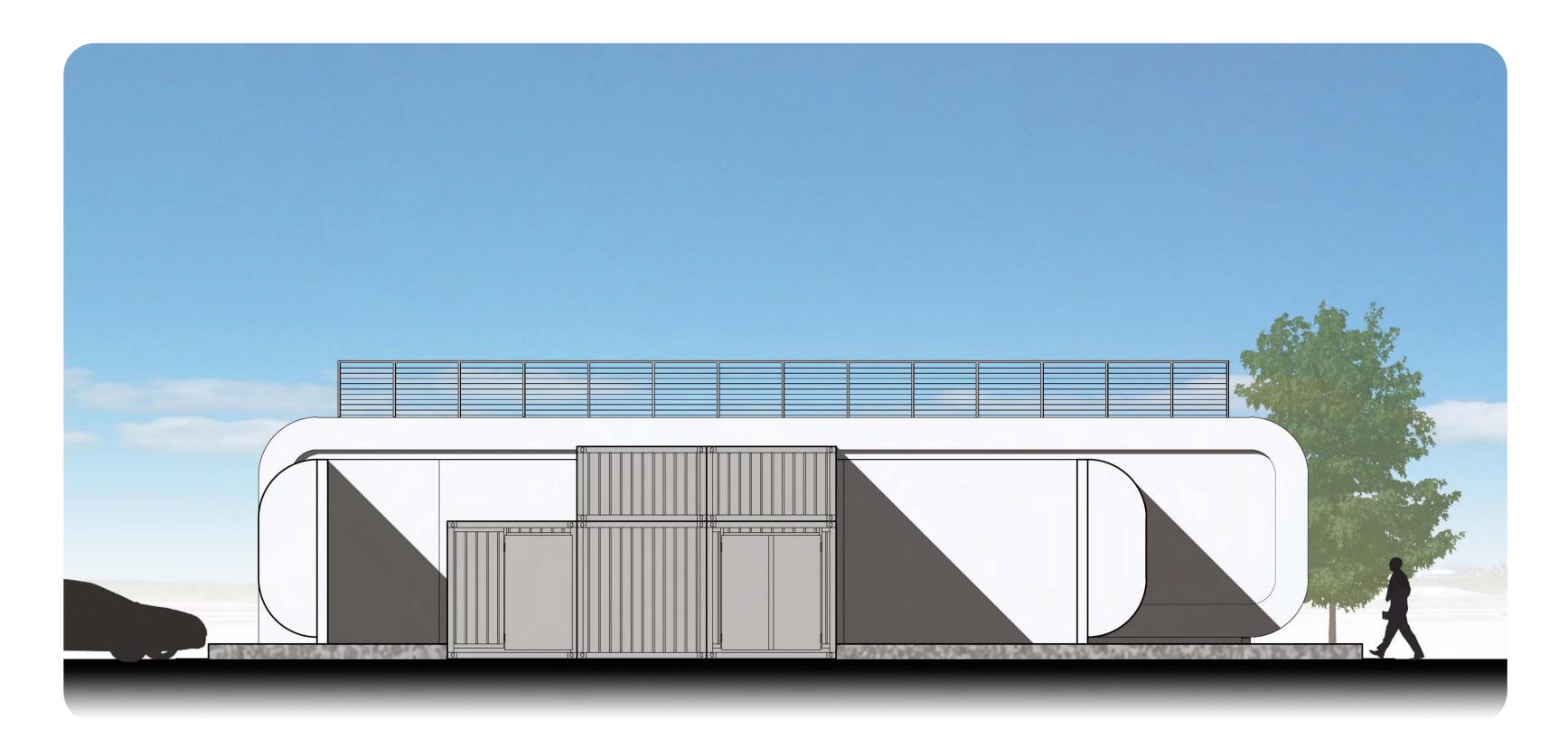












West Elevation



Better Place 708 Davis Street
San Francisco, CA

Color Legend:

