

DATE ISSUED: September 28, 2006 **REPORT NO. PC-06-233**

ATTENTION: **Planning Commission, Agenda of October 5, 2006**

SUBJECT: RAINIER PLACE – PROJECT NO. 75711
PROCESS 5

**OWNER/
APPLICANT:** Rainier Place, L.P., a California Limited Partnership (Attachment 12)
Mark Freed, Landmark Development Services

SUMMARY

Issue: Should the Planning Commission RECOMMEND to the City Council approval of a Rezone from RM- 1 to RM-3-7, a Tentative Map with an Underground Waiver, a Public Right of Way Vacation, and a Planned Development Permit to develop 22 condominium units on a 0.688 acre site located at 4535- 4549 Rainier Avenue within the Navajo Community Plan area?

Staff Recommendations:

1. Recommend **CERTIFICATION** to the City Council of Negative Declaration No. 75711.
2. Recommend **APPROVAL** to the City Council of Rezone No. 232863.
3. Recommend **APPROVAL** to the City Council of Planned Development Permit No. 278782.
4. Recommend **APPROVAL** to the City Council of Tentative Map No. 323037 with Underground Waiver and Public Right-of-Way Vacation No. 236107.

Community Planning Group Recommendation - On April 17, 2006, the Navajo Community Planning Group voted 16-0-0 to recommend approval of the project with no conditions (Attachment 11).

Environmental Review – The City of San Diego has conducted an Initial Study and determined that the proposed project will not have a significant effect on the environment. A Negative Declaration has been prepared for the project in accordance with the State of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines.

Fiscal Impact - 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 project would add 22 residential units to a site that is already developed and designated for multi-family residential. Four residential units would be demolished for a net increase of eighteen units. The applicant will be paying the in lieu fee to satisfy the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance requirement.

BACKGROUND

The 0.688-acre site is located at 4535- 4549 Rainier Avenue within the Navajo Community Plan area. The site is flat and currently zoned multi-family residential (RM-1-1). The land use is designated as multi family residential. The community plan allows development between 10-43 dwelling units an acre. The project site is currently developed with four single-family dwelling units. All four residential units would be demolished to construct the proposed condominium development. Many of the existing dwelling units are in need of major repairs with one the structures boarded shut.

City staff has reviewed building records, site photographs, and reviewed the Historic Resources Board historic property list. Based on the available information, City staff determined that none of the units embody distinctive characteristics of a type or period, nor was any important persons identified to be associated with the residences.

The site is located near Kaiser Hospital and Medical Complex, Mission Gorge Road with a variety of commercial and retail business'; and is adjacent to the Grantville Redevelopment Project area.

DISCUSSION

Project Description:

The proposed project requires a rezone from RM-1-1, low-density multi-family residential zone, to RM-3-7, medium-density multi-family residential, a Planned Development Permit (PDP), and a Tentative Map with an Underground Waiver and Public-Right-of-Way Vacation, to construct 22 condominium townhomes, (total of 42,056 square-feet). The units would be divided between four, three-story buildings ranging between five and six units per building. All 22 units would be

two bedroom townhomes with an option of two different floor plans. Plan “A” would be approximately 1,889 square-feet, and Plan “B” would be approximately 1,972-square-feet. All units would have attached two-car garages.

The proposed Rezone from RM-1-1 to RM-3-7 would be consistent with the allowed higher residential density pursuant to the Navajo Community Plan, and with the adjacent sites to the west and east.

Vehicular access to the proposed townhome project would be from the alley at the southern property boundary. Vehicles would access the site using one of two proposed driveways from the alley to access the attached garages. These driveways would not be through streets and would end with a landscaped area and a three-foot high block wall just south of Rainier Avenue.

The applicant is proposing 56 parking spaces where 53 are required. Of the 56 spaces, 44 will be two car garages, 2 additional spaces will be on the project site and 10 spaces on the street. The number of *common area* parking spaces that may be required is 20 percent of the total *off-street* parking spaces. The proposed project has 44 *off-street* spaces and therefore would be required to provide an additional 9 spaces. Applicant is providing 10.

The 10 *on-street* parking spaces are acceptable under Land Development Code Section 142.0525(d). “Minimum Required Parking Without a 20-foot Driveway. Any multiple dwelling unit with a garage that does not provide a driveway that is at least 20-feet long, measured from the back of the sidewalk to that portion of the driveway most distant from the sidewalk, as illustrated in Diagram 142-05A (Section 142.0520), shall provide one additional parking space. This additional parking space may be on-street, abutting the subject property.”

Access to the project area would move egress and ingress from Rainier Avenue to the alley. There are two driveways from the project on to the alley. Three existing curb cuts located on Rainier would be closed and a portion of Rainier Avenue, within the project boundaries fronting the property, would be vacated. The above actions would preclude access from Rainier to the project. The applicant is requesting a public right-of-way vacation of approximately 200 feet fronting their property to eliminate existing underutilized land.

The site is located in an urban setting and is not located in, or adjacent to, the Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) or Multi-Habitat Planning Area (MHPA). The site has been previously developed and is flat. The existing pad elevation is approximately 125-feet above the Average Mean Sea Level (AMSL). The project would grade all 0.688-acres of the project site. The project proposes a total soil removal amount of approximately 1,170-cubic yards to a maximum depth of 3 feet. The project is not proposing any fill, manufactured slopes, or retaining walls. All 1,170-cubic yards of soil would be exported.

The project is proposing ornamental and drought-tolerant landscaping. Pursuant to Section 142.0401 through Section 142.0413 of the City of San Diego's Land Development Code and the Land Development Manual's Landscape Guidelines, invasive species would not be used.

Community Plan Analysis:

The Navajo Community Plan designates the project site as multi-family residential. The Community Plan states that housing types and densities should be varied throughout the community to create interest and to provide a mix of people with various economic and social characteristics (page 16). In order to provide a wide range of densities in the community, the community plan allows multifamily designated sites to be developed between 10-43 dwelling units per acre. The project proposes twenty-two dwelling units on a 0.688-acre site, or thirty two dwelling units per acre density, which is in conformance with the Navajo Community Plan.

The Rainier Place development, which proposes to demolish four existing single-family residences and build 22 residential units, is located in a residential neighborhood area in transition, with mature housing and apartment buildings. The subject parcel is located directly south of the Kaiser Hospital parking lot. To the east, west and south of the subject parcel are multi-family developments. The subject parcel contains four single-family residences and it is anticipated that at some time in the future this existing housing may redevelop to the higher multi-family densities as designated in the Navajo Community Plan.

The subject parcel is also located a short distance from the Grantville Redevelopment Project area, which at the time of City Council adoption, did not include residential areas. It is reasonable however, to assume that this site will redevelop at a higher density in the future to support the intensification of jobs and businesses in the Grantville commercial area. The subject parcel is also steps away from Mission Gorge Road, which is identified as a Transit Corridor as well. Transit Corridors are typified with higher residential densities to support transit use. These surrounding influences and proximity to the trolley station and transit corridor supports development of the site at the higher residential density.

The applicant also provided information supporting the actual built out density of adjacent properties. The applicant submitted information on residential densities ranging from 31 to 58 dwelling units per acre. The properties directly adjacent to the subject property have the highest densities within the two block area referenced (54 to 58 dwelling units per acre), and the three parcels across the alley are similarly higher densities (40 to 55 dwelling units per acre). The rezone request for this site is compatible with the surrounding density of the built projects in the immediate neighborhood.

Environmental Analysis:

Negative Declaration No. 75711 has been prepared and finalized for the project in accordance with the State of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines. During the

environmental review of Rainier Place project, the City of San Diego conducted an Initial Study, with the recommended finding that the project will not have a significant affect on the environment and has issued a Negative Declaration.

Project Related Issues:

Rezone

The property is currently zoned RM-1-1 and the requested Rezone is RM-3-7 to allow the property to be redeveloped with multi-family townhomes totaling 22 units, with an overall density of 32 du/ac. The request for a rezone to RM-3-7 is consistent with the Community Plan and is compatible with the emerging development pattern of the surrounding area.

Tentative Map

A Tentative Map is requested for the subdivision of a 0.688-acre site to create twenty-two residential condominium units. The applicant has requested a waiver from the requirement to underground the existing overhead utilities within the abutting public rights of way. City Staff has determined the undergrounding waiver request qualifies under the guidelines of Council Policy 600-25, *Underground Conversion of Utility Lines at Developer Expense*. A waiver may be granted if, *“The conversion involves a short span of overhead facility (less than a full block in length) and it has been determined that such conversion is not a part of a continuing effort to accomplish a total undergrounding within a specific street or area.* The applicant would be required to underground any new service run to any new or proposed structures within the subdivision per Conditions 18 and 19 of the Tentative Map Resolution (Attachment 6). Utility poles and lines are located in the alley. At this time no undergrounding of utilities are scheduled or funded.

The proposed Public Right-of-Way Vacation is ten-feet deep and approximately two-hundred feet wide along Rainier Avenue encompassing only the area fronting the project site. The proposed vacation would close three curb cuts, moving the entrance to the project from Rainier Avenue to the alley and would bring the property line and sidewalks into conformance with the abutting properties. There would be no reduction in the paved width of Rainier Avenue.

Planned Development Permit

A Planned Development Permit (PDP) has been requested for deviations to the minimum side-yard setbacks. The applicable side-yard set-back is a minimum of 5 feet or 10 percent of the premises width, whichever is greater. The proposed project design combines six lots with a width totaling just over 200-feet thus requiring a 20-foot side-yard setback. If the lots were developed individually, a 5-foot side-yard setback would be required. The applicant is requesting a deviation for a 6’ - 9” side-yard setback on the first floor stepping back to 9’ - 9” for the second and third stories. The existing multi-family structures surrounding the subject property are built

with minimum side-yard setbacks of 6-feet or less. The request for a deviation for the side-yard setback would be consistent with the existing surrounding neighborhood development pattern and would provide additional articulation to the project. The proposed redevelopment of the site with a multi-family residential project would implement the Navajo Community Plan recommendations for developing a wide range of residential densities in the community.

CONCLUSION:

Staff believes that findings can be made to support the project. Staff finds the proposed project would be consistent with the recommended land use, design guidelines, and development standards in effect for this site per the San Diego Municipal Code. Staff has also determined the project is consistent with the adopted Navajo Community Plan and the City of San Diego Progress Guide and General Plan.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Recommend that the City Council **APPROVE** Rezone No. 232863, Tentative Map No. 323037 with an Underground Waiver, Public Right-of-Way Vacation No. 236107, and Planned Development Permit No. 278782 with modifications.
2. Recommend that the City Council **DENY** Rezone No. 232863, Tentative Map No. 323037 with an Underground Waiver, Public Right of Way Vacation No. 236107, and Planned Development Permit No. 278782 if the findings required to approve the project cannot be affirmed.

Respectfully submitted,

**Mike Westlake
Program Manager
Development Services Department**

**Jeffrey W. Robles,
Project Manager
Development Services Department**

WESTLAKE/JR

Attachments:

1. Aerial Photograph
2. Community Plan Land Use Map
3. Project Location Map
4. Project Data Sheet
5. Project Site Plan(s)/Tentative Map
6. Draft Tentative Map Resolution
7. Draft Planned Development Permit with Conditions
8. Draft Resolution with Findings
9. Draft Rezone Ordinance
10. Rezone "B" Sheet
11. Community Planning Group Recommendation
12. Ownership Disclosure Statement
13. Project Chronology
14. Site photos of current conditions
15. Planning Commission Resolution