

**DATE ISSUED:** April 21, 2005 **REPORT NO.** PC-05-180

**ATTENTION:** Planning Commission, Agenda of April 28, 2005

**SUBJECT:** MURRAY CANYON APARTMENTS - PROJECT NO. 5700  
PROCESS NUMBER 4

**OWNER/  
APPLICANT:** H. G. Fenton Company (Attachment 13)

**REFERENCE:** Conditional Use Permit (CUP) No. 82-0005 (Attachment 11)

**SUMMARY**

**Issue(s):** Should the Planning Commission approve a request to construct eight three-story multi-family structures containing a combined total of 268 apartment units; one two story resident community building; and associated site improvements on a former 17.04 acre quarry site. The project site is located at 5745 Mission Center Road (APN 677 220 14), between Mission Valley Road and Sevan Court, within the Mission Valley Community Plan area (Attachment 1).

**Staff Recommendation:**

1. **CERTIFY** Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) Project No. 5700, and **ADOPT** the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP), and
2. **APPROVE** Planned Development Permit No. 212959 and Site Development Permit No. 940 (Attachment 9).

**Community Planning Group Recommendation:** The Mission Valley Unified Planning Group, on March 2, 2005, voted 15:1:1 in support of the project as proposed with no conditions

**Environmental Review:** Mitigated Negative Declaration Project No. 5700 has been prepared in accordance with the State of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines. A Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) has been prepared and will be implemented which will reduce, to a level of insignificance, any potential impacts identified in the environmental review process for Utilities (Solid Waste), Traffic Circulation/Parking, Air Quality, and Paleontological Resources.

**Fiscal Impact Statement:** All costs associated with the processing of this project are paid for by the applicant.

**Housing Impact Statement:** The project adds 268 apartment units to the housing supply to help alleviate the housing shortage. The units are located in an area with significant employment opportunities, resulting in a better jobs/housing balance. The applicant will pay the affordable housing fee rather than provide the affordable units on site.

## **BACKGROUND**

The subject property is located at 5745 Mission Center Road, between Mission Valley Road and Sevan Court, in the Mission Valley Community Plan area (Attachment 2). The project site is surrounded by single-family residences to the north; Mission Center Road to the west; unimproved Mission Valley Road to the south; and mining operations to the east. The property is not within or adjacent to the Multi-Habitat Planning Area (MHA) of the City of San Diego's Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) Subarea Plan area.

The previously graded site is the location of the current concrete batch plant operations of Hanson Aggregates Pacific Southwest, Inc. (Attachment 3). The operations produce aggregate, base materials, sand, and concrete for use in the building industry. The site was previously part of a larger mining operation. As identified in Negative Declaration No. 82-0005, the proposed project site was created through surface mining and reclamation which resulted in a graded pad for future development.

Pursuant to the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA), site restoration is underway as previously analyzed in the Murray Canyon Reclamation Plan Negative Declaration No. 82-0005. The northern boundary of the project site has been graded to a 2:1 vegetated, irrigated slope as reviewed and approved by the City of San Diego in the Vulcan Materials Company Substantial Conformance Review to Conditional Use Permit (CUP) No. 82-0005, Project No. 96004865-P-1 (April 11, 2001). The slope was vegetated with a hydro-seed mix, and is in process of establishing a viable revegetation as obligated to Vulcan Materials Company by the Conditional Use Permit.

## DISCUSSION

### Project Description:

The request is to construct eight three-story multi-family structures containing a combined total of 268 apartment units (156 one-bedroom and 112 two-bedroom units); one two story resident community building; and associated site improvements on a former 17.04-acre quarry site (Attachment 4). The proposed eight three -story buildings would contain a combination of one- and two -bedroom apartment units ranging in size from 750 to 1,087 square-feet. The one-bedroom units would contain a kitchen, living/dining room, bathroom, and one bedroom; the two bedroom units would contain a kitchen, living/dining room, two bathrooms, and two bedrooms; and all units would contain either a balcony or patio. The three levels would be connected via enclosed stairways. Exterior treatments would include stucco finish and tile roofing. No structure would exceed 39 feet above grade at its highest point (Attachment 5).

The project site would continue to be accessed from Mission Center Road. Emergency and private pedestrian access from Mission Valley Road is proposed. The site drainage system would include trough inserts in all drain inlets and catch basins and a centrifugal separator, located downstream of the terminus of the private system, before discharge into the existing drainage system located within the public right-of-way. Site development would include construction of driveways, a retaining wall, surface parking, and landscaping. Site grading would consist of 33,400 cubic-yards of cut, 4,600 cubic yards of fill, and 28,800 cubic-yards of export. One 13-foot high 380-foot long retaining wall is proposed. A total of 473 automobile, 27 motorcycle, and 64 bicycle parking spaces are provided where 471 automobile, 27 motorcycle, and 62 bicycle parking spaces are required. The landscaping would be in conformance with the City's *Landscape Technical Manual* and would include trees such as Silk Tree, Crape Myrtle, and Fern Pine; shrubs such as Star Jasmine, India Hawthorn, and Heavenly Bamboo; and groundcovers such as Gazania and Lantana.

The project site is 17.04 acres, however, only 10.00 acres (57%) would be developed. The undeveloped 7.04 acres (33%) of the site would remain as an existing 2:1 graded, vegetated slope which is undergoing re-vegetation and restoration pursuant to the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act. No brush management for fire protection is required.

### Deviations

The proposed project would require a deviation from Section 142.0340(e), of the San Diego Municipal Code, which limits the height of retaining walls located outside required yards to a maximum of 12 feet. The project proposes a retaining wall at the base of a slope in the northern portion of the site. The wall would range from zero feet at its west end to a maximum of 14 feet in the central portion (for a distance of five feet eight inches) to one foot at the east end. The wall would be shielded by apartment buildings at a height of 35 feet and would not be visible to surrounding public streets. Landscaping would occur at the base of the wall to further screen it from view (Attachment 14).

The proposed project would also require a deviation from minimum setback requirements. For buildings along Mission Center Road, the project would require a deviation to the required setback to allow balconies and patios to encroach two feet into the setback. Additionally, the project would require a deviation in the required setback along Mission Valley Road to allow buildings to encroach four feet and to allow patios and balconies to encroach nine feet (Attachment 6).

Due to the hillside covering a large portion of the property, development is situated in the central and southern portions of the site so as to not impact the existing slope. Additionally, the project is required to dedicate a portion of the site along the southern boundary for future street improvements associated with Mission Valley Road. These constraints result in a reduced street yard area. Therefore, the project is requesting a deviation for the street yard requirement along future Mission Valley Road. The required street yard is 16,500 square feet. The project proposes 10,000 square feet, a reduction in the required street yard of 6,500 square feet. The reduction in the required street yard will allow for buildings to front on the street creating an urban street scene.

The deviations are supported because of the overall design of the project and the limitations of the project site. The intent of the site design is to create an activated street scene along existing Mission Center Road and future Mission Valley Road. By bringing buildings up closer to the road, with parking and amenities interior to the site, the project enlivens the street scene. Additionally, a pre-existing manufactured mined slope occurs in the north and east portions of the site. This physical feature constrains the area available for development. The minimal encroachments into the setback and use of retaining walls in the rear of the site create more flexibility in the site design.

### **Community Plan Analysis:**

The proposed project is located in the Mission Valley Community Plan area, within a larger area identified as “Multiple Use”. The Multiple Use designated area is situated north of Friars Road, east of Mission Center Road and west of I-805 (Attachment 7). As stated in the community plan the Multiple Use designation applies to “. . . a relatively large-scale real estate project characterized by:

*“Two or more significant revenue-producing uses (such as retail, office, residential (either as rentals or condominiums), hotel/motel, and/or recreation – which, in well-planned projects, are financially supportive of other uses; Significant functional and physical integration of the project component including uninterrupted pedestrian connections, if available, to adjacent developments; Development in conformance with a coherent plan (which frequently stipulates the type and scale of uses, permitted densities, and related items); and Public Transit opportunities and commitments.”* (Attachment 8)

The project site is further addressed through a note in the legend of the Specific Plan/Multiple Use Areas Map, Figure 10 in the Community Plan, which identifies the project site and adjacent area to the east, as “. . . most likely to develop under the multiple use option. Large and multiple-parcel projects should use the Specific Plan/PCD [PDP] mechanism, and smaller projects should use the PCD[PDP] permit for implementation.” (Attachment 8)

The proposed Murray Canyon Apartments project represents the first development within the area identified for the Multiple Use. It is being developed as a Planned Development Permit, in accordance with the Community Plan. While the project itself does not propose a mix of uses, the larger Multiple Use area will develop with other uses, including retail commercial, residential and business/office park uses as part of the proposed Quarry Falls Specific Plan.

Additionally, the Mission Valley Heights Specific Plan area is located across from and to the west of the proposed Murray Canyon Apartments project. Mission Valley Heights is a nearly built-out Specific Plan Area comprised of a retail center (Mission Center Retail Center) and industrial and office park developments. The Mission Center Retail Center includes a major food market, fast food restaurants, a food court, bank, dry cleaners, a post and mail establishment, and other retail services. The addition of residential uses in proximity of these existing and planned land uses will support the Multiple Use designation of the Community Plan. Existing retail uses will also provide necessary services for future residents of the Murray Canyon Apartments (Attachment 7).

The proposed Murray Canyon Apartments project includes pedestrian connections and linkages to Mission Center Road, the future extension of Mission Valley Road and an additional connection to the adjacent Quarry Falls project when that project is developed. Future residents of the Murray Canyon Apartments can easily access bus stops located on the adjacent Mission Center Road and on Friars Road, one block south of the project site.

### **Environmental Analysis:**

#### Traffic

In order to assess the potential traffic impacts of the proposal a Traffic Study was required. Based upon the study, it was determined that development of the proposed project will have the following impacts which can be fully mitigated.

A segment of Murray Ridge Road between I-805 northbound ramps and Mission Center Road will be impacted by the project. As a two lane collector with a two-way left turn lane, the segment would operate at LOS (Level of Service) F with or without the proposed project. However, the project would cause an increase in volume to capacity (V/C) ratio greater than 0.02 which requires mitigation. The restriping of Murray Ridge Road to a four lane collector (with parking retained) would increase the capacity and result in an acceptable LOS.

The traffic analysis shows that the proposed project would be expected to have significant impacts at the following intersections in the Near Term for Murray Ridge Road at Mission

Center Road, AM; Murray Ridge Road at I-805 southbound ramps, AM/PM; and Friars Road westbound ramps at Qualcomm Way, PM. For the Long Term impacts would be at Murray Ridge Road at I-805 northbound ramps, PM. Signalization will mitigate the Near Term impacts at Murray Ridge Road at Mission Center Road; Murray Ridge Road at I-805 southbound ramps; and Friars Road westbound ramp at Qualcomm Way. The project will mitigate the Long Term impacts at Murray Ridge Road at I-805 northbound ramps by a fair share contribution based on the fair share percentage calculation towards an additional right turn lane and signalization.

#### Air Quality

Dust would be generated from site grading on approximately 10-acres of the project site. The dust control techniques defined in the MMRP, such as, site watering would reduce direct and cumulative impacts to nearby homes from dust emissions associated with the project.

#### Utilities - Solid Waste

For new residential development of 50 units or more a Waste Management Plan for construction debris must be completed. The plan details what waste will be recycled and what will be sent to landfills. The purpose of the plan is to reduce the use of existing landfills and increase the use of recyclable materials. The plan must be approved by the City of San Diego's Environmental Services Department. Implementation of the approved Waste Management Plan would reduce impact to the City's landfills to below a level of significance.

#### Paleontological Resources

The project site is underlain by the Stadium Conglomerate (Tst), Friars (Tp), and Mission Valley (Tmv) geologic formations, which have a high potential to contain paleontological resources, and by the Pomerado Conglomerate (Tpm) formation, which has a moderate resource potential for paleontological resources. A narrow portion of the site adjacent to Murray Canyon Road is underlain by Stream-terrace deposits (Qt) which has a low potential for paleontological resources. A previously-recorded fossil locality (site number 3691) exists less than a mile to the north of the project site. Although previous mining has been conducted on the site, undisturbed Stadium Conglomerate (Tst) formation exists on the northern end of the project site at the foot of the existing graded slope and could be affected by the proposed site development by cuts of more than 10 feet deep into undisturbed formation. These areas may contain additional fossil resources. As such, monitoring for paleontological resources would be required for these areas.

#### **Conclusion:**

Staff supports the proposed project and requested deviations to construct eight three-story multi-family structures containing a combined total of 268 apartment units. Staff recommends that the Planning Commission approve Planned Development Permit No. 212959 and Site Development Permit No. 9430 for the proposed Murray Canyon Apartments project.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

1. **Approve** Planned Development Permit No. 212959 and Site Development Permit No. 9430 with modifications.
2. **Deny** Planned Development Permit No. 212959 and Site Development Permit No. 9430, if the findings required to approve the project cannot be affirmed.

**Respectfully submitted,**

---

**Marcela Escobar-Eck  
Deputy Director, Customer Support and  
Information Division  
Development Services Department**

---

**Patricia Grabski, AICP  
Project Manager, Customer Support  
and Information Division  
Development Services Department**

HALBERT/PXG

Attachments:

1. Aerial Photo
2. Community Plan Land Use Map
3. Site Photo
4. Site Plan
5. Elevations
6. Project Data Sheet
7. Community Plan - Multiple Land Use Map
8. Community Plan Pages
9. Draft Permit with Conditions
10. Draft Resolution with Findings
11. CUP 82 0005
12. Project Chronology
13. Ownership Disclosure Statement
14. Retaining Wall Section