

**DATE ISSUED:** September 7, 2006                      REPORT NO. PC-06-236

**ATTENTION:** Planning Commission, Agenda of September 14, 2006

**SUBJECT:** HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC CEMETERY- PROJECT NO. 77831  
PROCESS 4

**REFERENCE:** Planning Commission Report No. P-98-156

**OWNER/  
APPLICANT:** Roman Catholic Bishop of San Diego/  
Dann Mallec (Attachment 14)

**SUMMARY**

**Issue(s):** Should the Planning Commission allow improvements to the existing Holy Cross Catholic cemetery which include reserving adjacent land for additional burial plots, and constructing a new maintenance building and storage compound?

**Staff Recommendation:**

**APPROVE** Conditional Use Permit No. 241428, Site Development Permit No. 247227, and Planned Development Permit No. 361998, with conditions (Attachment 7).

**Community Planning Group Recommendation:** On May 15, 2006, the Encanto Neighborhoods Community Planning Group voted 14-0-0 to approve the project with no conditions (Attachment 13).

**Environmental Review:** The proposed activity is exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 15303 (New construction or conversion of small structures) of the State CEQA Guidelines.

**Fiscal Impact Statement:** None associated with this action. All costs associated with the processing for this project are paid by the applicant.

**Code Enforcement Impact:** None with this action.

**Housing Impact Statement:** The proposed project site is planned and zoned for multi-family residential developmental at a density of 10-15 dwelling units per acre. The proposed four-acre addition, if developed with residential, could yield a maximum of 60-units.

## **BACKGROUND**

The project proposes to expand the Holly Cross cemetery by 3.9 acres by adding 2.8 acres of burial plots and constructing the remaining 1.1 acres with a new maintenance and storage compound. The 3.9 acre site is located at 4470 Hilltop Drive within the Chollas View Neighborhood of the Southeastern San Diego Community Planning area, and is designated for residential uses. The site is zoned MF-3000 of the Southeastern San Diego Planned District. The Holy Cross Cemetery was established in 1919 and operates under Conditional Use Permit (CUP) No. 4910 approved in 1964 (Attachment 9).

The original CUP has been amended three times since its original approval. In 1992 the cemetery was amended through CUP 91-0348 to add 3.4 acres of burial space, an eight-foot wrought iron fence and off-street parking (Attachment 10). In 1993 an amendment was completed through CUP 93 0532 to add a 7,656-square-foot mausoleum and off-street parking (Attachment 11). The last amendment took place in 1998 through CUP 96-7710 which included the addition of a 31,892-square-foot mausoleum (Attachment 12).

The entire cemetery encompasses 43 acres and is surrounded by single and multi-family homes to the east, west and south. Interstate 94 is located to the north of the property.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Project Description:**

The project proposes the expansion and construction of a maintenance compound for the Holy Cross Cemetery, owned and operated by the Roman Catholic Bishop of San Diego. The majority of the proposed site is currently vacant and is located in the northwest quadrant of the cemetery. The proposed burial grounds will encompass an area adjacent to the cemetery and across 44<sup>th</sup> Street and provide approximately 2,200 additional burial spaces. The storage compound will be developed adjacent to the cemetery across 44<sup>th</sup> Street. The existing vacant lot has been subject to illegal dumping at the end of 44<sup>th</sup> Street. One house remains on the site which serves as housing for cemetery caretakers. The Diocese proposes to relocate the caretaker home off site.

The current location of the storage and maintenance compound is adjacent to the existing administration offices, which serves as a welcome center for the cemetery. The relocation of the maintenance compound is due to the Diocese's desire to reorganize and expand its facility. The proposed maintenance compound will store landscaping equipment and cement vaults as well as function as a small office and provide parking for grounds keepers. The old maintenance compound land will be converted into burial grounds.

The project's approvals include the requirement for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) amendment for a cemetery as improvements are proposed to previously approved CUP No. 96-7710. A Planned Development Permit has been requested to address minor deviations to the side yard setbacks as well as wall and fence heights. A Southeastern San Diego Permit, processed as a Site Development Permit, is required for the processing of Conditional Use Permits within the Southeastern San Diego Planned District.

### **Community Plan Analysis:**

The Holy Cross Catholic Cemetery expansion plan is located in the area of 44<sup>th</sup> and "C" Streets and is currently vacant land adjacent to the existing cemetery grounds established in 1919. The Recommended Land Use map for the Chollas View neighborhood in the Southeastern San Diego Community Plan identifies this site as Residential 10-15 DU/acre, and it is zoned MF-3000 by the Southeastern San Diego Planned District. The expansion would not adversely affect the applicable land use plan in that cemetery use is consistent with the underlying zone and becomes allowable by a Conditional Use Permit. The Cemetery is consistent with the Southeastern San Diego Community Plan which describes on page 209 how its "blue-domed mausoleum became a landmark of Southeastern San Diego." The expansion plan area extends this community landmark to the West as far as the Chollas View neighborhood boundary at Interstate 805.

### **Project-Related Issues:**

#### *Planned Development Permit/Deviations Analysis:*

The Planned Development Permit allows 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. Staff supports the proposed deviations as they have been determined to be minor in scope and that the project conforms to all other development requirements which implement community plan recommendations through sensitive design practices. The project also provides for community benefits.

The project design has incorporated deviations to the setback areas, fence/wall heights, and types of fences. The site specific deviations are described below.

- 1) Retaining Wall in required Street Side Yards (adjacent to I-94) with proposed heights of ten to 13-feet where two retaining walls with a maximum height of 3-feet each are permitted in the required street side yard (SDMC Section 142.0340(c)(1));
- 2) Open Fence (wrought iron fence) in the front and street side yard setbacks with proposed height of eight feet where Open Fences are permitted up to 6 feet in height (SDMC Section 142.0310(c)(2)).
- 3) Building wing walls to encroach into required street side yard setbacks where the building is not allowed to encroach within required setbacks (SDMC Section 142.0310(e)(2)(B)).

4) Permanent chain-link fences within the sideyard setback where chain-link fences are prohibited (SDMC Section 103.1703(f)).

5) A Solid Fence within the street side yard setback with a proposed height of six feet where 4-feet, two-inches in height is the maximum allowed (SDMC 142.0310).

The proposed retaining wall will support a manufactured slope on the western portion of the maintenance compound. The wall will be screened with a landscape “plantable wall” that will screen 80-percent of the wall within two years. Several trees and shrubs exist in front of the proposed wall location and are to remain, thus further screening the proposed retaining wall from the public right of way. Landscaping will be provided on top of the wall to further screen the maintenance compound.

The proposed black, eight-foot wrought iron fence will be constructed to surround the new burial locations. The proposed wrought iron fence is consistent with the existing previously conforming eight-foot wrought iron fence along the perimeter of the cemetery.

The proposed deviation to allow an eight-foot wing wall to encroach into the side yard setbacks is necessary to screen views from the burial grounds to the maintenance compound. Wing walls would be articulated with vertical offsets and arched reveals to reduce bulk and scale and to blend the walls with the proposed maintenance building.

The project is proposing chain link fencing for security purposes. Staff supports the chain link fence in this situation because the fence will be facing I-94/I-805 and not visible from any public right of way or adjacent neighbors due to the extensive landscape established in front of it and additional landscape to be planted adjacent to it.

The project is also proposing a six-foot solid wood fence within the street side yard setback, three-feet behind the property line where a fence height of 4-feet, 2-inches is permitted. Landscaping will be planted along the length of the fence to include climbing vines and street trees. The fence will function as a screen to the maintenance compound from the surrounding burial sites and 44<sup>th</sup> Street.

The project will provide a benefit to the community by providing additional burial sites for the cemetery. The project will implement the Southeastern San Diego Community Plan by maintaining a use that is recommended for the area. The project is anticipated to visually enhance the neighborhood by developing a vacant site that has been plagued with illegal dumping with a developed site that includes extensive landscaping and structures consistent with the existing cemetery. In addition, the project would result in a landscape plan that exceeds the City’s requirements.

## **CONCLUSION:**

Staff has reviewed the proposed project and has determined the project is in conformance with all applicable sections of the San Diego Municipal Code Sections. Staff has concluded that the

proposed deviations will not adversely affect the Progress Guide, the General Plan, and the Southeastern San Diego Community Plan. Staff has determined the required findings can be supported as the project meets the applicable San Diego Municipal Code requirements regulating commercial developments.

1. Approve Conditional Use Permit No. 241428 Planned Development Permit No. 361998, and Site Development Permit No. 247227 , with modifications.
2. Deny Conditional Use Permit No. 241428, Planned Development Permit No. 361998 and Site Development Permit No. 247227 if the findings required to approve the project cannot be affirmed.

**Respectfully submitted,**

---

**Mike Westlake**  
**Program Manager**  
**Development Services Department**

---

**William Zounes**  
**Project Manager**  
**Development Services Department**

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 (Site Plan)
7. Draft Permit with Conditions
8. Draft Resolution with Findings
9. Copy of Recorded Permit C-4910
10. Copy of Recorded Permit CUP No. 91-0348
11. Copy of Recorded Permit CUP No. 93-0532
12. Copy of Recorded Permit CUP No. 96-7710
13. Community Planning Group Recommendation
14. Ownership Disclosure Statement
15. Project Chronology