



Grace Commons

SPECIAL NEEDS HOUSING

Just off of busy Soquel Avenue in the Eastside Business District of Santa Cruz, Grace Commons is an affordable apartment building built on the site of the former Grace Methodist Church. The church played a critical role in fostering the development of a housing complex that would serve psychiatrically disabled residents.

This fifteen one-bedroom unit building is less than 10,000 square feet and fits in well as the neighborhood transition between busy Soquel Avenue on the north side, and the smaller-scaled cottages and small apartment buildings to the south. The building itself steps down from three-stories with a flat roof to one-story with a gable roof, and various sloping roofs between. The stucco exterior is punctuated by window awnings and recesses. The building provides a common laundry room, gathering room, and rear barbeque patio for residents. A parking lot, shaded by heritage Chinese Elms and a treasured Heritage Pepper tree, is shared by a peer counseling center on the rear parcel. The counseling center has pedestrian access across the Grace Commons site, with a welcoming overhead trellis demarcating their entry at the street sidewalk. The overall effect is a gracious yet contemporary transition between the Eastside Business District and the adjacent bungalow neighborhood.

Pyatok Architects' scope of services also included master-planning the originally larger church site, and determining how to partition it into three independent parcels for development. A community meeting process was successful in changing the attitude of the neighborhood from hostility to near-unanimous support for the project.

PROJECT DATA

- Client:** Santa Cruz Counseling Center
- Location:** Santa Cruz, CA
- Completion:** 2007
- Units:** 15 1BRs
- Amenities:** Common room, laundry, BBQ patio
- Site Area:** 0.4 acres
- Project Area:** 10,000 sf
- Parking Ratio:** 4 spaces/unit
- Cost:** \$2.6 million
- Contractor:** Bogard Construction

