

**DATE ISSUED:** September 20, 2007

**REPORT NO. PC-07-142**

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

**SUBJECT:** West Ocean Beach Park Units

**OWNER/  
APPLICANT:** Eric Otterson, Benedicte Otterson and George Vano [Attachment 13]  
Ricardo Torres, Golba Architecture

**SUMMARY**

**Issue:** Should the Planning Commission approve the demolition of two existing residential units, the construction of a new seven rental units in five detached buildings and one duplex on a 13,078 square-foot site with two deviations from the Municipal Code?

**Staff Recommendation:**

1. **Certify** Mitigated Negative Declaration No. 95894, and **Adopt** Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program;
2. **Approve** Coastal Development Permit No. 310804 and Planned Development Permit No. 456171.

**Community Planning Group Recommendation:** The subject project was presented at the Ocean Beach Planning Board's General Meeting on May 2, 2007. There were two motions concerning this property and neither one passed. For a full discussion, see the Discussion section of this report.

**Environmental Review:** A Mitigated Negative Declaration Project No. 95894 has been prepared for the project in accordance with State of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines. A Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program has been prepared and will be implemented for Archaeological Resources and Noise which will reduce any potential impacts to below a level of significance.

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

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

**Housing Impact Statement:** The project proposes to demolish two residences in order to construct seven for-rent dwelling units. The units consist of five cottages plus one duplex over a basement on a 0.30-acre site. The proposal would result in a net gain of five units to the Ocean Beach community plan area.

The proposed project is exempt from the Coastal Overlay Zone Affordable Housing Replacement Requirements division of the Land Development Code 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 is located at 4824 - 4836 West Point Loma Boulevard between Bacon Street and Sunset Cliffs Boulevard [Attachment 1] in the RM 2-4 Zone and is within the Coastal Overlay Zone; Coastal Height Limit Overlay Zone; Airport Approach Overlay Zone; Airport Environs Overlay Zone; the Ocean Beach Emerging Historic District; and the Parking Impact Overlay Zone [Attachment 2]. The 0.3-acre site is within the Ocean Beach Precise Plan and Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan which designates the property and surrounding neighborhood for multi-family land use at a maximum density of 25 dwelling units per acre [Attachment 3].

The property is developed with two single-family houses constructed in 1912 and 1914. City staff determined that neither of the single-family homes is considered historically significant. The project site is surrounded by established single-family and multi-family residential developments to the west, east, south and open space park land to the north [Attachment 2].

The project site is adjoins open space park land to the north and is within the First Public Roadway. The property slopes downhill from West Point Loma Boulevard to the rear lot line along the park frontage with a grade difference of approximately 11 feet.

A Coastal Development Permit is required to allow the demolition of the existing one-story, single-family houses and the construction of the proposed new seven dwelling units.

A Planned Development Permit is required to allow for deviations to the regulations of the Municipal Code (SDMC Section 143.0403).

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Project Description:**

The project proposes the demolition of the two existing one-story, single-family houses [Attachment 4] and the construction of five detached structures and one duplex fronting West Point Loma Boulevard. The five detached structures would be two stories in height over parking. These units have identified in the plans as Buildings A and B. The duplex structure is also two

stories high above parking and is shown in the plans as Building C. Building A is repeated on the site four times, Building B and C is used only once each. Building A would provide 957 square feet of living area. Building B would provide 1,030 square feet of living area. Building C would provide 2,033 square feet of living area for two units [Attachment 5]. The project would also include 16 on-site parking spaces.

The project proposes to grade the entire site. The earthwork would total approximately 400 cubic feet of excavation and construct approximately 200 linear feet of retaining walls to a maximum height of nine feet. Landscaping is proposed which would exceed the code requirements, both in terms of area and plant points. The landscape plan would install four *Podocarpus* as the street trees and shade the site with 16 trees such as: Gold Medallion; Purple Leaf Plum; Ornamental Pear; and Dwarf Magnolia. The existing King and Fan Palms would be removed.

### **Community Plan Analysis:**

The Ocean Beach Precise Plan identifies this site at 4836 West Point Loma Boulevard as an area designated for residential development at a density of between 15 to 25 dwelling units per net residential acre [Attachment 3]. This equates to a range of between four and seven dwelling units for this 13,175 square foot site. The Ocean Beach Precise Plan states; “That new residential construction be in the form of garden-type units, absent from excessive height and bulk and compatible in design with the existing community.” This proposal would not adversely affect the stated plan policy and would provide ample landscaping. The Plan also states; “Maintain the existing residential character of Ocean Beach as exemplified by a mixture of small scale residential building types and styles.” The project is well articulated and would not detract from existing neighborhood character.

Surrounding land uses include a mix of single-family and multi-family dwelling units and commercial development associated with the Voltaire commercial district. The proposal in north Ocean Beach would be consistent with the current mixture of single and multi-family dwellings of varying architectural styles plus commercial buildings in the Voltaire commercial district up to thirty feet in height.

The block where the subject site is located contains predominately residential development, with much of the surrounding development at single-story. However, there is a general mixture of both single and multi-family residential development, both single and multi-stories in height within a 300 foot radius of the subject site [Attachment 6].

The Ocean Beach Community Plan calls for small-scale residential building types and styles. While the proposed cottages are greater in number than the existing residences to be demolished, individually, each detached unit is a small-scale residential building type consisting of units of only approximately 1,000 square feet. The project was designed to minimize the footprint. The small footprints and detached structures, combined with staggering of the structures and allowing the structures to follow the natural contours of the parcel, present a small mass and profile to the neighborhood. The project also includes open space at the front and rear yards, along with substantial landscaping around all the units.

The project location is within an area designated by the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) for increased density [Attachment 7]. In addition, the project site is served by bus route 35. The increase in density at this site is consistent with the SANDAG long-range vision for the area.

### **Zoning**

The project meets the density of the zone which allows for one dwelling unit for each 1,750 square feet of lot area. Therefore, the 13,078 square-foot project site would allow eight units where seven are proposed. The proposed density is within the allowable density of both the Ocean Beach Precise Plan and Local Coastal Program Plan, and the San Diego Municipal Code (SDMC) RM-2-4 zone.

The SDMC establishes a maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 0.7, or 9,222 square feet for this property. The project proposes 6,891 square feet of living area, where up to 6,893 square feet could be allowed and provides 9,222 square feet total floor area, where 9,222 is allowed.

The project meets the requirements of the Municipal Code and recommendations of the community plan with respect to building height and setbacks. While the zone could allow a maximum height of up to 40 feet [SDMC 131.0444(f)], the Coastal Height Overlay Zone restricts the height to 30 feet. The maximum building height would be 29' 4" in Building C at the rear of the site. All required setbacks are observed.

### **Environmental**

A Mitigated Negative Declaration Project No. 95894 has been prepared for the project in accordance with State of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines. While the general project vicinity is known to contain archaeological resources, this specific project site is not designated as an "important archaeological site" within the meaning of the SDMC. However, Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Program is required for Archaeological Resources and Noise to reduce any potential impacts to below a level of significance should they exist. Under existing conditions, the project site discharges 1.01 cubic feet per second (cfs) whereas, under the proposed condition, the project discharge would be reduced to 0.91 cfs due to a decrease in the slope across the project site. This discharge would be treated by utilizing pervious paving for the surface guest parking areas, filtration strips and catch basins for runoff from roof surfaces.

### **Land Use Compatibility (Noise)**

The project site is within the 65 – 70 dB noise contour of the San Diego International Airport. A project-specific noise study indicates existing ambient noise conditions, due to traffic and aircraft, is 67 decibels (dB) at the front (southerly end) of the project site. Exterior usable spaces on the project site would be at 65 dB. Interior noise levels would be mitigated to 45 dB. The San Diego County Regional Airport Authority has found the project to be conditionally consistent with the San Diego international Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan.

## **Project-Related Issues:**

### **Deviations**

The project is requesting approval of a Planned Development Permit for proposed two deviations from the Municipal Code.

- Deviate from the Municipal Code to allow less than 50% of the length of the building façade on the ground floor to enclose habitable area per SDMC 131.0464(e)(3). In order to provide a project with the proposed small footprints and detached structures, the driveway configuration bisects the parcel to allow for vehicular access to all the detached cottages in the rear of the parcel. The front two structures exceed the 50% maximum by approximately six feet. Without this deviation, the design alternative at the same density would be a “box-like” form, increasing visual bulk and scale. This form would be out of character with the surrounding neighborhood.
- Deviate from the Municipal Code to allow retaining walls that exceed the maximum required height of six feet by two feet, eight inches, for portions of a retaining wall that extend into the side and rear yard setbacks. The retaining walls allow the project to maintain level and usable common and private exterior open space in the rear of the project site.

Staff has considered the requested deviations and determined that they are minor in scope, provide a better overall project design and are consistent with the purpose and intent of the applicable regulations.

### **Parking**

Per Land Development Code Section 142.0525 (LDC) Table 142-05C, the minimum parking requirement for this project is 16 automobile spaces (at a rate of 2.25 spaces per two-bedroom unit in the beach impact area), and 1 motorcycle space (at a rate of 0.1 per unit) must also be provided. The Land Development Code also requires at least 25% of the Floor Area Ratio (FAR) to be reserved for parking. The project reserves 2,329 square feet for parking, whereas 2,306 is required.

The new construction would provide seven residential units and 16 on-site parking spaces. The site contains two existing driveway connections to West Point Loma Boulevard. Upon completion of the project, one 20 foot driveway would serve the project site. An adjacent driveway and curb cut on the easterly edge of the project site would be retained as this driveway provides access to the adjacent property, as recorded on February 2001.

### **Community Group:**

The Ocean Beach Planning Board met on May 2, 2007. During the meeting there were two motions presented concerning this property and neither one passed [Attachment 9].

- The first motion was to approve the project as presented. The motion failed by a vote of 5-5-0
- The subsequent motion was to deny the project as presented. This motion also failed by a vote of 5-5-0.

Various board members noted that the proposed design typified the modern interpretation of the Ocean Beach cottage and was appropriate for the RM-2-4 zone. Various board members also expressed a primary concern that the project could be viewed as too much bulk near the main entrances to Ocean Beach.

### **CONCLUSION**

Staff has reviewed the proposed project and determined the project is in conformance with all applicable sections of the San Diego Municipal Code regarding the RM-2-4 Zone, as allowed through the Planned Development Permit. Staff has determined the proposed deviation for a shorter length of the front façade and for over-height retaining walls will not adversely affect the General Plan, the Ocean Beach Precise Plan, and is appropriate for this location and will result in a more desirable project than would be achieved if designed in strict conformance with the development regulations of the applicable zone. The project is also consistent with the San Diego Association of Governments long-range plan for increased density in this vicinity. Staff has determined the required findings can be supported as substantiated in the resolution [Attachment 11] and recommends approval of the project as proposed.

### **ALTERNATIVES**

1. **Approve** Coastal Development Permit No. 310804, and Planned Development Permit No. 456171, **with modifications.**
2. **Deny** Coastal Development Permit No. 310804, and Planned Development Permit No. 456171, **if the findings required to approve the project cannot be affirmed.**

Respectfully submitted,

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Mike Westlake  
 Program Manager  
 Development Services Department

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Laila Iskandar  
 Development Project Manager  
 Development Services Department

**Attachments:**

1. Site Location
2. Aerial Photo
3. Land Use Plan
4. Site Photos
5. Project Plans
6. Building Height Survey
7. SANDAG Smart Growth Concept Map
8. Project Data Sheet
9. Community Planning Group Recommendation
10. Permit
11. Permit Resolution
12. Airport Authority Consistency Determination
13. Ownership Disclosure
14. Project Chronology