THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

REPORT TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION

DATE ISSUED:	**March 6, 2008**	**REPORT NO. PC-08-025**
ATTENTION:	**Planning Commission, Agenda of March 13, 2008**	
SUBJECT:	SUNRISE SENIOR LIVING - PROJECT NO. 132808 PROCESS 4	
REFERENCE:	City Council Report No. 06-022 dated March 1, 2006 http://docs.sandiego.gov/reportstocouncil/2006/06-022.pdf	
OWNER/ APPLICANT:	Sunrise Senior Living Inc. (Attachment 12)	

SUMMARY

Issue(s): Should the Planning Commission approve an amendment to Planned Development Permit No. 95020 for the construction of an 83-room residential care facility that would provide approximately 100 beds on a vacant 2.38-acre site located at 12515 Springhurst Drive on the southeastern corner of Poway Road and Springhurst Drive within the Sabre Springs Community Plan Area?

Staff Recommendation:

1. **CERTIFY** Mitigated Negative Declaration No. 132808, and **ADOPT** the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP);

2. **APPROVE** Planned Development Permit No. 459606;

3. **APPROVE** Conditional Use Permit No. 459605.

Community Planning Group Recommendation: On August 15, 2007 the Sabre Springs Community Planning Group voted 8:0:0 to approve the project with conditions (Attachment 11).

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Environmental Review: Mitigated Negative Declaration No. 132808 has been prepared for the project in accordance with the State of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines, which address potential impacts to Land Use/Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP), Biological Resources (Raptors), and Solid Waste. A Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) has been prepared and once implemented will reduce any potential impacts identified in the environmental review process to below a level of significance.

Fiscal Impact Statement: None with this action. 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 the construction of an 83-room residential care facility that would provide approximately 100 beds on a vacant 2.38-acre site. The proposed facility would provide in-house treatment or rehabilitation programs for residents on a 24-hour basis and all meals are served restaurant style in common dining rooms on each floor. The rooms are designed as bedroom suites without cooking facilities or kitchens; therefore, the rooms would not be classified as individual dwelling units. The Sabre Springs Community Plan designates the proposed project site as Specialty Commercial without assigning a residential density or anticipated residential yield.

BACKGROUND

The project site is a previously-graded, vacant triangular-shaped lot located at 12515 Springhurst Drive on the southeast corner of Poway Road and Springhurst Drive (Attachment 1). The site is located in the CC-1-2 Zone (Commercial-Community) and is designated as Specialized Commercial within the Sabre Springs Community Plan Area, and is known as Parcel 31 within the plan. The zoning designation allows for a mix of community-serving commercial uses and residential uses. The Specialty Commercial designation is intended to provide convenience and specialized goods and services for residents of South Sabre Springs, and includes commercial development criteria for Parcel 31. The 2.38-acre site is surrounded by institutional uses (church and daycare) to the south and east, an elementary school to the southwest and low-density residential to the north (Attachment 2). A small portion of the site, the southeastern corner, is adjacent to the Multiple Habitat Planning Area (MHPA).

On March 6, 2006, the City Council approved a Community Plan Amendment, Rezone, Planned Development Permit, and Map Waiver for Parcels 15, 16, and 31, as identified within the community plan. Planned Development Permit No. 95020 included conditions (Attachment 10) and design guidelines (Attachment 9) for future development on Parcel 31 (Conditions 48-50).

DISCUSSION

Project Description:

The project site has remained vacant for over 20 years since the adoption of the first Sabre Springs Community Plan in 1982. The project proposes the construction of an 83-room residential care facility that would provide approximately 100 beds on the vacant 2.38-acre site. The proposed facility would provide in-house treatment or rehabilitation programs for residents on a 24-hour basis and all meals are served restaurant style in common dining rooms on each floor. The rooms are designed as bedroom suites without cooking facilities or kitchens; therefore, the rooms would not be classified as individual dwelling units. The proposed four-story structure is approximately 70,268 square feet and includes forty-one parking spaces on site, with approximately thirty-one being provided within the subterranean parking structure and the remaining eleven provided at surface grade. Two driveways are proposed for the project. The primary access to the site will be via a driveway on Springhurst Drive. A second driveway on Poway Road is required for emergency access only. Landscaping has been designed to screen the development from the public right-of-way. Approximately forty five healthy mature trees exist on site and only three of these trees will be removed as a result of the development. Retaining walls with a height deviation for a portion are also proposed. Additional landscaping compatible with the Multiple Habitat Planning Area (MHPA) will screen the proposed retaining wall located towards the rear of the property opposite Poway Road.

An amendment to Planned Development Permit (PDP) No. 95020 and associated design guidelines is required for the proposed development. The existing permit required an amendment to the PDP in order to allow any uses which were not specifically allowed by the permit, but allowed by the zone. The Land Development Code (LDC) section regulating "Separately Regulated Uses," for the CC-1-2 Zone requires the applicant to also obtain a Conditional Use Permit in order to operate the 83-room, 100 bed residential care facility. Approval of the proposed development and amendment to the existing permit would only affect this site. All other aspects of the previous approval would remain in full force and effect.

Community Plan Analysis:

The project site, known as Parcel 31, is designated for Specialty Commercial in the Sabre Springs Community Plan. The Specialty Commercial Designation is intended to provide convenience and specialized goods and services for residents of South Sabre Springs, and includes commercial development criteria for the 2.38-acre site. Specifically, the special design concerns include adequate buffering from adjacent residential and institutional uses, assuring sensitivity of bulk and scale to the setting, creating safe and efficient vehicular access from Springhurst Drive, avoiding uses that generate high levels of traffic such as gas stations and drive-through restaurants, and giving priority to uses that have low appeal to students from the nearby elementary school.

The proposed project is an assisted care residential facility which would offer a specialized service for senior citizens of Sabre Springs and elsewhere. Also, the proposed project would generate less traffic than a gas station or a drive-through restaurant and would have a low appeal for students from the nearby elementary school. Adequate buffering from adjacent residential and institutional uses would be provided by topographical separation, roadways, screening, and landscaping. The primary access to the project will be provided from Springhurst Drive. The proposed building's apparent bulk and scale will be minimized through offsetting planes, façade articulation, color variations, and landscaping. Therefore, the proposed project would meet the intent of the Specialty Commercial Designation and the commercial development criteria and would not have a negative impact on the community plan.

Environmental Analysis:

A Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) No. 132808, has been prepared for the project in accordance with the State of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines, which addresses potential impacts and a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) would be implemented with this project to reduce the impacts to a level below significant. The following environmental issues were considered during the review and determined to be significant.

Land Use/Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) - A small portion of the project site, the southeastern corner, is adjacent to the Multiple Habitat Planning Area (MHPA) as identified in the City of San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) Subarea Plan. Therefore the project would be required to comply with the MHPA Land Use Adjacency Guidelines (Section 1.4.3) of the City's MSCP Subarea Plan to ensure that the project would not result in an indirect impact to the MHPA.

The project footprint would not be allowed to encroach into the MHPA nor into the open space easement, and project issues pertaining to lighting, noise, invasives, and drainage must not adversely affect the MHPA. More specifically, all proposed lighting adjacent to the MHPA, as well as open-space areas, would be directed away from these areas, and shielded as necessary. Landscape plantings would consist of either native plant species or non-invasive ornamental plant species. Drainage would be directed away from the MHPA and must not drain directly into these areas. No staging and/or storage areas would be allowed to be located within or adjacent to sensitive biological areas and no equipment maintenance would be permitted. In addition, the limits of grading would be clearly demarcated by the biological monitor to ensure no impacts occur outside of the approved development footprint.

Based upon the proposal and the required compliance with the Land Use/MSCP mitigation measures contained in Section V of the MND, the project has been found consistent with the MHPA land use adjacency guidelines of the City of San Diego MSCP Subarea Plan and all impacts reduced to below a level of significance.

Biological Resources/Raptors - Temporary significant indirect impacts could result from noise generated during construction-related activities to raptors that potentially utilize the trees on-site and adjacent to the project site for nesting opportunities. These indirect impacts can be avoided if the project is constructed outside the raptor breeding season (February 1 – September 15). Should construction occur during the raptor breeding season, preconstruction surveys would be required to determine the presence or absence of active nests. If active nests are found during the preconstruction survey, avoidance measures would be required to mitigate any potential impacts to below a level of significance. Direct impacts would be avoided through compliance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

With implementation of the Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Program, impacts to biological resources would be reduced to below a level of significance.

Solid Waste - Assembly Bill 939, California's Integrated Waste Management Act, enacted in 1989, mandates that all California cities divert at least 50 percent of its solid waste from landfill disposal through source reduction, recycling, and composting by 2000. This goal has not yet been met in the City of San Diego. As of 2003, the City has achieved 45 percent diversion. About 1.68 million tons of trash is produced annually in San Diego. At this rate of waste disposal, the City's only landfill, the Miramar Landfill, will be filled to capacity by 2012.

According to the City of San Diego's Significance Thresholds, projects that propose commercial construction of over 40,000 square feet may result in a significant solid waste impact. Such impacts are required to prepare a solid waste generation/disposal plan which addresses demolition, construction and the occupancy phases of the project. As mitigation for cumulative impacts to the landfill, a waste management plan must be prepared by the applicant and approved by the Environmental Services Department. With implementation of the Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Program, the project's contribution to cumulative waste management impacts would be reduced to less than considerable.

Project-Related Issues:

Deviations from the San Diego Municipal Code (SDMC) - A deviation is requested to allow a retaining wall to observe a maximum height of 17-feet where 12-feet is the maximum allowed outside of required setbacks. The proposed retaining wall is located roughly perpendicular to Springhurst Drive and roughly parallel to the existing driveway that provides access to the adjoining church at the southeast end of the project site. This retaining wall is necessary to preserve the church's existing driveway and to ensure a sufficient developable area. The proposed retaining wall will deviate from the development standards by approximately 5 feet in height for 100 linear feet. The retaining wall would be screened in part by an existing large live oak tree specimen which the applicant would preserve. The location of this tree also limited other options for the retaining wall and grading. The eastern portions of this retaining wall would have limited visibility from Springhurst Drive and would not be visible from Poway Road.

This is the minimum deviation feasible due to topography and in order to preserve the established live oak.

Design Guidelines for Sabre Springs Parcel 31 Site - The application includes amendments to the Design Guidelines for Parcel 31 (Attachment 9). The changes include amending the purpose of the guidelines to allow assisted living/senior housing, defining amenities and design principles for the site, incorporating site development standards, and refining architectural details and materials. The proposed amendments strengthen the design guidelines for parcel 31, and would not have a negative impact on the community plan.

Fire and Life Safety- The development site is within an existing urbanized area currently served by police, fire, and emergency medical personnel. The project would be served by City of San Diego Fire Station 37 which has a response time of approximately 5.3 minutes. In addition, the development would also be served by City of Poway Fire Station 1, which has a response time of approximately 5.5 minutes; City of Poway Fire Station 3 has a response time of approximately 5.5 minutes; Fire Station 40, which has a response time of approximately 6.3; and, lastly from Fire Station 44, which has a response time of approximately 8.9 minutes. The location is within the City of San Diego Police Department's Northeastern Division which had an average emergency response time of 8.88 minutes.

Sabre Springs Special Sign District Guidelines - The project proposes to change the monument sign at the intersection of Springhurst Drive and Poway Road. The Special Sign District Guidelines have identified the site as the location for a secondary community identification sign, which is used to identify the community's entryway. The guidelines also include specifications for commercial signs, stating they may be configured as part of a "gateway" entry statement. Changes proposed to the secondary community identification sign are limited to include the addition of the facility's name, and will meet the intent of the sign district guidelines.

Community Planning Group – The Sabre Springs Community Planning Group voted unanimously to support the project. They requested adequate landscaping be provided and the maximum amount of mature trees be preserved. The city's Landscaping staff have reviewed the project and has determined the proposed landscaping meets the Land Development Code requirements as well as the recommendations of the community group.

Conclusion:

Other than the retaining wall height deviation, slight modifications to the design guidelines, and Special Sign District Guidelines, the project meets all other applicable regulations and policy documents and staff finds the project is consistent with the recommended land use, design guidelines and development standards approved for this site. The use is consistent with the separately regulated use regulations for the zone and compatible with the community plan. Draft conditions of approval and modified design guidelines and sign guidelines have been prepared for the project and findings to approve the project are included in the draft permit resolution.

ALTERNATIVES

1. **CERTIFY** Mitigated Negative Declaration No. 132808, and **ADOPT** the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP); and **APPROVE** Planned Development Permit No. 459606 and Conditional Use Permit No. 459605, **with modifications**

2. **DO NOT CERTIFY** Mitigated Negative Declaration No. 132808, or **ADOPT** the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP); and **DENY** Planned Development Permit No. 459606 and Conditional Use Permit No. 459605, **if the findings required to approve the project cannot be affirmed.**

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Westlake
Program Manager
Development Services Department

Helene Deisher
Project Manager
Development Services Department

WESTLAKE/HMD

Attachments:

1. Aerial Photograph
2. Community Plan Land Use Map
3. Project Location Map
4. Project Data Sheet

5. Project Site Plan(s)
6. Project Plans
7. Draft Permit with Conditions
8. Draft Resolution with Findings
9. Draft design guidelines
10. Copy of Recorded (existing) Permit
11. Community Planning Group Recommendation
12. Ownership Disclosure Statement
13. Project Chronology