THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

REPORT TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION

DATE ISSUED: January 4, 2007 **REPORT NO. PC-07-011**

ATTENTION: **Planning Commission, Agenda of January 11, 2007**

SUBJECT: 47th Street Self Storage - PROJECT NO. 82503. PROCESS FIVE

REFERENCE: REPORT NO. PC-06-097 - CPA Initiation Report
http://www.sandiego.gov/planning-commission/pcreports/pc0609747st.pdf

OWNER/
APPLICANT: **47th Street Self-Storage, LLC**

SUMMARY

Issue: Should the Planning Commission approve the development of a 206,155 square-foot self storage facility on a vacant 1.87 acre site at 930 47th Street, in the Specialized Commercial land-use designation of the Lincoln Park Neighborhood of the Southeastern San Diego Community Plan?

Staff Recommendation:

1. Recommend that the City Council **Certify** Mitigated Negative Declaration No. 82503 and **Adopt** the Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program;

2. Recommend that the City Council **Approve** amendments to the Progress Guide and General Plan, and the Southeastern San Diego Community Plan, No. 260655;

3. Recommend that the City Council **Approve** Planned Development Permit No. 260654;

4. Recommend that the City Council **Approve** Site Development Permit No. 260818; and

5. Recommend that the City Council **Approve** Easement Abandonment No. 392085.

Community Planning Group Recommendation: On June 19, 2006, the Encanto Neighborhoods Community Planning Group voted 14-0-0 to approve the project as proposed. On June 12, 2006 the Southeastern San Diego Planning Committee voted 11-0-0 to approve the project as proposed. See Attachments 18 and 19.

DIVERSITY

Other Recommendations: The Southeastern Economic Development Corporation (SEDC) reviewed the project for the proposed development of a moving and household storage facility to be located at 47th Street south of Logan Avenue. The site is located within SEDC's area of influence and is immediately south of the Central Imperial Redevelopment Project Area. SEDC is in support of the proposed use for this site given the constraints of adjacency to Interstate 805 and the sloping terrain. It provides an adequate buffer between the I-805 and the residents directly across the street.

Environmental Review: Mitigated Negative Declaration Number 82503 was prepared, and finalized on December 11, 2006 in accordance with the State of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines. A Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program would be implemented which would reduce, to below a level of significance, the potential environmental impacts identified from the environmental review process for Paleontological Resources.

Fiscal Impact Statement: 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 proposed general/community plan amendment would not have an impact on housing supply or availability. The site is currently vacant and is designated Specialized Commercial by the Southeastern San Diego Community Plan. The site is adjacent to a major freeway and is not intended for housing. There is no housing currently on the site and a self storage facility is anticipated by the proposed project; therefore, the proposed project would not have an impact on the availability of housing.

The project is not subject to the requirements of the City's Inclusionary Housing Ordinance, in that no residential development is proposed as a part of the project.

BACKGROUND

The vacant 1.87-acre rectangular project site is located at 930 47th Street, between Logan Avenue and Solola Avenue, east of Interstate 805. The site is located in the Lincoln Park neighborhood of the Encanto Neighborhoods section of the Southeastern San Diego Community Plan and is designated Specialized Commercial. The site is located in the Southeastern San Diego Planned District Ordinance and is zoned CSF-3 (Commercial; commercial strip development with parking to the rear or side of the building). Surrounding land uses include multi-family to the south and east, commercial to the north, and Interstate 805 to the east.

Elevations on site vary from a high of approximately 120 feet above mean sea level (AMSL) at the northwest corner of the site to a low of approximately 74 feet AMSL at the southeast corner of the site. The proposed project site contains 0.97 acres of ruderal lands and 0.90 acres of non-native grasslands. The subject property is not within or adjacent to the Multi-Habitat Planning

Area (MHPA) of the City of San Diego's Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) Subarea Plan area.

Because the project proposes the installation of a roof-mounted photovoltaic system consisting of solar panels sufficient to generate at least 30 percent of the proposed project's projected energy consumption, as established by Council Policy 900-14, the land use approvals have been processed through the "Affordable/In-Fill Housing and Sustainable Buildings Expedite Program."

DISCUSSION

Project Description:

The 47th Street Self-Storage project would involve an amendment to the Progress Guide and General Plan and the Southeastern San Diego Community Plan, a Planned Development Permit, Site Development Permit, and Easement Abandonment to allow the development of a 206,155 square foot self storage facility. The permits have been conditioned to limit the hours of operation from 7:00 AM to 10:00 PM on a daily basis.

The proposed four-story over one-story basement 206,155 square-foot self-storage building would consist of 1,400 storage units that range in size from 5 feet x 5 feet (25 square-feet) to 10 feet x 30 feet (300 square-feet). The proposed surface parking lots would contain a total of 23 vehicular spaces (inclusive of one accessible space) and three loading spaces. Exterior treatments would include split-face masonry and stucco finishes with ledgerstore veneers, azurlite spandrel glazing, and a ribbed steel roof with foam cornices. The proposed structure would not exceed 37.75 feet above grade at its highest point and would include a photovoltaic system on the rooftop.

The project site would continue to be accessed from 47th Street. Site development would include the construction of three driveways leading to three surface parking lots; new sidewalk, curb and gutter; stepped split-face masonry wall, and landscaping. The parking requirement for this project consisting of a 206,155 square-foot self storage facility (which includes 780 square feet of office space) is 23 parking spaces; one of which is an accessible parking space. The 23 parking spaces and one accessible parking space provided meet the San Diego Municipal Code's parking requirements. The proposed 206,155 square-foot self storage facility is estimated to generate 412 average daily trips with 24 AM trips and 38 PM trips. Per the City of San Diego Traffic Impact Study Area, a traffic analysis was not required.

Site drainage would be conveyed through a grass-lined swale and hydrocarbon filters, located within each catch basin, before discharge into the existing storm drain system located within the public right-of-way. The proposed landscaping would be in conformance with the City's Landscape Technical Manual and would include trees such as Queen Palm, Carrotwood Tree, Eldarica Pine; shrubs such as Red Tipped Photinia, India Hawthorn, and Shiny Xylosma; and groundcover such as Lily of Nile and Daylily. Grading would consist of 26,600 cubic-yards of export soil.

Required Approvals:

As proposed, the project requires the following approvals:

- A Progress Guide and General Plan and Southeastern San Diego Community Plan Amendment (Process 5) to allow moving and household storage uses on the 1.87 acre site within the Specialized Commercial land use designation, with a Planned Development Permit (Process 4);
- A Planned Development Permit (Process 4) to allow moving and household storage uses within the Specialized land use designation;
- An Easement Abandonment for abandonment of an existing slope easement which is no longer needed and serves no public or private purpose (Process 5);
- A Site Development Permit (Process 3) for industrial development within the Southeastern San Diego Planned District, and for project sites with Environmentally Sensitive Lands (Process 3), and a Site Development Permit (Process 4) for deviations for Sustainable Buildings.

All discretionary actions are being processed concurrently, with a Recommendation hearing with the Planning Commission prior to a final decision by the City Council, in accordance with a Process 5 decision.

Community Plan Analysis:

The proposed amendment would add language to the Southeastern San Diego community plan permitting moving and self storage uses under the Specialized Commercial land use designation at the subject site only. No changes are proposed to the community plan land use map.

Before submitting an application for the project, the applicant approached the Encanto Neighborhoods Community Planning Group about the possibility of a self-storage facility at this location. Because of the historical difficulty of developing the site for Specialty Commercial under its current land use designation and zoning, the Encanto Planning Group expressed support for the concept of a self-storage facility, but raised concerns about the possible proliferation of these uses throughout the community. The applicant committed to finding a solution that would address this concern.

Several approaches were considered through the planning process. A proposal to redesignate the site from Specialized Commercial to Industrial was rejected because the property is located across the street from existing single-family and multi-family development and future industrial uses, with their attendant truck traffic, could result in potential land use incompatibilities. Also, an industrial designation would create an isolated pocket of industrial use, away from other industrial areas of the community which are concentrated along major streets such as Market Street and Imperial Avenue.

A proposal to rezone the property from CSF-3 to CSF-2, combined with a Southeastern San Diego Planned District Ordinance (SESDPDO) amendment to add moving and household

storage uses as permitted use of the CSF-2 zone was also considered and rejected after it was presented to the two community planning groups that are governed by the SESPDO. The Encanto Neighborhoods Community Planning Group, which covers the area east of I-805, including the project site, voted 12-0-0 to recommend approval of the SESDPDO amendment initiation (see Attachment 16). However, the group voiced concerns about the potential proliferation of moving and storage facilities throughout the community, and requested that these uses be limited to a few areas. The Southeastern San Diego Planning Committee voted 7-3-0 to recommend denial of the initiation because of concerns that moving and household storage facilities within commercial areas would be detrimental to the goal of revitalizing older, larger retail areas (see Attachment 18).

Following public input and review by the City, staff became concerned that the proposed modification to the CSF-2 zone could affect many areas of the Southeastern San Diego community. Staff also rejected the idea of a rezone to a citywide commercial zone that would allow moving and storage facilities due to the infeasibility of introducing a citywide zone on a small, isolated site within the SESDPDO.

In response to these concerns, in February of 2006, staff resurrected a previously considered idea to amend the Southeastern San Diego Community Plan to include language specifically related to moving and storage facilities on the project site. Under the provisions of the San Diego Municipal Code, if addressed within the community plan, a planned development permit could be processed for a future project to allow self-storage facilities within the CSF-3 zone without requiring a rezone. Due to the location of the site between I-805 and 47th Street and the elongated and sloping nature of the site, and because of the communities' acceptance of a self-storage use at this location, staff felt a storage use may be appropriate for this unique site if adequate design controls are incorporated into the community plan to ensure that future development respects adjacent residential development.

Therefore, the proposed amendment would allow moving and household storage uses only if no outside storage is permitted, hours of operation are limited, commercial businesses are not allowed within individual storage spaces, the development provides appropriate lighting and parking on site, height and bulk are adequately addressed and the development complies with all other applicable recommendations of the community plan. The permit for this project has been conditioned to ensure that these requirements have been met.

The amendment would contribute toward achieving two objectives of the Commercial Element of the Southeastern San Diego Community Plan:

- Provision of attractive quality community and neighborhood commercial facilities that offer a variety of goods and services to meet community needs.
- Enhance the perception of safety through the use of crime-deterring materials and design, including the thoughtful use of landscaping, screening materials, lighting and building siting, and materials and parking locations.

The project would contribute toward meeting these plan objectives by providing a needed commercial facility and by taking advantage of the natural hillside slope to tuck about one-third of the building below grade and providing ample lighting and parking. It would also implement

the community plan design provision to minimize grading and to incorporate natural slopes into the design.

The applicant is requesting three deviations:

1. A Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 1.99 where .50 is allowed.

2. A Lot Coverage of 57% where 50% is allowed.

3. Trees within 30 feet of 17 of the project's parking spaces where trees within 30 feet of all 23 proposed parking space where are required.

The requested deviations would not adversely affect the community plan since they do not adversely affect the achievement of the goal of providing attractive quality community and neighborhood commercial facilities that offer a variety of goods and services to meet community needs.

Environmental Analysis:

The City of San Diego conducted an Initial Study which determined that the proposed project could have a significant environmental effect in the area of Paleontological Resources. The project area is underlain by the Bay Point Formation which has high paleontological resource potential. Because more than 1,000 cubic-yards of excavation at a depth of ten feet or greater would be required to construct the project, the potential exists for significant adverse impacts to paleontological resources. Therefore, implementation of the Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting program, contained in Section V of the attached Mitigated Negative Declaration, would mitigate potentially significant paleontological resource impacts to below a level significance.

Subsequent revisions in the project proposal create the specific mitigation identified in Section V of the Mitigated Negative Declaration, which has been included in the materials distributed to the Planning Commission. The project as revised now avoids or mitigates the potentially significant environmental effects previously identified, and the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report will not be required.

Mitigated Negative Declaration Number 82503 was prepared, and finalized on December 11, 2006 in accordance with the State of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines. A Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program would be implemented which would reduce, to below a level of significance, the potential environmental impacts identified from the environmental review process for Paleontological Resources.

Project-Related Issues:

In addition to the issues discussed in the Community Plan Analysis, the response to issues raised at the Planning Commission Community Plan Amendment Initiation Hearing (See Attachment 14), and Environmental Analysis sections of the report, the applicant has requested three deviations, for which staff believes the findings can be made.

Deviations:

Deviations to the applicable development regulations are requested to allow the self storage facility to be sited within the project without regard to the base CSF-3 Zone and the Citywide Landscape Regulations, including:

- A Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 2.0 where 0.50 is allowed.
- A Lot Coverage of 57% where 50% is allowed.
- Trees within 30 feet of 17 of the parking spaces in the Vehicular Use Area (VUA) where trees within 30 feet of all 23 proposed parking space where are required.

Floor Area Ratio and Lot Coverage - Self-storage facilities are unique uses not specifically addressed in the SDMC Coverage requirements. Such facilities require a great deal of floor space to be economically feasible. This project is proposing a Floor Area Ratio of 1.99 and a Lot Coverage of 57% due to two unique factors: topographic constraints of the property and the use of renewable energy sources. These two factors increase the cost of construction and require additional rental area for economic feasibility. In addition, the Planned District Ordinance's FAR and Lot Coverage limitations are provided to control building bulk and limit traffic impacts on surrounding streets. Thirty percent of the proposed building is tucked into the existing slope, minimizing the bulk of the building. Multiple vertical and horizontal planes and a variety of building materials are incorporated to further reduce the perception of bulk and to complement and enhance the neighborhood. Self-storage use will generate much less traffic than a commercial building with the same floor area. Also, self-storage buildings require less floor height than regular commercial buildings. Thus, a self-storage building can be built to the same mass and bulk of other buildings permitted with nearly half the FAR. Due to the cost of the renewable energy sources and the architectural features that make it a more aesthetically pleasing project that complements and enhances the community, the development could not be designed without the proposed deviations.

Tree Spacing - The purpose of the requirements for trees in the (VUA) is to provide shade over pavement. The proposed building is located west of the parking areas and provides shade over pavement for the areas that are not within 30 feet of a shade tree. The San Diego Municipal Code permits the requirement for trees in the VUA to be met by planting the required trees within 5 feet of the edge of the parking area when the parking area is less than 6,000 square feet. Each of the three proposed parking areas is approximately 3,600 square feet. Within 5 feet of each proposed parking area are two 36-inch box canopy trees (exceeding the minimum requirement of one 24-inch box tree) and four palms with 12-foot brown trunk height (exceeding the minimum of 8-foot brown trunk height). The project would exceed the plant point requirements for the VUA with the enhanced tree planting. Shade over pavement is achieved because of the tree planting on the eastern side of the VUA and the building itself on the western side of the VUA. It is for this reason that the purpose and intent of the Landscape Regulations would be met for the tree spacing requirements in the VUA.

Therefore, staff supports the requested deviations and believes that the required findings can be made.

Critical Project Features to Consider During Substantial Conformance Review

Land Use: A General/Community Plan Amendment is one of the requested and required project approvals. The Community Plan Amendment would add language to allow the self storage use on only this specific site, through the application of a Planned Development Permit. Any change in the land use designation for the subject site shall not be allowed, unless an amendment to the current approvals is processed.

Conclusion:

The project as proposed would allow the development of a 206,155 square foot self storage facility on a vacant 1.87-acre site in the in the Lincoln Park neighborhood of the Encanto Neighborhoods section of the Southeastern San Diego Community Plan. The closest self-storage facility is two miles from the project site, and the average self-storage facility in the 3-mile trade area is 20 years old, and does not provide state of the art security, and other modern characteristics that are now in demand. The 47th Street Self-Storage project would provide for all of these.

The project has been reviewed in accordance with all applicable development regulations including the Land Development Code, Progress Guide and General Plan, Southeastern San Diego Community Plan, and the California Environmental Quality Act. Staff has considered the issues and determined the project complies with the applicable development regulations and would be consistent with the purpose and intent of the underlying zone. Mitigated Negative Declaration Number 82503 was prepared, and finalized on December 11, 2006 in accordance with the State of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines. A Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program would be implemented which would reduce, to below a level of significance, the potential environmental impacts identified from the environmental review process for Paleontological Resources.

Staff believes the proposed self-storage facility is well designed and overall would be an asset to the community. Therefore, staff has provided the required findings to affirm the project and recommends that the Planning Commission forward this application to the City Council with a recommendation to approve the project.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Recommend that the City Council **Certify** Mitigated Negative Declaration No. 82503 and **Adopt** the Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program; **Approve** amendments to the Progress Guide and General Plan, and the Southeastern San Diego Community Plan, No. 260655; **Approve** Planned Development Permit No. 260654; **Approve** Site Development Permit No. 260818; and **Approve** Easement Abandonment No. 392085, **with modifications.**

2. Recommend that the City Council **Not Certify** Mitigated Negative Declaration No. 82503 and **Not Adopt** the Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program; **Deny** amendments to the Progress Guide and General Plan, and the Southeastern San Diego Community Plan, No. 260655; **Deny** Planned Development Permit No. 260654; **Deny**

Site Development Permit No. 260818; and **Deny** Easement Abandonment No. 392085, **if the findings required to approve the project cannot be affirmed.**

Respectfully submitted,

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ESCOBAR-ECK/DES

Attachments:

1. Aerial Photograph
2. Community Plan Land Use Map
3. Project Location Map
4. Project Data Sheet
5. Site Plan and Floor Plan
6. Elevations and Cross Sections
7. Roof Plan
8. Landscape Plan
9. Civil Plan
10. Draft Permit with Conditions
11. Draft Permit Resolution with Findings
12. Draft Easement Abandonment Resolution with Exhibits
13. Community Plan Amendment (CPA) Initiation Resolution
14. Staff Responses to Planning Commission CPA Initiation Questions
15. Draft Community Plan Amendment Resolution with Exhibits
16. Encanto Neighborhoods Community Planning Group Vote, December 19, 2005
17. Encanto Neighborhoods Community Planning Group Vote, June 19, 2006
18. Southeastern San Diego Planning Committee Vote, January 9, 2006
19. Southeastern San Diego Planning Committee Vote, June 12, 2006
20. Draft Planning Commission Recommendation to City Council Resolution
21. Ownership Disclosure Statement
22. Project Chronology
23. Three-Mile Trade Area Analysis