

DATE ISSUED: June 16, 2006 **REPORT NO.** PC-06-174

ATTENTION: **Planning Commission, Agenda of June 22, 2006**

SUBJECT: ALEXANDRIA TECHNOLOGY CENTER-SORRENTO VIEW
PROJECT NO. 4466. PROCESS 4.

**OWNER/
APPLICANT:** ARE-Sorrento View, Limited Liability Corporation (Attachment 12).

SUMMARY

Issue(s): Should the Planning Commission approve a proposal to develop an approximately 9.1-acre office, research and development facility containing two multi-story buildings, a four-level parking structure, and surface parking area?

Staff Recommendations:

1. **Certify** the Environmental Impact Report No. 4466 and **Adopt** the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, and Statement of Overriding Considerations.
2. **Approve** Coastal Development Permit No. 7293, Site Development Permit No. 7294, and Planned Development Permit No. 62021.

Community Planning Group Recommendation: The Mira Mesa Community Planning Group, on November 15, 2004, voted 12-2-0 to recommend approval of the proposed project with no conditions (Attachment 10).

San Diego County Regional Airport Authority: On May 1, 2006, the San Diego County Airport Land Use Commission determined that the proposed project is consistent with the MCAS Miramar Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (Attachment 11)

Environmental Review: Environmental Impact Report No. 4466 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 and reduce, to a level of insignificance, any potential impacts identified in the environmental review process.

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

Code Enforcement Impact: None with this action.

Housing Impact Statement: The proposed project is located within the Mira Mesa Community Plan's Sorrento Mesa Subarea and is identified as industrial park use. One of the objectives outlined in the community plan is to prohibit residential uses in industrially designated areas. The proposed project is in conformance with that objective as no residential units are proposed as part of this project.

BACKGROUND

The Alexandria Technology Center – Sorrento View project site is located in the northwestern portion of the City of San Diego approximately 190 feet east of Interstate 805 (I-805), 700 feet south of Lusk Boulevard, and 0.5 mile north of Mira Mesa Boulevard. The approximately 11.2-acre project site is undeveloped (Attachment 3). The project site is in the Mira Mesa Community Plan's Sorrento Mesa Subarea for industrial land use and is surrounded by industrial/business park uses. Commercial multi-story buildings and associated parking facilities are immediately northwest and southwest of the project site. Vista Sorrento Parkway borders the site on the west and southwest. The Multiple Habitat Planning Area (MHPA) associated with the City's Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) is adjacent to the east and northeast property lines. In addition, Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Miramar is located approximately three miles to the southeast.

The applicable zone designations for this property are IL-3-1 (light industrial) and RS-1-8 (residential, single-unit) pursuant to the Land Development Code. The project site is within the non-appealable Area 1 of the Coastal Overlay Zone, the Los Peñasquitos Watershed Impact Area, the Airport Environs Overlay (60 dBA) Zone due to its proximity to MCAS Miramar and within the Airport Influence Area identified in the Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP, amended 1992) for MCAS Miramar. In addition, approximately 9.85 acres of the site are within the Accident Potential Zone 2. The proposed project site is located within the City's MSCP Subarea Plan and is adjacent to the MHPA. Approximately 2.1 acres have been placed into an on-site biological conservation easement adjacent to the MHPA.

The entire project site has been previously graded and the landform substantially altered, reportedly due to the use of the site as a construction staging and soil borrow area for the construction of Interstate 805. In addition, aerial photographs indicate that the subject 11.2-acre

parcel underwent significant grading between 1953 and 1977. More recent aerial photographs indicate that additional grading has occurred since the late 1970's. However, no records of grading permits from this earlier time period exist. In 1999, Wachovia Bank applied for a Coastal Development Permit (CDP) No. 99-0804 for grading activities with no associated development of the subject parcel requested. As a result of the application, a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND), State Clearinghouse (SCH) No. 2000041027 was approved by the City of San Diego on May 31, 2000 and only clearing and grubbing occurred on the site. On May 27, 2003, the City approved CDP No. 11100, an extension of time to CDP No. 99-0804 (Attachment No. 5). Biological mitigation measures associated with the CDP No. 99-0804 consisted of three components: 0.14 acre of off-site wetland restoration in the Torrey Pines State Reserve, 3.5 acres of off-site mitigation, and 2.1 acres of on-site preservation (0.6 acre of Diegan coastal sage scrub and 1.5 acres of non-native grassland). The purchase of a 0.14-acre wetland credit from the Torrey Pines State Park was finalized in May 2000. The conservation easement agreement for 2.1 acres of on-site preservation was approved by the City and recorded at the San Diego County Recorder's Office in March 2003. The purchase transaction and conservation easement agreement for 3.5 acres of off-site mitigation was finalized in November 2002 in favor of the City of San Diego between The Environmental Trust and Wachovia Bank (San Diego County 2002). The site remains vacant except for a small parking lot.

Existing streetscape fronting the property along Vista Sorrento Parkway consists of a single palm tree adjacent to the road and an approximately 20-foot high manufactured slope covered primarily with non-native vegetation. The current right-of-way width for Vista Sorrento Parkway adjacent to the site is 74 feet with a curb-to-curb width of 60 feet. This right-of-way includes three automobile travel lanes; one travel lane in each direction (northwest-southeast) with a center lane provided for left turn lanes into office complex parking lots. The right-of-way also includes two bike lanes, one on either side of the road.

On-site elevations range from approximately 120 feet above mean sea level (AMSL) on the west to 230 feet AMSL on the east. From the southwest property line, adjacent to Vista Sorrento Parkway, the site slopes upward approximately 20 feet at a gradient of approximately 2:1. From the top of this slope, the lot extends eastward approximately 500 feet across a level graded pad to a slope near the rear of the parcel. The lower portion of this 100-foot-high slope appears to be stability fill and the remainder is undisturbed. A stockpile of soil forms a short ridge up to approximately 35 feet high extending along the southeast property line and a portion of Vista Sorrento Parkway. A second soil stockpile is located in the northeast portion of the lot adjacent to an existing asphalt-concrete parking lot. A third stockpile of rock rubble sits in the eastern quadrant of the property. The parking lot is approximately 125 feet by 250 feet (0.75 acre) and surrounded by a chain-link fence. The parking lot has not been recently maintained as evidenced by vegetation growing through large surface cracks. In addition to the aforementioned chain-link fence surrounding the parking lot, a chain-link fence encompasses the entire site.

Two 3-foot-wide concrete brow ditches occur on site. One drains from north to south in the northern corner of the property, partially within the 2.1-acre biological conservation easement that extends along the east site boundary. This brow ditch drains into an existing underground,

30-inch, reinforced concrete pipe (RCP) along the northern boundary, eventually connecting to an existing 42-inch RCP storm drain in Vista Sorrento Parkway. The second brow ditch drains northeast to southwest and is located along the southeastern property boundary. Runoff from this brow ditch also drains into the existing 42-inch storm drain within Vista Sorrento Parkway. Additionally, construction of two 18-inch polyvinyl chloride storm drain stubs into the Alexandria Technology Center – Sorrento View site were completed when Vista Sorrento Parkway was constructed.

DISCUSSION

Project Description

The Alexandria Technology Center – Sorrento View project proposes to develop an approximately 9.1-acre office and research and development facility consisting of Building “A,” a five-story (over basement garage) office building approximately 170,790 square-feet; Building “B,” a four-story (over basement garage) office building approximately 129,963 square-feet; a four-level parking structure approximately 195,775 square-feet; a mechanical equipment enclosure; two refuse/recycle enclosures; approximately 763 linear feet of retaining wall with a maximum height of 18.1 feet; and roadway widening along Vista Sorrento Parkway. The development requires processing a Coastal Development Permit (CDP), an amendment to CDP No. 11100, for the development within the coastal zone area, a Site Development Permit (SDP) for impacts to environmentally sensitive lands within 100 feet of the proposed development, and a Planned Development Permit (PDP) to allow deviations to the fence height regulations.

Approval of the PDP would allow the construction of the proposed retaining wall on the eastern and southern edges of the building pad, which range from 4 feet to 18.1 feet. The maximum allowed height per Land Development Code section 142.0340(e) is 12 feet for walls not within required yards. The walls are located such that they are not readily viewed from any public right of way, provide for efficient vehicular circulation and parking, and allow the buildings to be sited further back from Vista Sorrento Parkway.

Proposed landscaping, in conformance with the City’s Landscape Standards, is required for the project. A variety of native and ornamental trees, shrubs, groundcover and hydro-seeding would be included in the design. The Brush Management Program has modified the Zone 1 requirements to eliminate the need for Zone 2 requirements. A 55-foot wide Zone 1 shall extend along the eastern property line, adjacent to the existing biological conservation easement. No brush management will be required at the proposed northeast parking structure due to the non-flammable construction.

Community Plan Analysis

The proposed project is located in the Mira Mesa Community Planning and North City Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan areas and is designated for industrial land uses. According to the Mira Mesa Community Plan’s, Industrial Land Use section, a specific goal is for

“Preservation of an adequate supply of industrial land.” The project is proposing to develop allowed industrial uses. The project, as proposed with restrictions on the mix of specific uses, implements the objectives of the Mira Mesa Community Plan to contribute to the industrial market and protect industrially-designated areas for industrial development.

Environmental Analysis

The environmental review process for the proposed project included an evaluation of several areas of interest; Land Use, Transportation/Circulation, Noise, Paleontological Resources, Utilities, Hydrology and Water Quality, Geology and Soils, Biological Resources, Air Quality, Human Health/Public Safety/Hazardous Materials, Public Services, Landform Alteration/Visual Quality, and Aesthetics/Neighborhood Character. These areas of interest were evaluated by City staff and have been documented in the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) No. 4466.

Of the aforementioned environmental issues, the EIR concluded that the project would result in significant but mitigable direct impacts associated with Land Use/Biology, Transportation /Circulation, Noise, Paleontological Resources, and Utilities. Implementation of the proposed Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program (MMRP) would reduce the environmental effects of the proposed project to below a level of significance. However, the proposed project would contribute incrementally to a significant and unmitigated cumulative air quality impact. No feasible mitigation measures exist to reduce the impact to below a level of significance.

The Mira Mesa Community Plan Update Environmental Impact Report (EIR No. 89-1221/SCH No. 91051053) which evaluated significant impacts at building of the Mira Mesa community concluded that any development in accordance with the Community Plan would contribute incrementally to the degradation of air quality in the region. The baseline for environmental review would therefore be an existing significant “cumulative” impact for air quality even with the implementation and conformance with Regional Air Quality Standards (RAQS). A Statement of Overriding Considerations is included with the Alexandria Technology Center EIR in accordance with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15093.

Biological Resources

As discussed earlier, the development would occur adjacent to the conservation easement mapped within the City’s Multi-Habitat Planning Area (MHPA). Therefore, the project would need to comply with the Land Use Adjacency Guidelines contained in Section 1.4.3 of the MSCP Subarea Plan. Implementation of specific lighting, grading, noise, and fencing requirements, as described in the MMRP would reduce potentially significant indirect land use impacts (related to biology) to a level below significance.

Paleontological Resources

The project site is underlain by the Bay Point and Ardath Shale formations, which have a high sensitivity rating with respect to paleontological resources. A significant, but mitigable

paleontological impact has been identified for the proposed project since the proposed grading activities (approximately 120,000 cubic yards of soil and depth of cut of approximately 25 feet) would have the potential to impact paleontological resources within these formations. Mitigation measures (monitoring) as described in the MMRP would ensure that any discoveries during grading activities would be recorded, reported, and curated.

Transportation/Circulation

The proposed project is located on the east side of Vista Sorrento Parkway, south of Lusk Boulevard and north of Directors Place in the Mira Mesa community planning area. Due to degraded existing traffic conditions in the community, the additional traffic generated from the proposed project would result in project-level significant impacts to a number of street segments including: Vista Sorrento Parkway between Lusk Boulevard and Directors Place and Vista Sorrento Parkway between Directors Place and Mira Sorrento Place; and intersections I-805 northbound on-ramp/Vista Sorrento Parkway; Sorrento Valley Boulevard/Vista Sorrento Parkway; I-5 northbound off-ramp/Roselle Street, and Sorrento Valley Boulevard/Sorrento Valley Road for both Near Term, Year 2005 and Horizon Year, 2020 scenarios.

Specific transportation/circulation measures as described in the MMRP are required to mitigate identified impacts to a level below significance. Therefore, the applicant would provide and install a traffic signal at the northern access point of the project site on Vista Sorrento Parkway; contribute approximately \$78,000 to the City of San Diego for the proposed traffic signal at the intersection of the I-5 northbound off-ramp and Roselle Street; construct Vista Sorrento Parkway as a modified four-lane collector with a 69-foot curb-to-curb width on an 84-foot wide right-of-way from Directors Place to the existing widening segment immediately south of Lusk Boulevard; and construct a westbound to northbound right-turn lane at the Sorrento Valley Boulevard/Vista Sorrento Parkway intersection. During the construction of Vista Sorrento Parkway, a traffic control plan would be prepared by the applicant and approved by the City.

Noise

In addition to the indirect noise impact to the California Gnatcatcher (sensitive bird species), as detailed in the Land Use/Biology section of the EIR, the project would also result in a potentially significant direct impact related to construction noise and traffic noise (interior). Mitigation measures as outlined in the MMRP would require the applicant to ensure all construction equipment, fixed or mobile, be equipped with properly operating and maintained mufflers; require construction contractors to locate construction staging areas as far as practical from occupied buildings and the on-site biological conservation easement; and submit an interior noise analysis, install air-conditioning and/or mechanical ventilation in the office buildings, and install windows to meet the City's 50 dB(A) interior noise standards.

Solid Waste (Utilities)

The proposed project could result in a significant, mitigable impact to solid waste as a result of the proposed demolition and new construction. Therefore, a mitigation measure would be required to ensure that those potential impacts would be reduced to below a level of significance. That mitigation measure requires the preparation of a Waste Management Plan subject to approval by both the City's Development Services Department and the Environmental Services Department. That plan is required to address waste disposal issues for all stages of the proposed project (demolition, construction, and occupancy phases).

Critical Project Features to Consider During Substantial Conformance Review

The project and conditions of approval have several requirements to address the uses for the project within each building which should not be altered through any substantial conformance review process. These are important and necessary to conclude the proposed project would not adversely impact the Mira Mesa Community Plan, not create unmitigated transportation/circulation impacts, and be consistent with the requirements of the Land Development Code.

Draft conditions in the permit of specific importance to this concern include conditions 47 and 49 (Attachment 8). These conditions are intended to assure the uses would be consistent with the environmental analysis and CEQA document prepared for the project, the policies of the Mira Mesa Community Plan and the regulations of the Land Development Code. Uses shall be limited to those identified appropriate for industrial park designation per the Mira Mesa Community Plan and can include a mixture of research and development, office, and manufacturing uses. Pursuant to the Mira Mesa Community Plan, multi-tenant office shall be limited to 50 percent of the overall building square footage. Also, the existing Conservation Easement of 2.1 acres shall remain in natural state and shall not be converted to useable space.

CONCLUSION

The proposed Alexandria Technology Center – Sorrento View project conforms to the land use density, land use designation and design guidelines specified within the Mira Mesa Community Plan. The project will provide the required pedestrian scale improvements and design features established in the community plan for industrial development. The project as proposed is compatible with the existing surrounding developments. Findings required to approve the project are included in draft resolutions (Attachment 9). Draft conditions of approval have been prepared for the project (Attachment 8). The Mira Mesa Community Planning Group, on November 15, 2004, voted to recommend approval of the proposed project.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Approve Coastal Development Permit No. 7293, Site Development Permit No. 7294, and Planned Development Permit No. 62021, and, with modifications.
2. Deny Coastal Development Permit No. 7293, Site Development Permit No. 7294, and Planned Development Permit No. 62021, if the findings required to approve the project cannot be affirmed.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Westlake
Program Manager,
Development Services Department

Tim Daly
Development Project Manager,
Development Services Department

HALBERT/TD

Attachments:

1. Aerial Photograph
2. Community Plan Land Use Map
3. Project Location Map
4. Project Data Sheet
5. Copy of Coastal Development Permit No. 11100
6. Project Site Plan
7. Project Plans
8. Draft Permit with conditions
9. Draft Permit Resolution with Findings
10. Mira Mesa Community Planning Group recommendation
11. San Diego County Regional Airport Authority Resolution No. 2006-0030 ALUC
12. Ownership Disclosure Statement
13. Project Chronology