



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

REPORT TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION

DATE ISSUED: April 1, 2005 **REPORT NO.** PC-05-086

ATTENTION: Planning Commission, Agenda of April 7, 2005

SUBJECT: SKYLINE HILLS COMMUNITY- PROJECT NO. 6777. PROCESS 5

REFERENCE: Planning Commission Report No. PC-04-125, Initiation of an Amendment to the Progress Guide and General Plan and the Skyline-Paradise Hills Community Plan.

**OWNER/
APPLICANT:** Meadowbrook Homes, LLC (Attachment 15)

SUMMARY

Issue(s) – Should the Planning Commission recommend that the City Council approve a Progress Guide and General Plan Amendment/Community Plan Amendment; Rezone, Drainage Easement Vacation, Tentative Map, Planned Development Permit and Site Development Permit to construct a 66-unit condominium development on a 5.2-acre site located on Meadowbrook Drive?

Staff Recommendations:

- Recommend to City Council Certification of Mitigated Negative Declaration No. 6777 and Adoption of the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program; and
- 2 Recommend to City Council Approval of Progress Guide and General Plan Amendment/Community Plan Amendment No. 198836 (Attachment 5);
- 3 Recommend to City Council Approval of Rezone No. 011305 (Attachment 6);
4. Recommend to City Council Approval of Tentative Map No. 011309 (Attachment 7);
- 5 Recommend to City Council Approval of Drainage Easement Vacation No.194762, Planned Development Permit No. 011303 and Site Development Permit No. 206466 (Attachments 8 and 9).

Community Planning Group Recommendation: On January 11, 2005, the Skyline-Paradise Hills Planning Committee recommended unanimous approval of the project by a vote of 12-0-0 with no conditions Attachment 11).



Environmental Review: The City of San Diego as Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) has prepared and completed a Mitigated Negative Declaration, in accordance with the State of California CEQA Guidelines. Mitigation measures have been included for biological and paleontological resources which will reduce to below a level of significance, any potential adverse impacts to these resources.

Fiscal Impact: None with this action.

Code Enforcement Impact: None with this action.

Housing Impact Statement: The community plan for Skyline-Paradise Hills currently designates the project site for single-family residential use at a low density of 0 to 10 dwelling units per net residential acre (DU/NRA). This density range would allow a maximum of 52 units on this 5.2-acre, vacant site. A land use redesignation to low medium density multi-family residential use (10-15 DU/NRA) is being requested which would allow a range of 52 to 78 units on this site. The proposed project consists of new construction of 66 townhome units (12.7 DU/NRA) on the subject site that would add to the housing stock of owner-occupied units in this community and increase the overall housing supply in the City of San Diego. In-lieu fees would be paid instead of providing affordable housing units on the site as allowed under the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance. Condition number 10 of the Tentative Map requires compliance with the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance.

BACKGROUND

The project proposes to construct a 66-unit, multi-family, condominium development within 22 detached, triplex buildings on a 5.2-acre vacant parcel located on the east side of Meadowbrook Drive, just north of Paradise Valley Road (Attachment 2). The property is currently designated for low density residential development within the Skyline-Paradise Hills Community Plan and currently zoned RS-1-7, a city-wide, single-family residential zone (Attachment 1). The site is irregular in shape and is disturbed due to previous grading activities. The site contains environmentally sensitive lands consisting of coastal sage scrub and non-native grasslands. The property does not contain natural steep slopes nor is it within the Multiple Habitat Planning Area.

The surrounding developments are single-family homes to the north on South Royal Oak Drive and to the east on the Glenn Vista Court cul-de-sac. Just south of the project site are multi-family units and a gas station. Across Meadowbrook Drive to the west are multi-family units, a neighborhood shopping center and a public library. These properties are zoned RS-1-7, RM-1-1, RM-2-5, CC-1-3 and CN-1-2 (Attachment 3).

In 2003, the applicant submitted a development project for the construction of a 90-unit, multi-family project. During that review, it was determined that the project required a Community Plan Amendment as the site was designated for low density residential development and, a rezone from a single-family zone to a multi-family zone. The applicants applied for the

Community Plan Amendment in June of 2004. On August 19, 2004, the Planning Commission initiated the amendment to the Progress Guide and General Plan and the Skyline-Paradise Hills Community Plan by a vote of 4-0 to redesignate 5.2 acres of vacant land from single-family residential low density (0-10 DU/NRA) to multi-family residential low medium density (10-15 DU/NRA). At that hearing, staff and the applicant were directed to consider several land use issues during the project's review as noted in Attachment 10. These items are discussed below in the "Community Plan Analysis" section of this report.

Project implementation requires the following approvals:

1. A Progress Guide and General Plan/Community Plan Amendment to redesignate the site from single-family residential use at a density of 0 to ten units per net residential acre, to multi-family residential use at a density of 10 to 15 units per net residential acre.
2. A Rezone from RS-1-7 to RM-1-1 to allow a density of one unit per 3,000 square feet of lot area.
3. A Drainage Easement Vacation to abandon an existing drainage easement which runs through the site in various locations.
4. A Tentative Map to allow for the condominium development.
5. A Planned Development Permit to consider a request for a deviation to building height, and, as the Skyline-Paradise Hills Community Plan recommends a Planned Development Permit for residential developments exceeding a density of 30 dwelling units, or 20 dwelling units per net residential acre.
6. A Site Development Permit to implement the environmentally sensitive lands regulations for potential impacts to environmental resources, specifically, coastal sage brush and non-native grasslands.

DISCUSSION

Project Description:

The project proposes to construct a 66-unit, one lot, condominium development consisting of 22 two-story, triplex buildings containing 44, three bedroom units and 22 two bedroom units, enclosed and surface parking, recreational facilities and a private street (Attachment 4). The project proposes three architectural styles (Tuscan, French and Spanish) and three floor plans ranging in size from 1,235 square feet to 1,535 square feet. Each building would contain three units, and two garages. Two units, one double-car garage and one single-car garage would be located on the first floor and each of these units would have a fenced rear yard. The second floor would contain one unit accessed from an interior stairwell from the first floor, and a balcony. A total of 152 parking spaces are proposed (110 within garages and 42 surface spaces) where 143 are required. No tandem parking spaces are proposed. Motorcycle and bicycle parking spaces are

provided in various locations throughout the site. Ingress and egress to the site is proposed from a 25-foot wide driveway on Meadowbrook Drive which would access a new private street. Two entry signs identifying the community are proposed on a freestanding 6'-0" high, block wall along Meadowbrook Drive. This wall is in conformance with the fence regulations and would provide decorative column elements and landscape features in front of the wall.

The project proposes several amenities including a large recreation area with swimming pool, spa, picnic area with benches and tables and, a pool equipment building with restroom and shower facilities. A smaller pocket park with children's play equipment, seating areas and barbeque facilities, is also proposed within the interior of the complex (Attachment 4a).

Community Plan Analysis:

The project requires the processing of a Progress Guide and General Plan and Community Plan Amendment with required changes to graphics only, as shown in attachment 5, and no changes to the plan language. The project site is located within the Skyline-Paradise Hills community planning area and more specifically within the Skyline neighborhood. The site is presently designated single-family residential use at a low density of 0 to 10 dwelling units per net residential acre (DU/NRA) in the community plan which was adopted by the City Council on June 30, 1987. The project proposes that the Skyline-Paradise Hills Community Plan be amended to change the land use designation on the subject site to low medium density (10-15 DU/NRA). On August 19, 2004, the Planning Commission initiated the plan amendment by a vote of 4-0 and requested staff to proceed with analysis of a variety of land use issues that will be covered as part of this report. These items are discussed below in the section entitled "Planning Commission Initiation Land Use Issues."

The proposed request for construction of 66 residential units and on-site recreation areas would not adversely affect the Skyline-Paradise Hills Community Plan in that it would implement the policies and recommendations of the community plan associated with building scale and character, site and building design, parking areas for multi-family developments, pedestrian access, streetscape, landscaping, sign standards, outdoor amenities and pedestrian activity areas. More specifically, the proposed project would help increase housing supply in the City as well as provide new and high quality housing development within the community. The project design would also improve the visual and physical character of the community through streetscape improvements, quality residential development, enhanced landscaping, unobtrusive parking areas, overall site and building design, and relationship between the buildings and proposed associated passive/active recreational areas. The proposed project features pedestrian-oriented design elements, such as enhanced paving area, pedestrian connections throughout the site and with the public right-of-way area, a pocket park, and a recreation/pool area. The proposed development would also enhance the visual image of the surrounding neighborhood and it would be compatible with existing and planned land uses on adjoining properties. Adjoining properties are mainly comprised of single-family, multi-family and commercial developments with respective land use designations of low density (0-10 DU/NRA), medium density (15-30 DU/NRA), and neighborhood commercial.

The proposed project would also not adversely affect the Progress Guide and General Plan as one of the goals in the General Plan encourages in-fill development and revitalization. The proposed project would accommodate in-fill development by allowing additional housing in the community. The plan also discusses the importance of improving the neighborhood environment to increase personal safety, comfort, pride and opportunity. As the subject property has been vacant for at least 36 years collecting trash and debris over the years, the proposed project would develop much needed multi-family housing to help improve the neighborhood and its surroundings. The proposed project would also not adversely affect the Housing Element of the Progress Guide and General Plan as the proposed use would be ensuring the development of new housing to help meet the City's housing needs for a variety of household sizes. Although the project does not include building restricted affordable housing units on the site, the project would be targeting first-time homebuyers. This in turn would address another goal of the Housing Element to increase housing opportunities for first-time homebuyers.

Planning Commission Initiation Land Use Issues

Impacts on housing availability (supply and demand) and affordability

The Skyline-Paradise Hills Community Plan identifies the need to ensure quality residential development designed in accordance with the urban design principles established within the plan. One of the objectives in the community plan also states that gradual and orderly development compatible with the existing neighborhood should be accommodated, and that an economically and socially balanced community should be maintained. The project proposes new construction of quality residential development (66 townhome units with on-site recreational areas) on the subject vacant site that would add to the housing stock of owner-occupied units in this community and increase the overall housing supply in the City of San Diego. As of January 1, 2004, the total number of housing units in this community was 19,003 with approximately 16 percent of these units being multi-family. Based on existing land use and the maximum number of dwelling units permitted for vacant property per the planned land use designations, the projected number of housing units at build-out is approximately 22,000 units. According to San Diego Housing Commission's information on affordable housing restricted units for the entire city, there are currently no restricted units in Skyline-Paradise Hills. Overall, residential development in this community has occurred within the planned residential density ranges while providing housing unit counts that more commonly meet the lower end of these planned density ranges. Although the applicant has chosen to pay in-lieu fees as allowed under the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance, the project would provide 66 townhome units targeted at first-time homebuyers trying to enter the housing market.

Feasibility of providing affordable housing on the subject site

The applicant proposes to target first-time homebuyers with market-rate housing as part of this project. Although the project would not include units that are restricted affordable housing units, it would offer much needed quality multi-family housing to households trying to enter the housing market. Overall, the applicant's focus and main goal is to provide housing development in this community that caters to first-time homebuyers, and to ensure that units in the project are

and remain owner-occupied in the long run. A program, known as the Homebuyers Club, is currently being tailored by the applicant to address the needs of the San Diego region. This program offers personal counseling and consultation to further assist individuals with finding their home and understanding financing strategies/programs to purchase their home. This program also offers loan programs and loan counselors to facilitate the homebuying process.

- *The appropriate land use designation, density range and zoning for the site*

The community plan calls for a variety of density ranges to achieve the residential objectives, such as maintaining Skyline-Paradise Hills as an economically and socially balanced community as well as ensuring development that is compatible with the existing neighborhood. The majority of the community's residential land, approximately 80 percent, is designated as low density (0-10 DU/NRA) in order to maintain the existing pattern and scale of development in the community. The next density range of low medium density (10-15 DU/NRA) for the subject site would provide a transition between the low density single-family units located to the north of subject site and the adjacent multi-family complex and commercial development located south of the subject site. This site has been vacant for at least 36 years under the single-family designation and single-family zone (RS-1-7 or previously known as R-1-5000). The site's proximity to an identified village opportunity area on the west side of Meadowbrook Drive as well as proximity to existing multi-family developments, school, park facilities, bus stops, commercial uses, and the Skyline Branch Library further support the development of multi-family development on this site. The 66 townhome units being proposed at a density of 12.7 DU/NRA reflect the type of multi-family development that would be compatible with the existing surrounding neighborhood. Also, the addition of new quality residential development on this vacant site could potentially help bring new commercial and mixed-use development to the village opportunity area site located immediately across Meadowbrook Drive from subject site. Based on this analysis, it is staff's recommendation that the appropriate land use designation for this site is low medium density (10-15 DU/NRA) and the appropriate zoning to accompany this designation is RM-1-1 (previously known as R-3000).

- *Comparisons between current land use designation/zoning and proposed land use designation/zoning*

The current land use designation for the project site is low density (0-10 DU/NRA) and current zoning is RS-1-7. This land use designation would allow a maximum of 52 units to be built on this site. The proposed land use designation for the site is low medium density (10-15 DU/NRA) with proposed zoning of RM-1-1. The proposed land use designation would allow a range of 52 to 78 units on the subject site. Presently, approximately 80 percent of the community's residentially-designated land is identified as low density which is intended to accommodate detached units on individual lots; RS-1-7 (previously known as R-1-5000) is recommended to implement this density designation. Approximately nine percent of the community's residentially-designated land is called out as low medium density and the RM-1-1 zone (previously known as R-3000) is recommended per the community plan to accompany and implement this density designation.

Impacts of proposed development on adjacent residential developments

The proposed development would bring 66 new townhome units to this community on a site that has been sitting vacant for at least 36 years. The amenities and improvements associated with the proposed project would serve to improve the neighborhood, streetscape along Meadowbrook Drive and overall community image. In addition, the proposed development would have a positive impact on adjacent residential developments (single-family and multi-family) by bringing in new quality multi-family development to this neighborhood that is compatible in scale and building size with surrounding residential developments. In addition, the adjacent single-family and multi-family residential units to the north, east and south of subject site would have views of the recreational/pool area, enhanced landscaping, landscaped slopes as well as front/side elevations of the proposed units. The new development, associated improvements and the focus on first-time homebuyers would also help reinforce pride and sense of ownership in the neighborhood. The provision of additional owner-occupied housing through this development would also assist in maintaining and strengthening the type of housing tenure in this community, which is 98 percent owner-occupied as of January 1, 2004.

Possibility of extending the boundaries of the amendment to surrounding properties where appropriate

During the review process, staff considered the possibility of extending the boundaries of this amendment to other surrounding properties to the north and south of subject site. Based on review of the land use designations and existing land uses for surrounding properties, it has been determined that it is appropriate to maintain the low density residential designation to the north of the subject project site given the existing established single-family residential units. In addition, it has been determined that it is appropriate to maintain the neighborhood commercial designation for the properties located immediately south of the subject site given that the community plan calls for the protection and preservation of existing commercially designated sites to ensure needed commercial development in the community. Also, this community, over the years, has experienced a decline in the quality and number of active commercial centers causing residents to drive to other nearby communities for related services. This area south of the subject site is currently occupied by a gas station and an old multi-family development. Given the proximity of the subject site to a village opportunity area across Meadowbrook Drive, mixed-use development in this area could occur south of subject site where the current commercial zoning allows for mixed-use development with neighborhood commercial services and a residential component.

The adequacy of existing public services and facilities, including schools, parks, fire, police and transit services, to determine whether the additional units proposed would negatively impact the current levels of these services

Currently, there are 10 elementary schools, one middle school, one junior high, and one senior high school located in the Skyline-Paradise Hills community. Freese Elementary school is the closest school to the project site with current enrollment of 669 students and total capacity of 930 students. Bell Junior High located on Paradise Valley Road further west from project site has a

current enrollment of 1,690 with capacity for 2,730 students. Therefore, there appears to be adequate school facilities to serve the proposed development. In terms of parks, there are approximately 100 acres of community, neighborhood and joint use parks in Skyline-Paradise Hills, including the 10 acres from Skyline Park and Recreation Center that is the closest park to the project site and located on Skyline Drive. According to the Progress Guide and General Plan standards for population-based park acreage, a total of 201 acres is needed to meet these standards in this community. However, these standards and acquisition of additional land for parks are difficult to achieve in urbanized communities of the City, and as stated in the Skyline-Paradise Hills community plan these standards should be considered as guidelines only. Nonetheless, a total of 98 acres in future neighborhood parks and joint use park projects is identified in the Skyline-Paradise Hills Public Facilities Financing Plan that will contribute to meeting the park acreage standards. The project is proposing on-site recreational facilities, such as a pool area and a pocket park with seating areas to help alleviate impacts of proposed units. In addition, the project applicant would be paying development impact fees at \$5,632 per unit where \$3,701 out of this figure would be going towards meeting park and recreation facility costs.

The proposed project would be served by City of San Diego Fire-Rescue Department Station 32, located at 484 Briarwood Road. Station 32 houses one engine and one paramedic ambulance and a total of six personnel. The City strives to provide an average maximum response time of no more than five minutes for fire suppression activities. The response time to the site is estimated to be within three minutes of the proposed site. Therefore, the current response time from the nearest fire station is within the acceptable response time of five minutes for fire protection and eight minutes for paramedic service. However, the project site does not have the capability of a full first alarm assignment, which consists of three engines and two trucks, to reach the site in a prescribed time due to their distance from the project area.

Police protection is provided by the Southeastern Area Substation of the San Diego Police Department, located at Skyline Drive and Sychar. Also, the Police Department heads a neighborhood watch program in order to involve residents within their own neighborhood in a self-protection program against crime. The Skyline Branch library is located immediately across Meadowbrook Drive from project site and the City is currently looking to build and expand this existing facility. Public transit services and several bus routes are located within walking distance of the subject site along Meadowbrook Drive, Paradise Valley Road, and Skyline Drive. Although located outside of this community, the San Diego Trolley line runs along the northern boundary of this community on Imperial Avenue with a station located at 62nd Street and Akins Avenue.

- *Need for transportation improvements and impacts on the circulation system*

There are no significant impacts on the circulation system; and therefore, there is not a need for new transportation improvements as a result of this proposed project.

- *Consistency with the City's Strategic Framework Element, Transit-Oriented Development Design Guidelines, and Housing Element goals for future development*

The project is consistent with the recommendations of the Strategic Framework Element that emphasize the need to ensure that housing supply accommodates future population growth. The community has been relatively inactive in terms of large scale development due to mostly build-out condition; however, some leftover vacant sites and areas in need of revitalization are now being looked at for potential private development in this community. This project site would offer the opportunity to develop much needed housing to help address future growth. Also, the project addresses recommendations regarding creation of walkable neighborhoods by improving the sidewalks, providing street trees along Meadowbrook Drive and enhancing pedestrian access in the neighborhood area. The proposed project also incorporates several aspects of the Transit-Oriented Development Design Guidelines as it provides for pedestrian access linking future residents to major transit corridors along Meadowbrook Drive and Paradise Valley Road. Pedestrian connection from the project site would also enhance walkability to nearby commercial centers, schools, parks and nearby bus stops. The proposed project would also not adversely affect the Housing Element of the Progress Guide and General Plan as the proposed use would be ensuring the development of new housing to help meet the City's housing needs for a variety of household sizes. Although the project would not be building restricted affordable housing units on the site, the project would be targeting first-time homebuyers. This in turn would address another goal of the Housing Element to increase housing opportunities for first-time homebuyers.

- *Provision of amenities and pedestrian-scale elements associated with proposed development and application of urban design guidelines per the Skyline-Paradise Hills Community Plan*

The proposed request for construction of 66 residential units and on-site recreation areas would not adversely affect the Skyline-Paradise Hills Community Plan in that it is implementing the policies and recommendations of the community plan associated with building scale and character, site and building design, parking areas for multi-family developments, pedestrian access, streetscape, landscaping, sign standards, outdoor amenities and pedestrian activity areas. The project design would specifically improve the visual and physical character of the community through streetscape improvements (new sidewalks and street trees), quality residential development with three different building styles and architectural themes, enhanced landscaping, unobtrusive parking areas, enhanced paving, monument sign, and overall site and building design. The proposed project would include an on-site recreational/pool area and seating areas as well as a pocket park. The proposed project features pedestrian-oriented design elements, such as enhanced paving area, pedestrian connections throughout the site and a connection with the public right-of-way area. Unit entrances would also be facing Meadowbrook Drive to help create a more pedestrian-oriented environment along this road. The proposed development would enhance the visual image of the surrounding neighborhood and it would be compatible with existing and planned land uses on adjoining properties.

Review of pedestrian and vehicular circulation patterns for safety and connection within the site as well as review of pedestrian/vehicular access into the property

Pedestrian access within the project site is provided through sidewalks that also connect to the public right-of-way on Meadowbrook Drive. These sidewalks provide safe access from the units

to the recreational area and the pocket park. Private drives are being provided that form a loop within the project site to facilitate overall connection throughout the site and easy access to the public right-of-way. There is one entry with enhanced paving pedestrian crosswalk to the project site from Meadowbrook Drive as well as a sidewalk connection to the project from the proposed improved streetscape along this same road.

Design and character of proposed development and compatibility with adjacent uses

The project design would improve the visual and physical character of the community through streetscape improvements, quality residential development, enhanced landscaping, unobtrusive parking areas, overall site and building design, and relationship between the buildings and proposed associated passive/active recreational areas. Three different architectural themes will be used as part of this project (Spanish, Tuscan and French) to provide building style variation and enhance the overall community character as well as complement adjacent existing single-family residential units.

- *Project's ability to meet energy efficient construction standards*

Project would be meeting the energy use requirements specified by the California Energy Star New Homes Program. These requirements stipulate that all new homes need to be at least fifteen percent more energy efficient than homes built according to the 2001 California Energy Commission Energy Efficient Standards (Title 24). The energy efficiency is achieved by selecting and installing typical design elements, such as windows, insulation, HVAC system, and architectural design that will reduce energy usage.

- *Consideration and use of sustainable building features*

The project will incorporate all of the energy efficient construction standards as outlined in the Council Policy 900-14 with the exception of incorporating self-generation using renewable technologies to reduce environmental impacts associated with fossil fuel energy use.

Environmental Analysis/Site Development Permit:

A Mitigated Negative Declaration was prepared for the project for potential impacts to biological and paleontological resources. As such, a Site Development Permit is required to address potential impacts to environmentally sensitive lands. A biological letter report was prepared for the project to determine the presence or absence of environmental resources. The letter report entitled *Biological Resources Letter Survey Report For The Skyline Hills Community* dated July 2004, states that the site contains small and isolated patches of non-native grasslands typical for a disturbed, developed setting, and, disturbed coastal sage brush (4.28 acres and 0.18 acres respectively). The removal of these resources would directly impact sensitive vegetation and require mitigation. The Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) establishes the requirement for either off-site acquisition, off-site land acquisition in an approved conservation mitigation bank, or payment into the City's Habitat Conservation Fund. These mitigation measures would reduce the impacts to these habitats to below a level of significance.

A geotechnical investigation was prepared for the project entitled *Report of Supplemental Geotechnical Investigation* dated 2003, which identified the site as having earth formations assigned a high resource potential for containing fossil deposits. The proposed development requires the excavation of greater than 1,000 cubic yards of earth material at depths of ten feet or greater. As such, the MMRP includes mitigation for paleontological monitoring during grading to ensure the recovery of any fossil remains, reducing impacts to these resources to below a level of significance.

The environmental analysis conducted for the project included a review of a Water Quality Technical Report, a Noise Study, a Traffic Study, and a visual simulation of the manufactured slope and retaining walls proposed at the rear of the site. Staff's analysis of these documents concluded that the project would not result in impacts to geology/soils, water quality, noise and visual quality, therefore, no mitigation was required.

Project Related Issues:

Site Grading

Topographically, the property is an irregular shaped, disturbed infill parcel with a grade difference of approximately 55 feet from west to east. The site has varying terrain, sloping downward from Meadowbrook Drive in an easterly direction. The geotechnical investigation prepared for the project concluded that the site was graded in two episodes sometime between 1959 and 1973 during which fill was placed on the site in association with the grading for the subdivisions to the west and north and again sometime around 1986, in association with grading activities for the adjacent subdivision to the east. The site originally contained a "Y" shaped, finger canyon within the interior. The previous grading activities have resulted in fill slopes on the easterly side and a portion of the northeast side, a combination of cut and fill slopes along the southerly side, and a fill slope along the westerly side.

The project would grade approximately 5.0 acres of the site consisting of 5,010 cubic yards of cut soil and 75,890 cubic yards of fill to level the site for the proposed buildings and infrastructure. The maximum height of fill slopes proposed is 42 feet at a 2:1 ratio, with cut slopes resulting in a height of 13 feet at a 2:1 ratio. A series of retaining walls are proposed throughout the site including a two-stepped retaining wall at the base of a slope at the rear (east). All site fencing and retaining walls will not exceed the maximum 6'-0" height limit within setback areas.

Planned Development Permit Analysis (Deviation/Design Criteria /Open Space Requirements)

A Planned Development Permit (PDP) is required for the project as the proposed buildings would result in a building height of 52'-0" where 30'-0" is the maximum allowed. Grading and preparation of the site require the placement of fill in various depths beneath the buildings which will render the structures overheight when measured from pre-existing grades, however, no building will exceed a visual height of 30'-0" from finished grade. The PDP is also required as the Skyline-Paradise Hills Community Plan states that residential projects greater than 30 units or

greater than 20 dwelling units per net acre are recommended to be developed under a Planned Development Permit to ensure a quality design, compatibility with surrounding structures and consistency with community plan design guidelines.

The purpose of the PDP regulations is to provide flexibility in the application of development regulations for projects where strict application of the base zone development regulations would restrict design options and result in a less desirable project. The intent of the PDP regulations is to accommodate to the greatest extent possible, an equitable balance of development types, intensities, styles, site constraints, project amenities, public improvements, community and City benefits. Staff recommends approval of the height deviation: The fill proposed to be placed on the site is necessary to accommodate the proposed development. As noted above, the site has been previously graded on several occasions and contains a considerable amount of fill and manufactured slopes. The site must be re-graded for the proposed development. The buildings will not appear overheight when viewed from street level and adjoining properties. The structures will not exceed a visual height of 30'-0" and the building heights are consistent with other structures in the neighborhood.

The proposed project was analyzed to determine consistency with the goals and recommendations of the community plan. As discussed above in the "Community Plan Analysis" section of this report, staff has concluded that the proposed project and required amendments will not adversely affect the Progress Guide and General Plan and the Skyline-Paradise Hills Community Plan.

The PDP ordinance contains additional criteria for developments as well as supplemental regulations for residential development. The criteria for development regulations require that the overall design of developments be comprehensive and demonstrate the relationship between on-site and off-site developments. Structures should avoid repetitious patterns that are inconsistent with the goals of the land use plan. The scale of the developments should be consistent with the neighborhood and should represent the dominant development pattern in the area. Landscaping should be used to soften the appearance of blank walls and enhance the pedestrian scale of the development. The supplemental regulations contain open space requirements which exceed that specified in the underlying zone (60 square feet per dwelling unit in the RM-1-1 zone) as well as the provision for a recreational facility.

The project incorporates these design standards. The proposed development has been designed to be in conformance with all of the underlying zone regulations for building setback, wall heights, floor area ratio, coverage, parking and landscaping requirements. The adjoining properties to the north and east are one and two-story, single-family developments with varying architecture and design. The condominium development will provide for three architectural styles Tuscan, French and Spanish, with varying roof treatments, colors and façade treatments to break up the bulk and scale and provide visual interest as shown on architectural renderings in Attachments 12 and 13. The project will provide larger than required setback areas and screened buffers from these adjoining developments due to the placement of the buildings, street alignment and extensively landscaped areas along the site's perimeter. A manufactured slope is

proposed within the rear portion of the site, supported at the base along the east property line by a series of plantable crib walls which will not exceed a height of 6'-0" at the highest point due to required horizontal separations. Staff required a visual simulation of this slope and the proposed retaining walls in order to analyze potential visual impacts to adjoining developments (Attachment 14). Due to the extensive landscape features proposed along the slope, and the placement of a plantable crib wall at the base of the slope, staff concluded that the creation of the slope and the placement of the crib walls would not cause an adverse visual impact to surrounding developments.

With respect to open space requirements, the PDP regulations have both "total" (common) and "usable" (private) open space requirements. For sites zoned RM-1-1, 500 square feet of total open space and, 500 square feet of usable open space per dwelling unit is required. The project will provide 1,828 square feet of total open space, and 904 square feet of usable open space as graphically depicted in Attachment 4b.

Total open space areas must meet the following requirements:

- It includes usable open space;
- It includes other areas which are to be left as open space;
- It must be readily accessible to all occupants; and,
- It should, whenever, possible, be physically connected to other common open spaces areas on the premises.

Usable open space must meet the following criteria:

- It may include both *private* exterior open space and *common* open space that is *functional* to residents;
- It must be generally contiguous and moderately level, having an overall gradient not exceeding 10 percent; and,
- It may include *outdoor* recreational areas, but cannot include any areas occupied by buildings, structures, streets, driveways, or parking areas.

A total of 33,000 square feet of total and usable open space is required for the proposed development (66 units X 500 square feet). The project will provide 120,670 square feet of total open space, or 1,828 per unit and, 59,658 square feet of usable open space, or 904 square feet per unit. Total open space areas include all usable open space, and, the sloped areas and other landscaped areas. Usable open space areas include the 7,703 square foot, recreation area with pool, seating areas and shade structures; private rear yards and balconies; the pocket park; landscaped side yards and landscaped areas adjacent to the sidewalks

Additionally, the Land Development Code requires that projects exceeding 10 dwellings units must provide one of the following recreational amenities within the common open space requirement: a tot lot; a barbecue area with picnic tables and shade structure; a sport court or field; or, a swimming pool or golf course. With the exception of the sport court or field, the project provides each of these recreational facilities, or three such facilities, where only one is required.

The proposed project is consistent with the purpose and intent of the Planned Development Permit Ordinance requesting a minor deviation to one development regulation, incorporating the design criteria for residential developments, and providing open space areas in excess of what is required. The project will provide several benefits to the City. The project will provide additional housing stock for the community. It will visually enhance the site and the neighborhood by constructing a high quality, extensively landscaped project that is in keeping with the surrounding neighborhood. The project will serve as a transitional, buffer development, a low density, multi-family residential project, between existing single-family developments, higher density developments and neighborhood commercial centers in the immediate area.

CRITICAL PROJECT FEATURES TO CONSIDER DURING SUBSTANTIAL CONFORMANCE REVIEW

Land Use: The project site shall not adversely affect the Progress Guide, General Plan, Skyline-Paradise Hills Community Plan and remain consistent with the Planned Development Permit Ordinance. Any changes from the proposed land use should be reviewed to ensure conformance with the applicable land use plan and the San Diego Municipal Code.

Site Design: The project design should not increase the amount of deviation from the development regulations of the underlying zone, unless the required findings could be made. The location of the buildings shall be maintained in place as shown on Exhibit "A."

Parking/Circulation: Parking spaces shall not be reduced unless there is a reduction in the number of units. Any changes made to the parking and or conversion for any other use shall be reviewed by the Development Services Department.

Landscaping: Landscape material, size, number and location shall be consistent with Exhibit "A." Any changes to the landscape plan should be reviewed to ensure conformance with the San Diego Municipal Code.

CONCLUSION:

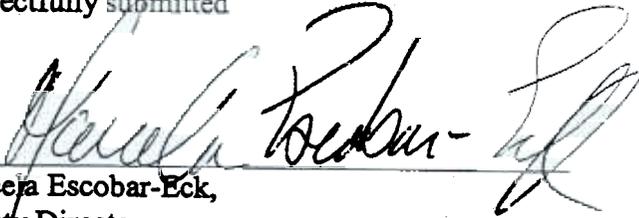
The proposed Skyline Hills Community is consistent with all of the relevant regulations of the proposed RM-1-1 zone. The project implements several goals, objectives and recommendations of the Skyline-Hills Community Plan and the Progress Guide and General Plan as described above. Staff recommends approval of the project.

ALTERNATIVES

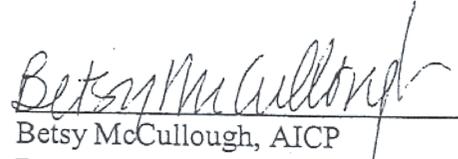
Recommend, with modifications, Approval to the City Council of Progress Guide and General Plan and Community Plan Amendment No. 198838, Rezone No.011305, Drainage Easement Vacation No. 194762, Tentative Map No. 011309, Planned Development Permit No. 011303, and Site Development Permit No. 206466 .

2. Recommend Denial to the City Council, Progress Guide and General Plan and Community Plan Amendment No. 198838, Rezone No. 011305, Drainage Easement Vacation No. 194762, Tentative Map No. 011309, Planned Development Permit No. 011303, and Site Development Permit No. 206466 if the findings required to approve the project cannot be affirmed.

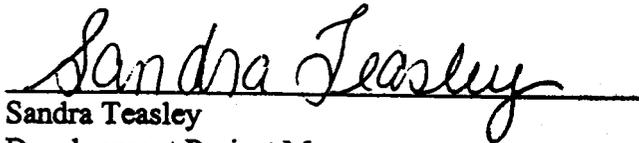
Respectfully submitted



Marceja Escobar-Eck,
Deputy Director
Customer Service and Information
Division, Development Services Department



Betsy McCullough, AICP
Deputy Planning Director



Sandra Teasley
Development Project Manager
Development Services Department

MEE/BM/SMT

Attachments:

1. Community Plan Land Use Map
2. Project Location Map
3. Aerial Map of Surrounding Development/Zoning
4. Project Plans (4a: Recreation Area Exhibit; 4b: Open Space Exhibit)
5. Draft Community Plan Amendment Documents (Resolution/Revised Graphics)
6. Rezone Ordinance (6a: Rezone Exhibit)
7. Tentative Map Resolution
8. Draft PDP/SDP/Drainage Easement Vacation Permit
9. Draft PDP/SDP/Drainage Easement Vacation Resolution
10. Planning Commission Initiation Resolution No. 3558-PC dated August 4, 2004
11. Community Planning Group Recommendation
12. Building Elevation Rendering
13. Streetscape Rendering
14. Slope/Retaining Wall Rendering
15. Ownership Disclosure Statement
16. Project Chronology
17. Project Data Sheet