



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

## REPORT TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION

**DATE ISSUED:** September 20, 2007      **REPORT NO. PC-07-139**

**ATTENTION:** Planning Commission, Agenda of September 27, 2007

**SUBJECT:** LAWRENCE STREET UNITS - PROJECT NO. 46540  
PROCESS FOUR

**OWNER:** MM GROUP, LLC, Michael Marinkovich, Manager  
(See Attachment 19)

**APPLICANT:** Tim Golba, Golba Architecture

### SUMMARY

**Issue:** Should the Planning Commission approve a Coastal Development Permit and Planned Development Permit to remodel and convert an existing historically designated single-family residence to a duplex and to construct a triplex on a 7,481 square-foot site located at 3035 Lawrence Street in the RM-3-9 Zone, Coastal Overlay (Non-Appealable Area 2) Zone, and Coastal Height Limit Overlay Zone within the Peninsula Community Plan?

### **Staff Recommendation:**

1. **Certify** Negative Declaration No. 46540; and
2. **Approve** Coastal Development Permit No. 131711 and Planned Development Permit No. 480001.

**Community Planning Group Recommendation:** On August 16, 2007, the Peninsula Community Planning Committee voted 8-2-2 to approve the project as presented.

**Environmental Review:** Negative Declaration No. 46540 has been prepared for the project in accordance with State of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines.

**Fiscal Impact Statement:** All costs associated with the processing of this project are recovered from a deposit account maintained by the applicant.

**Code Enforcement Impact:** None with this action.

**Housing Impact Statement:** The Peninsula Community Plan designates this site for multi-family development at a density of 45 to 73 dwelling units per acre. This calculates to a density range of between 8 and 12 dwelling units for the 7,481 square-foot site. The site is constrained by the historic designation of the existing structure, which the applicant proposes to remodel and convert into a duplex. The requirement to preserve the existing residence and provide parking at-grade has resulted in a maximum number of possible parking spaces on-site at ten, limiting the number of units on the site to five. The proposal would result in a net gain of 4 units to the Peninsula Community plan area.

The proposed project is within the Coastal Overlay Zone and has been reviewed for compliance with the regulations in the Coastal Overlay Zone Affordable Housing Replacement Requirements of the Land Development Code. This division is not applicable to this proposal because the proposal for conversion or demolition of a residential structure contains less than three dwelling units. The project meets the requirements of the Affordable Inclusionary Housing Ordinance by agreeing to pay an in-lieu fee.

## **BACKGROUND**

The project site is located at 3035 Lawrence Street, between Rosecrans and San Elijo Streets, in the RM-3-9 Zone, the Coastal Overlay Zone (Non-Appealable Area 2), and Coastal Height Limit Overlay Zone within the Peninsula Community Plan. The RM-3-9 is a Residential-Multiple Unit Zone which allows one dwelling unit per each 600 square feet of lot area.

The project site is currently developed with an historically designated, approximately 3,354 square-foot, two-story residence. The site includes an unfinished basement, detached garage, hardscape, and landscape amenities. The existing home was constructed in 1931 and is a Spanish Eclectic architectural style. Surrounding land uses include single-family and multi-family residences designed in a wide variety of architectural styles, colors, heights, bulk, and scale.

There are no sensitive biological habitats or resources on or adjacent to the subject property, nor is the property within or adjacent to the City of San Diego's Multiple Species Conservation Program Multi-Habitat Planning Area. The property is located within an existing urbanized area currently served by police, fire, and emergency medical services.

The project originally proposed to demolish the existing residence and construct six, new apartments with underground parking. On April 27, 2007 the existing house was designated an historical resource by the City of San Diego Historical Resource Board (HRB) and was determined to be historically significant in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act, as further detailed in the Negative Declaration. Due to the historical designation, the applicant redesigned the project to incorporate the historically designated home, as further described in the Project Description section of the report.

Because the project proposes to install a roof-mounted photovoltaic system consisting of solar panels sufficient to generate at least 50 percent of the proposed project's projected energy consumption, as established by Council Policy 900-14, the land use approvals have been processed through the "Affordable/In-Fill Housing and Sustainable Buildings Expedite

Program.” The photovoltaic cells would be located on the roof of the structures and would comply with the 30-foot Coastal Height Limit Overlay Zone.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Project Description:**

The project application proposes a Coastal Development Permit and Planned Development Permit to remodel and convert an existing historically designated single-family residence to a duplex and to construct a separate, freestanding triplex on the 7,481 square-foot site. All five proposed residential units would be for-rent units.

The existing residence would remain, with interior improvements to convert the single family residence into two units. The two-story duplex would consist of a 1,630 square-foot two bedroom, two bath unit on the ground floor, with a 1,215 square-foot two bedroom, two bath unit above. The new three-story triplex would be 29 feet 4.5 inches in height with a total gross floor area of 7,730 square feet. Unit Number 1 of the triplex would be approximately 1,357 square feet with a 91 square-foot deck area; Unit Number 2 would be approximately 1,702 square feet with a 216 square-foot deck area; and Unit Number 3 would be approximately 1,826 square feet with a 97 square-foot deck area. Ten parking spaces for the five units would be provided on-site with access from the existing driveway off Lawrence Street.

As proposed, the project requires the processing of a Coastal Development Permit to remodel the single dwelling unit into a duplex and for the construction of the triplex building, and a Planned Development Permit for development that does not comply with all base zone regulations or all development regulations.

### **Community Plan Analysis:**

The Peninsula Community Plan designates this site for multi-family development at a density of between 45 to 73 dwelling units per acre. Based on the total project site area and recommended residential densities, 8 to 12 dwelling units could potentially be developed on-site. The need to preserve the existing residence and to provide parking at-grade has resulted in a maximum number of possible parking spaces on-site at ten, in turn limiting the number of dwelling units proposed to five. The proposal would result in a net gain of four units to the Peninsula Community plan area. The community plan states, “The automobile or parking facilities should not be a dominant element of a neighborhood character. On-site parking should be screened or located in areas not highly visible from the street.” The parking for the proposal has been designed in a way to achieve consistency with community plan policy.

The Peninsula Community Plan states, “New development should be consistent with the scale and character of the existing development of the surrounding areas. The fitting in of new development is, in a broad sense a matter of scale. It requires a careful assessment of each building site in terms of the size and texture of its surroundings, and a very conscious attempt to achieve balance and compatibility in design between old and new buildings.” The applicant’s design and the bulk and scale of the proposal are generally consistent with community plan policy.

The proposal, in the La Playa neighborhood of the Peninsula Community Plan area, would be consistent with the current mix of single and multi-family dwellings of varying architectural styles, including Colonial, Craftsman, Spanish and contemporary styles. The La Playa neighborhood is also identified in the community plan as an area for a gradual transition to denser neighborhood character. The proposal for five dwelling units on a site where one currently exists is consistent with this policy.

**Environmental Analysis:**

On August 15, 2007, staff completed an environmental Initial Study for the Lawrence Street Units project. Based upon the Initial Study, staff found that the proposed project would not have a significant effect on the environment and determined that neither mitigation nor an Environmental Impact Report were required. In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act, Negative Declaration No. 46540 was prepared for the Lawrence Street Units project.

In accordance with CEQA Section 15064.5(b)(3), a project that follows the Secretary of Interior Standards for the Treatment for Historic Properties and Guidelines or the Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines shall be considered as mitigated to a level of less than a significant impact on an historical resources. Environmental and HRB staff reviewed the revised plans and determined that the conversion of the historically designated single-family structure into a duplex and the new triplex structure would be consistent with the direction given by the HRB Design Assistance Subcommittee and is consistent with the Secretary of Interior Standards and Guidelines. Staff determined adherence with Secretary of Interior Standards and Guidelines would preclude adverse impacts to historical resources and no mitigation would be required.

**Project-Related Issues:**

Deviations – The project proposes to deviate from the San Diego Municipal Code (SDMC) requirements for driveway width, tandem parking use, vehicular turnaround area, and personal storage area. Through the processing of a Planned Development Permit, the SDMC allows applicants to propose development that requires greater flexibility from the strict application of the regulations than would be allowed through a deviation process. The intent of Planned Development Permit regulations is to encourage imaginative and innovative planning, to assure the development achieves the purpose and intent of the applicable land use plan and that the design would be preferable to what would be achieved by strict conformance with the regulations. Staff believes that the Planning Commission can make the appropriate findings based on the following information.

The applicant is requesting the following deviations:

Driveway Width - The San Diego Municipal Code (SDMC) requires a minimum driveway width of 14 feet for multi-family residential developments of three to five units. The project proposes to utilize the existing nine-foot driveway to serve the required parking spaces. Given the proposed design, the existing nine-foot driveway is the maximum width feasible on the site without altering or removing the designated historic structure. In an effort to reduce runoff from the driveway, the applicant proposes to either install a "turf-block" material with

grass planted in the open cells or a fieldstone pattern of tile with ivy between the inlaid panels. Therefore, staff supports the requested driveway width.

Tandem Parking - The project location is not within the Tandem Parking Overlay Zone. The applicant is requesting a deviation to allow tandem parking spaces on the site to be counted towards meeting the parking requirements.

The Parking regulations of the SDMC require a total of ten parking spaces for the five residential units. The applicant proposes to meet a portion of the requirement by providing six parking spaces in three tandem spaces. The remaining four spaces would be provided for by standard sized parking spaces. The project proposes the parking deviation in an effort to maximize the site's efficiency and usable land without altering or removing the designated historic structure. In addition, the provision of tandem parking spaces fully meets the required number of parking spaces while reducing the parking area footprint. Staff supports the requested use of tandem parking.

Vehicular Circulation within Parking Facilities – The SDMC requires drive aisles that do not provide through circulation to provide a turnaround area at the end of the aisle that is clearly marked to prohibit parking and that has a minimum area equivalent to a parking space. The project proposes the circulation deviation in an effort to maximize the site's efficiency and usable land without altering or removing the designated historic structure. Although the proposed design does not meet the minimum area equivalent to a parking space, approximated four feet is provided in the garage area design. The additional four feet, combined with the long parking spaces associated with tandem parking, provides the required space to maneuver within the parking area. Staff supports the requested vehicular circulation plan.

Storage Requirements - The SDMC requires each dwelling unit in all RM zones to have a fully enclosed personal storage area outside of the unit which measures at least 240 cubic feet with a minimum of seven-foot horizontal dimension in one plane. The applicant is proposing the deviation for the two units within the converted historic structure.

As designed, the project proposes to preserve the historic structure with minimal alteration. The constraints of the historic designation, as well as the conversion of the existing home into a duplex with one unit on each of the two floors, do not offer any viable location to incorporate personal storage space outside of the units. However, approximately 200 cubic feet of limited head height basement will remain after the remodel, which would serve as personal storage space for the two units. Staff supports the proposed personal storage areas.

### **Critical Project Features to Consider During Substantial Conformance Review**

Density and Parking – The building design and/or site design should be fully analyzed for any revisions to the number of units proposed onsite and the number of parking spaces proposed to ensure the changes would be not reduce the density further below the land-use designation of the Peninsula Community Plan and reduce the number of parking spaces below the code requirement.

Environmental Document: The project design should remain within the parameters of the scope of the Negative Declaration.

**Conclusion:**

The project proposes to remodel and convert an existing historically designated single-family residence to a duplex and to construct a triplex on a 7,481 square-foot site, with the required 10 parking spaces at the rear of the site. The proposed multi-family residential project would implement numerous recommendations of the community plan by locating parking in areas not highly visible from the street, proposing development which is consistent with the scale and character of the existing development of the surrounding areas, and by increasing the on-site density from one unit to five in the La Playa neighborhood of the Peninsula Community Plan.

The project has been reviewed in accordance with all applicable development regulations and the Peninsula Community Plan and Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan, the City's Progress Guide and General Plan, and the California Environmental Quality Act. Staff has determined the project complies with the applicable development regulations and would be consistent with the purpose and intent of the underlying zones. Staff believes the multi-family residential infill project is well designed and would be an asset to the neighborhood. Staff has provided the required findings to affirm the project and recommends that the Planning Commission approve the project as proposed.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Approve Coastal Development Permit No. 131711 and Planned Development Permit No. 480001, with modifications.
2. Deny Coastal Development Permit No. 131711 and Planned Development Permit No. 480001, if the findings required to approve the project cannot be affirmed.

Respectfully submitted,



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Program Manager  
Development Services Department



Daniel Stricker  
Project Manager  
Development Services Department

BOEKAMP/DES

Attachments:

1. Aerial Photograph
2. Community Plan Land Use Map
3. Project Location Map
4. Project Data Sheet
5. Project Site Plan
6. Topographic Survey

7. Duplex – Floor Plans
8. Duplex – Roof Plan
9. Duplex – Elevations
10. Duplex – Section
11. Triplex – Floor Plans
12. Triplex – Roof Plan
13. Triplex – Elevations
14. Triplex – Sections
15. Landscape Plan
16. Draft Permit with Conditions
17. Draft Resolution with Findings
18. Community Planning Group Recommendation
19. Ownership Disclosure Statement
20. Project Chronology