

DATE ISSUED: November 30, 2006 **REPORT NO.** PC-06-291

ATTENTION: Planning Commission, Agenda of December 7, 2006

SUBJECT: IOWA MIXED USE – PROJECT NO. 88598 –
PROCESS FOUR

OWNERS: 5G, LLC, Morad Golcheh and Nahid Golcheh, members
Anthony P. Garofalo Trust, Anthony P. Garofalo, sole trustee

APPLICANT: Mike Davies, COHO Development

SUMMARY

Issue(s): Should the Planning Commission approve the demolition of two commercial buildings and the construction of 136 residential condominium units, 15 commercial condominium units and 220 structured parking spaces in a 268,598-square-foot, three- to five-story structure, on a 1.35-acre site located at the northeast corner of Iowa Street and University Avenue, within the Greater North Park Community Plan area?

Staff Recommendation:

1. **CERTIFY** Mitigated Negative Declaration No. 88598 and **Adopt** the Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP); and
2. **APPROVE** Site Development Permit No. 285985 and Vesting Tentative Map No. 282843.

Community Planning Group Recommendation: On May 16, 2006, the Greater North Park Community Planning Group voted 12-0-0 to recommend approval of the project, with five conditions, as detailed on Page 6 of this report (Attachment 7).

Environmental Review: In accordance with the State of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, Mitigated Negative Declaration No. 88598 has been prepared for this project. A Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) has been prepared and would be implemented to reduce any potentially significant impacts to below a level of significance.

Fiscal Impact Statement: None with this action. All costs associated with the processing of this project are paid by the applicant.

Code Enforcement Impact: None with this action.

Housing Impact Statement: The Greater North Park Community Plan designates 0.22-acre of the 1.35-acre project site for High-Very High Density Residential development, which allows 45 to 55 dwelling units per acre. The Plan designates the remaining 1.13 acres for Commercial with High-Very High Density Residential development, which allows 55 to 75 dwelling units per acre. Because the project includes parcel accumulation and is consistent with the Urban Design Guidelines of the Community Plan, this project is eligible for a residential density bonus of up to 110 dwelling unit per net residential acre. This would allow the project site to accommodate 72 to 141 dwelling units. The proposed project would result in the demolition of two existing commercial buildings and the construction of 136 multi-family units. As allowed by the Municipal Code, the applicant has elected to pay an in-lieu fee to satisfy their affordable housing requirement.

BACKGROUND

The 1.35-acre Iowa Mixed Use project site is located at 3152 University Avenue and 3937-3939 Iowa Street, at the northeast corner of University Avenue and Iowa Street, within the Greater North Park Community Plan area. The site is also located within the Transit Area Overlay Zone, the North Park Redevelopment Area and the North Park Pilot Village Boundary area. The majority of the project site, approximately 1.12 acres, is located within the CN-1 Zone of the Mid-City Communities Planned District, which allows commercial and mixed-use development at a rate of one dwelling unit per 400 square feet of lot area. The Greater North Park Community Plan designates this portion of the site for Commercial with High-Very High Density Residential development at a rate of 55 to 110 dwelling units per acre.

The remaining 0.22-acre is located at the northern portion of the project site and is within the MR-800B Zone of the Mid-City Communities Planned District, which allows for multi-family development at a rate of one dwelling unit per 800 square feet of lot area. The Greater North Park Community Plan designates this portion of the site for High-Very High Density Residential development at a rate of 45 to 75 dwelling units per acre.

This project would be allowed to utilize the higher end of the allowed Community Plan density range because it includes the incorporation of two or more parcels and has been determined to be in compliance with applicable design guidelines in the Urban Design Element. Please see the *Community Plan Analysis* section on Page 6 for more information.

Given the density requirements of the subject zones and Community Plan Land Use designations, the 136 dwelling units proposed would be allowed on the project site, as illustrated below:

Figure A, Residential Density Calculation:

Parcel Size	Zoning - Density	Units Allowed by Zone	Comm. Plan Land Use Density	Units Allowed by Comm. Plan
Southern Portion - 1.12-Acre	CN-1: One unit per 400 sq/ft of lot area	122 units	55 to 110 du/ac	61 to 123 units
Northern Portion - 0.23-Acre	MR-800: One unit per 800 sq/ft of lot area	15 units	45 to 75 du/ac	10 to 17 units
1.35-Acre Site		137 units		71 to 140 units

The project site is currently developed with two, one-story commercial structures. The structure located along the University Avenue frontage was constructed in the 1930s as a gas station. In 1976 it was converted to a bank and is currently occupied by Rodgers Police Patrol. The structure located along Iowa Street was constructed in 1956 and was most recently utilized as dentist offices. The Mitigated Negative Declaration prepared for this project determined that neither building is historically significant.

The level project site is located in a developed, urban area. Surrounding uses include a 13-story office building to the east, commercial uses to the south, multi-family residential uses to the north and a mix of commercial and multi-family uses to the west. Interstate 805 is located three blocks to the east of the project site.

DISCUSSION

Project Description:

The applicant proposes to demolish the two existing commercial structures and construct a new three- to five-story mixed-use building with 136 residential condominium units, 15 commercial condominium units, 220 structured parking spaces and common open space areas. The building square footages are described below:

Figure B, Building Uses:

Use	Square Feet
Commercial Space	10,566
Residential Units	129,133
Parking Garage	93,099
Storage Areas	1,789
Internal Circulation, Hallways, etc.	30,776
Utility Areas	3,235
Total:	268,598 square feet total*

* The Gross Floor area of the project is 212,563 sq/ft, as the level of underground parking is not used in that calculation.

The project would provide four commercial storefronts at street level along the University Avenue frontage. Although there are only four store-front entrances along University Avenue, the applicant is requesting a total of 10 commercial condominiums for this space to maintain marketing flexibility for the commercial space. Therefore, depending on market demands, the commercial space could be configured between one to ten users. Five live-work commercial units would be provided at street level along the Iowa Street frontage, with the residential unit for each commercial space located above. The 23 parking spaces for the commercial units would be located immediately behind the four storefront units on University Avenue, with an ingress and egress provided to Iowa Street and the alley frontage to the east. The commercial parking spaces are separated from the residential parking spaces, with individual entrances and exits.

The 136 residential units would consist of 98 one-bedroom units and 38 two-bedroom units. Five of the one-bedroom units would be located directly above and be accessible from the five live work commercial units located along Iowa Street. Both the one- and two-bedroom units include one- and two-story floor plans with six different floor plans overall. All units would include a private balcony or patio area. Project amenities would also include a common-area rooftop patio with barbeque facilities and separate storage lockers and rooms in the parking garage.

A total of 213 parking spaces are required for this project, 191 spaces for the residential units and 22 spaces for the commercial units. The project would provide a total of 220 parking spaces within a two-level, gated parking structure, with one level at grade and one level subterranean. The project would also provide 60 bicycle and 16 motorcycle parking spaces. Because the project is located within the Transit Area Overlay Zone, the parking ratios allowed in this overlay zone were applied to this project. Two access points to the parking garage would be provided: one at Iowa Street towards the northern end of the property; and one at the alley frontage on the east side of the property. Stairs and elevators would be provided to access the residential units from the parking garage. The parking requirements and number of proposed spaces for each use are summarized below:

Figure C, Parking Calculations:

Use	Square Feet or Number of Units	Required Parking Ratio	Parking Spaces Required	Parking Spaces Provided:
Commercial Space	10,556 sq/ft	2.1 spaces per 1,000 sq/ft	22 spaces	23 spaces
Residential, One-Bedroom	98 units	1.25 spaces per unit	123 spaces	197 spaces
Residential, Two-Bedroom	34 units	1.75 spaces per unit	60 spaces	
Residential, Three-Bedroom *	4 units	2 spaces per unit	8 spaces	
Totals:			213 spaces	220 spaces

* Although there are no three-bedroom units provided, there are four two-bedroom units that include a study area that could be used as a bedroom, so a worst-case scenario was utilized for calculating the required parking.

The three- to five-story project has been designed with a building height that ranges from approximately 65 feet as viewed from University Avenue to approximately 30 feet at the northern end of the property. The maximum building height for the portion of the site zoned CN-1 is 200 feet and the maximum height for the portion zoned MR-800 is 60 feet. As designed, the project complies with the height requirements.

The project would incorporate a variety of building materials and finishes, including stucco, ribbed metal siding, deep-set aluminum window frames, stained wood trellises, canopies and ceramic tile wall accents. The project design would incorporate numerous offset building planes architectural projections, including a five-story colored-glass stairway tower and a combination of sloped and flat roofs to provide visual interest and comply with the requirements of the Mid-City Communities Planned District Ordinance and the Greater North Park Community Plan. Please see the *Community Plan Analysis* section on Page 6 of this document for more information on the project design and how it complies with the Greater North Park Community Plan.

The project would require grading approximately 1.2 acres of the 1.35-acre site. Approximately 24,000 cubic yards of material would be cut from the site, at a maximum depth of 14 feet, to allow for the subterranean parking garage area. An approved Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan and a Monitoring Program Plan would be required prior to the commencement of grading activities to ensure that erosion and water quality impacts are minimized.

Requested Deviations:

Deviations from the regulations in the Mid-City Communities Planned District Ordinance are subject to approval of a Site Development Permit. The deviations requested by the applicant are listed below:

Street Yard Area in MR-800B Zone: The MR-800B Zone requires a street yard area of 1,400 square feet along Iowa Street. The project as designed proposes a street yard area of 1,267 square feet. Staff is supportive of the requested deviation because the portion of the site that is zoned CN 1 does not have a street yard requirement and the area provided offers a gradual transition from the CN-1 portion of the site to the MR-800B portion of the site.

Street Side Yard Setback in MR-800B Zone: The MR-800B Zone requires that the portion of the fifth floor that is located along the northern property line utilize a 12-foot side yard setback. While no habitable area encroaches into this setback, a stairwell located at the northeast corner of the building which provides access to the roof would maintain a 9-foot side yard setback where 12 feet is required. Staff is supportive of this requested deviation because the project provides more than the required setback on the lower levels and the area of encroachment is only approximately 27 square feet.

Street Wall Height in CN-1 Zone: The CN-1 Zone allows a maximum street wall height of 36 feet. The zone also requires that the portion of the building above the street wall be set back at least 15 feet from the street wall. As designed, the project would construct a maximum street

wall height of 40.5 feet along University Avenue where 36 feet is allowed.

The building above the street wall would utilize a 9-foot setback where 15 feet is required. Staff is supportive of the deviations because the overall design of the building meets the intent of the regulations by reducing the feeling of mass at the pedestrian level. The building area above the street wall which would utilize a reduced 9-foot setback is only 24.5 feet tall and would not be visible to pedestrians from the sidewalk.

The Iowa Street elevation has portions of street wall that exceed the height limit by up to 29 feet. However, the street wall on this entire elevation is 348 feet long and has varying heights of 18 to 52 feet. There are three portions of the street wall that would exceed the maximum height of 36 feet. The two portions that exceed the height by 16 feet are about 70 feet wide and the portion that would exceed the height by 29 feet is about 30 feet wide. Combined, the three over-height street wall sections constitute about 49% of the total street wall and are separated by areas of street wall that are lower. Given the distance and separation of the proposed over-height areas and the overall design of the building, Staff is supportive of the deviations.

The proposed mixed-use project, including the deviations described above, meets the requirements of the CN-1 and MR-800B zones of the Mid-City Communities Planned District and the Greater North Park Community Plan.

Community Plan Analysis:

As a mixed-used project proposed along University Avenue consisting of 136 market-rate multi-family units over 10,566 square feet of commercial-retail space, the proposed project would implement the goal of the Housing Element of the Greater North Park Community Plan for providing a diversity of housing options and encouraging the construction and preservation of moderate and higher cost housing. Additionally, the project would meet further objectives in the Housing Element of the community plan to locate housing along University Avenue in order to maintain the low-density character of predominantly single-family areas and to provide medium to high density housing along University Avenue. Further, the proposed project would meet the Housing Element objective of providing adequate off-street parking by proposing 220 parking spaces where 213 parking spaces would be required.

The proposed project would implement the goal of the Commercial Element of the community plan for providing appropriately located and attractive commercial facilities that offer a wide variety of goods and services by devoting 10,566 square feet of the project for commercial-retail use. The project would include 9 commercial-retail spaces consisting of 5 shopkeeper units along Iowa Street and 4 larger storefront commercial spaces along University Avenue that would provide opportunities to offer various goods and services. The project would also meet the objective of encouraging mixed-use development that includes retail facilities and medium to high density housing within commercial nodes, by providing 10,566 square feet of commercial-retail and a residential component with an overall density of 100 units per acre within the community's commercial core at 30th and University Avenue. In order to meet the objective of encouraging pedestrian orientation in the community's commercial core area, the proposed project would provide street trees along its frontage streets.

These trees would consist of 24-inch box Chinese Flame trees along University Avenue and 24-inch box London Plan Trees along Iowa Street. Planter areas would also be provided at street level along Iowa Street and University Avenue. Curb-cuts would also be removed from University Avenue and reduced from 5 to 2 curb-cuts along Iowa Street. Additional pedestrian oriented measures would include the provision of pedestrian curb ramps on both corners of the alley along University Avenue and at the northwest corner of Iowa Street and University Avenue.

According to the community plan, proposed development projects within the 30th and University Avenue commercial core area are eligible for a density bonus based on parcel accumulation and compliance with applicable design guidelines in the Urban Design Element of the community plan. Further, the community plan states that parcel accumulation is the minimum qualifier to obtain a density bonus. As part of the proposed project, two existing parcels would be consolidated into one project site. Based on the community plan land use designations, 0.23-acre of the site is designated for High-Very High Density Residential development at 45 to 55 dwelling units per net residential acre and 1.12-acre of the site is designated for Commercial with High-Very High Density Residential development at 55 to 75 dwelling units per net residential acre. The addition of the residential density bonus would allow the proposed project to achieve a density bonus of up to 110 dwelling units per net acre. In addition to meeting the parcel accumulation requirement for the residential density bonus, the proposed project would also meet several of the major design guidelines in the Urban Design Element that address bulk, scale, surface articulation, parking, pedestrian orientation, and landscaping.

The proposed project would meet recommendations in the Urban Design Element for avoiding abrupt differences in scale by gradually reducing building heights from University Avenue to the existing residential development to the north. Along University Avenue the proposed project would measure 65 feet in height and transition down to a height of approximately 30 feet where the proposed project would abut an adjacent, existing 2 story multi-family development. Gradual transitions in scale would further be provided by the sloping roof lines of the proposed project that slant downward to the north. The proposed project would also meet the recommendation of controlling building bulk through the use of vertical and horizontal offsets on all elevations of the project and other architectural features, such as windows and balconies that would serve to break up the building facades.

The proposed project would also incorporate various materials to further articulate the building's façade and reduce its size. Ribbed metal siding would be utilized to add texture and variation to the proposed building elevations, in addition to wooden fencing and trellises on the several of the upper story areas, and ceramic tile around the building at street level. Upper stories of the proposed project would be stepped back so that they appear to be set back or recede in order to reduce bulk and scale. Additionally, taller portions of the proposed project would be setback.

The project proposes to seek deviations to exceed street wall heights and reduce upper story setbacks along University Avenue and Iowa Street. However, the proposed project does meet the intent of these regulations, in addition to meeting the design recommendations in the Urban Design Element, by varying the frontages of the project along these streets and articulating the buildings elevations to reduce scale.

As proposed, the project implements the goals and recommendations of the Housing and Commercial Elements of the Greater North Park Community plan as well as the major guidelines and recommendations of the Urban Design Element; and therefore, would not adversely affect the goals, objectives, and recommendations of the community plan.

Environmental Analysis:

Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) No. 88598, dated November 21, 2006, was prepared for this project. The MND requires the implementation of Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) to reduce potential impacts to Health and Safety, Paleontological Resources and Waste Management to below a level of significance. Because the site was previously occupied by a gas station, a Phase I Environmental Study was conducted, which determined that although there is no evidence of contamination at the site, the applicant would be required to conform with all County of San Diego Department of Environmental Health requirements should contamination be encountered during grading activities. An onsite Paleontological monitor would be required during excavations to ensure that if resources are encountered, a recovery and documentation program would be implemented. A waste management plan approved by the City's Environmental Services Department would be required to mitigate for possible waste management impacts.

The MND also examined potential traffic impacts resulting from project implementation. A Traffic Impact Analysis was conducted which determined that the project would not result in a significant transportation impact.

For more information regarding the issues analyzed, please refer to Mitigated Negative Declaration No. 88598 and the associated Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Program that were prepared for this project.

Community Planning Group Recommendation:

On May 16, 2006, the Greater North Park Community Planning Group voted 12-0-0 to recommend approval of the project, with five conditions (Attachment 7). Each condition and staff's response is listed below:

1. *Maximize onsite parking:* The project provides 220 parking spaces where 213 are required by the Municipal Code.
2. *Maximize landscaping:* The project has been reviewed and approved by the City's LDR-Landscape section. The project provides all Municipal Code required landscaping and no landscape deviations have been requested.
3. *Grant right of first refusal to existing tenants:* This condition is intended for a residential condominium conversion. The site is currently developed with commercial structures, therefore, there are no existing tenants.
4. *Save historic sidewalk stamps and scoring:* This is already a Municipal Code Requirement.
5. *Deny the request to waive the requirement to underground the existing overhead utilities:* No waiver has been requested, the applicant would be required to underground the overhead

utilities.

Conclusion:

In summary, staff finds that the project is consistent with the recommended land use, design guidelines and development standards in effect for this site per the adopted Greater North Park Community Plan, the CN-1 Zone and the MR-800B Zone of the Mid-City Communities Planned District with the deviations included as allowed through the Site Development Permit Process. Draft conditions of approval have been prepared for this project (Attachments 7 and 8) and the findings required to approve the project can be made and are included in the draft resolutions (Attachments 7 and 9).

ALTERNATIVES

1. **Approve** Vesting Tentative Map No. 285985 and Site Development Permit No. 282843, **with modifications.**
2. **Deny** Vesting Tentative Map No. 285985 and Site Development Permit No. 282843, **if the findings required to approve the project cannot be affirmed.**

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Westlake
Program Manager
Development Services Department

Paul Godwin
Development Project Manager
Development Services Department

WESTLAKE/PBG

Attachments:

1. Aerial Photograph
2. Community Plan Land Use Map
3. Project Location Map
4. Project Data Sheet
5. Project Site Plan
6. Vesting Tentative Map
7. Project Plans and Elevations
8. Draft Map Conditions and Subdivision Resolution
9. Draft Permit with Conditions
10. Draft Resolution with Findings
11. Community Planning Group Recommendation
12. Ownership Disclosure Statement

13. Project Chronology