THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

REPORT TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION

DATE ISSUED: April 19, 2007 **REPORT NO. PC-07-059**

ATTENTION: **Planning Commission, Agenda of April 26, 2007**

SUBJECT: W LAUREL COMMERCIAL STUDIOS - PROJECT NO. 112323 PROCESS 4

OWNER: West Laurel Studios, LP

APPLICANT: Brett Farrow Architect

SUMMARY

Issue(s): Should the Planning Commission approve a Tentative Map for the subdivision of two (2) lots into 10 lots on a 0.22-acre site located at 929 W. Laurel Street, in the Centre City Planning Area?

Staff Recommendation: APPROVE Tentative Map No. 377076

Community Planning Group Recommendation: On October 18, 2006, the Centre City Advisory Committee (CCAC) voted to approve the project by a vote of 20 in favor and 0 opposed.

Environmental Review: This project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act per Article 19, Section 15301(k), Existing Facilities. This project is not pending an appeal of the environmental determination. The environmental exemption determination for this project was made on October 10, 2006, and the opportunity to appeal that determination ended October 24, 2006.

Fiscal Impact Statement: None, as West Laurel Studios, LP is responsible for all processing costs of this application.

Code Enforcement Impact: There are no Code Enforcement violations associated with this project.

Housing Impact Statement: The proposed project is the subdivision of two existing lots into ten lots for commercial development. No residential units will be affected by this action.

DIVERSITY

BACKGROUND

The 0.22-acre project site is located at 929 W. Laurel Street, on the southeast corner of W Laurel Street and Kettner Boulevard, in the Mixed-Commercial District and Little Italy Neighborhood of the Centre City Planned District (Attachment 2), Airport Approach Zone, Airport Environs Zone and Airport Influence Zones.

On November 28, 2005, the Centre City Development Corp. (CCDC) issued Centre City Development Permit (CCDP) No. 2005-42. This permit allowed construction of ten, two-story commercial office buildings with ground floor retail facing Kettner Street.

The site was originally developed in 1959 with a 1,300 square-foot, two-story commercial building. An application to demolish the existing structure was approved by the Development Services Department after staff review determined the building had no historic significance. The demolition permit was issued on May 23, 2005, and the existing structure has since been removed from the property.

On May 17, 2006, building permits were issued for construction of ten, detached, two-story commercial office buildings ranging in size from 740 square feet to 1,536 square feet, all totaling 14,491 square feet. These buildings are currently under construction and have not yet received Certificates of Occupancy.

The neighborhood is characterized by mixed-use development. Land use immediately adjacent to the site include, a mixed-use commercial/residential building to the north, a three-story office building to the east, a single family dwelling to the south and a six-story commercial parking structure to the west.

DISCUSSION

Project Description: The project proposes to subdivide two lots into ten lots for development of ten separate commercial studios. Each commercial studio shall be located on its own lot.

Environmental Analysis: Building permits for the development have been issued in conformance with CCDP No. 2005-42 and construction has commenced. As such, it has been determined that the proposed subdivision is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act on the basis that the facilities are existing.

Project-Related Issues: The Centre City Planned District does not have minimum lot dimension requirements. As such, the proposed subdivision complies with all pertinent zoning requirements for subdividing property in the Centre City Planned Area

Under current zoning requirements for this site, commercial developments with fewer than 50,000 square feet do not require any off-street parking spaces. Further, CCDP No. 2005-42 has no parking requirement. However, the project does propose nine on-site parking spaces, one space per studio unit, with one unit having no space. There is also on-street parking as well as a six-story parking garage directly across the street. Finally, because each studio will be located on its own lot, an easement for shared access will be required as a condition of the Final Map.

Since building permits have already been issued for the development, the proposed Tentative Map has been reviewed for compliance with building code regulations regarding proximity to property lines, occupancy, fire ratings and construction type.

Airport Approach Overlay Zone: The project site is within the Airport Approach Zone, Airport Environs Zone and Airport Influence Zone. On September 8, 2005 the project was determined by the Airport Authority to be conditionally consistent with the San Diego International Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan. An Avigation Easement has been recorded on the property and a copy is filed with the airport operator. No further action is required for the proposed subdivision.

Conclusion:

Development Services and CCDC staff has reviewed the request for a Tentative Map for the subdivision of two lots into ten lots and has found the project to be in conformance with the applicable sections of the San Diego Municipal Code regulating Tentative Maps, land development and building code. Development Services and CCDC staff believe the required findings can be supported and recommend that the Planning Commission approve the project as proposed.

ALTERNATIVE

1. Approve Tentative Map No. 377076, with modifications.

2. Deny Tentative Map No. 377076, if the findings required to approve the project cannot be affirmed.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Westlake
Program Manager,
Development Services Department

Peter Lynch
Development Project Manager,
Development Services Department

Attachments:
1. Project Location Map
2. Community Plan Land Use Map
3. Aerial Photo
4. Project Data Sheet
5. Tentative Map Exhibit
6. Draft Tentative Map Resolution, with Findings and Conditions
7. Ownership Disclosure Statement
8. Project Chronology
9. Photo Survey