



SOUTH VALLEY AREA PLANNING COMMISSION

200 N. Spring Street, Room 272, Los Angeles, California, 90012-4801, (213) 978-1300
www.lacity.org/PLN/index.htm

Determination Mailing Date: MAY 16 2014

CASE NO. APCSV-2013-1388-ZC-CDO

CEQA: ENV-2013-1389-MND

Location: 7118 N. Amigo Avenue

Council District: 3

Plan Area: Reseda-West Van Nuys

Zone: [Q]R1-2D-CDO

Request(s): Zone Change and
Community Design Overlay

APPLICANT: Athena Novak, AHN

At its meeting on **March 13, 2014**, the following action was taken by the **South Valley Area Planning Commission**:

1. **Approved and recommended** that the City Council, pursuant to Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) Section 12.32 **approve a Zone Change** from **[Q]R1-2D-CDO** (One-Family Dwelling Zone) to **(T)(Q)RAS3-2D-CDO** (Residential Accessory Zone) for the subject property, with the attached Conditions of Approval.
2. **Approved a Community Design Overlay Plan Approval** for the construction of a new 15-unit apartment building within the Reseda Central Business District Community Design Overlay district;
3. **Modified and adopted** the Mitigated Negative Declaration No. ENV-2013-1389-MND with modification to remove Mitigation V1-70, Liquefaction.
4. **Adopted** the attached Findings.
5. **Advised** the applicant that, pursuant to California State Public Resources Code Section 21081.6, the City shall monitor or require evidence that mitigation conditions are implemented and maintained throughout the life of the project and the City may require any necessary fees to cover the cost of such monitoring.

Fiscal Impact Statement: There is no General Fund impact as administrative costs are recovered through fees.

This action was taken by the following vote:

Moved: Commissioner Guzman
Seconded: Commissioner Mather
Ayes: Commissioners Cochran, Kim, and Epstein

Vote: 5 - 0

Fely C. Ringol, Commission Executive Assistant
South Valley Area Planning Commission

Appeals: If the Commission has disapproved the Zone Change request, in whole or in part, only the applicant may appeal that disapproval to the Council within 20 days after the mailing date of this determination. Any appeal not filed within the 20-day period shall not be considered by the Council. All appeals shall be filed on forms provided at the Planning Department's Public Counters at 201 N. Figueroa Street, Fourth Floor, Los Angeles, or at 6262 Van Nuys Boulevard, Suite 251, Van Nuys.

FINAL APPEAL DATE JUN 05 2014

If you seek judicial review of any decision of the City pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure Section 1094.5, the petition for writ of mandate pursuant to that section must be filed no later than the 90th day following the date on which the City's decision became final pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure Section 1094.6. There may be other time limits which also affect your ability to seek judicial review.

Attachments: (T) Conditions, Ordinance, Zone Change Map, (Q) Conditions, Zone Change Signature Sheet,
CDO Conditions, Findings

cc: Notification List
Thomas Henry

FINDINGS

A. General Plan/Charter Findings

1. **General Plan Land Use Designation.** The subject property is located within the Reseda – West Van Nuys Community Plan, updated and adopted by the City Council on November 17, 1999. The existing Plan designates the subject property as Community Commercial which corresponds to the CR, C2, C4, RAS3, RAS4, P, and PB zones. The proposed zone change to RAS3 (Residential Accessory) zone is consistent with the land use designation on the plan map and thus is in substantial conformance with the purposes, intent and provisions of the General Plan as reflected in the adopted Community Plan. The project is also in conformance with Footnote 8 of the Community Plan Map, which states a maximum height of six stories.
2. **General Plan Text.** The Reseda – West Van Nuys Community Plan text includes the following relevant land use goals, objectives, policies and programs:

GOAL 1: A SAFE, SECURE, AND HIGH QUALITY RESIDENTIAL ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL ECONOMIC, AGE, AND ETHNIC SEGMENTS OF THE COMMUNITY.

Objective 1-1: To provide for the preservation of existing housing and for the development of new housing to meet the diverse economic and physical needs of the existing residents and projected population of the Plan area to the year 2010.

Policy 1-1.1 Designate specific lands to provide for adequate multi-family residential development.

Program: The Plan Map identifies specific areas where multi-family residential development is permitted.

Policy 1-1.4 Protect the quality of the residential environment through attention to the appearance of communities, including attention to building and site design.

Program: The Plan includes an Urban Design Chapter which is supplemented by Design Guidelines and Standards for residential development.

Objective 1-2: To preserve and enhance the varied and distinct residential character and integrity of existing single and multi-family neighborhoods.

Policy 2-2.1 Seek a high degree of architectural compatibility and landscaping for new infill development to protect the character and scale of existing residential neighborhoods.

Program: The Plan includes Design Guidelines which establish design standards for residential development to implement this policy.

Policy 1-2.2 Consider factors such as neighborhood character and identity, compatibility of land uses, impacts on livability, impacts on services and public facilities, and impacts on traffic levels when changes in residential densities are proposed.

Program: The decision-maker should adopt a finding which addresses these factors as part of any decision relating to changes in planned residential densities.

Objective 1-3 To promote and ensure the provision of adequate housing for all persons regardless of income, age, or ethnic background.

Policy 1-3.1 Promote greater individual choice in type, quality, price, and location of housing.

Program: The Plan promotes greater individual choice through its establishment of residential design standards and its allocation of lands for a variety of residential densities.

The proposed project will meet the above objectives and policies by providing additional housing at an appropriate density and location to meet the plan area's needs and by preserving the assigned community plan land use designation. The site is located within a transitional area along Amigo Avenue which includes a mix of single-family homes and multi-family developments and is located across from a 6-acre church and school. The proposed RAS3 zone and new fifteen-unit apartment building would be compatible with the existing neighborhood land use and character.

The project has also been conditioned to dedicate and improve the surrounding public right-of-ways, which will serve to enhance the roadways, sidewalks, and street lighting along the site and provide for better connectivity within the neighborhood. Other utilities and public services for the site, including the availability of sewer and drainage facilities in Amigo Avenue, were found to be adequate or were appropriately mitigated by conditions required in the approval for the subject zone change. Significant traffic impacts are not expected from the project, and the site is in close proximity to several bus lines operating along Roscoe Boulevard and Sherman Way. Therefore, the project is not expected to cause any adverse impacts on livability, services and public facilities, or traffic levels.

Additionally, the Community Plan also sets standards for Urban Design, coupled with the recently adopted Residential Citywide Design Guidelines, which include the need for a pedestrian entrance at the front of each project, for useable open space to be provided for residents, and for a building design of quality and character. The submitted building plans are consistent with these design standards. Pedestrian access from the street will be provided from Amigo Avenue, open space will be provided within numerous balconies and a central rooftop area, and additional trees will be planted around the perimeter of the property for adequate screening of the parking ground floor. The building elevations are designed with variations in height, depth, and building materials in order to achieve an articulated façade.

Therefore, as conditioned, the recommended development meets the objectives of the Community Plan, is permitted in the RAS3 Zone and is consistent with the general plan land use designation.

B. Entitlement Findings

1. **Zone Change, L.A.M.C. Sec. 12.32-F:** The recommended zone change is in conformance with the public necessity, convenience, general welfare or good zoning practice in that:

The RAS3 zone is consistent with the existing Community Commercial General Plan Land Use designation in that this land use category allows for corresponding zones of CR, C2, C4, RAS3, RAS4, P, and PB. The project is convenient in location to several major streets, such as Reseda Boulevard and Sherman Way, and as an infill project will

have adequate access to existing City services and infrastructure. There is a necessity for housing in all income levels and housing types, and the project will create more opportunity for multi-family housing in the vicinity. Properties in the immediate neighborhood primarily consist of single-family homes on R1 lots to the south, a church and school to the west, various commercial and school properties in C2 and R2 zones to the east, and single-family and apartment buildings on R1 and RAS3 lots to the north. This is an R1 lot located on the eastern side of the block of Amigo Avenue, which remains an area of transition between single-family and multi-family developments, and although this portion of the street retains mostly single-family uses, recent zone changes along the street have resulted in a mix of zones (R1, RAS3). A zone change from [Q]R1-2D-CDO to (T)(Q)RAS3-2D-CDO and construction of a 15-unit apartment building would be compatible with the use and size of existing adjacent developments. Therefore, the zone change is provided as part of public necessity and convenience and in the general welfare of the neighborhood. Furthermore, such zone change will be in good zoning practice by providing a harmonious density and land use activity for the vicinity.

The action, as recommended, has been made contingent upon compliance with the "(Q)" and "(T)" conditions imposed herein. Such limitations are necessary to protect the best interests of and to assure developments and improvements more compatible with surrounding properties, to secure an appropriate development in harmony with the General Plan, and to prevent or mitigate the potential adverse environmental effects of the subject recommended action.

2. Community Design Review Plan Approval, L.A.M.C. Sec. 13.08 E.3:

a. As conditioned, the project substantially complies with the adopted CDO Design Guidelines and Standards, as follows:

The proposed Project includes the construction of a new fifteen-unit apartment building, three stories, and 35 to 45 feet in height, on a 12,000 square-foot lot. The site is located in a Community Commercial area within the Central Business District of Reseda, within a proposed multi-family zone. The proposed project would replace a single-family residential building on the lot, and would create an appropriate transition between the commercial and church/school uses on either side of the property. The project has demonstrated compliance with the guidelines and standards of the adopted CDO by incorporating several features into the plan design such as the screening of ground-floor parking through the use of landscaping, providing a distinct pedestrian entrance and walkway to the main entryway, adequately screening trash areas and mechanical equipment, installing sufficient landscaping along the perimeters of the site to soften and buffer the building and use from adjacent single-family homes and businesses, and setting back common open space areas on the roof to minimize impacts on adjacent uses. The proposed project also employs a coordinated colors scheme not exceeding four colors per façade and maintains consistent design and compatible materials. The articulation of the building façade on Amigo Avenue and the varied roofline additionally display features and characteristics consistent with the Reseda CDO Guidelines and Standards.

Therefore, as conditioned, the proposed fifteen-unit apartment building is harmonious with the guidelines and standards in the Reseda Central Business District CDO.

b. The structures, site plan, and landscaping are harmonious in scale and design with existing development and any cultural, scenic, or environmental resources adjacent to the site and in the vicinity.

The surrounding properties along Amigo Avenue are within a range of single-family, multi-family, and commercial zones, and the east side of the street is developed with several one-story single-family homes, a single-story two-unit site, and two three-story apartment buildings. The west side of Amigo Avenue contains a one- and two-story church and school complex on an approximately six-acre site. The proposed project mirrors the style and configuration of the two other apartment buildings on the street, and the submitted plans, elevations, and renderings for the building illustrate that it will enhance the presently built environment with an articulated façade, as well as the use of balconies, a varied roofline with tower element, red-roof tile, stucco finishes, and compatible colors. In order to minimize project impacts on the two one-story homes which bound the property to the north and south, a five-foot landscape buffer containing a minimum of six trees is required along each of the two abutting properties, and the rooftop common open space area has been setback at least 23-feet from each property line. The new building's features have been designed to be sensitive to the existing built environment and will provide a visual improvement to the surrounding community. Additionally, the site is not adjacent to, or in the vicinity of, any recognized and/or known cultural, scenic, or environmental resources.

C. CEQA Findings

Environmental. The Environmental Review Section of the Planning Department issued the proposed project Mitigated Negative Declaration ENV-2013-1389-MND on November 20, 2013. A modification of the MND is required to remove all language regarding liquefaction as the property does not exist in such an area. On the basis of the whole of the record before the lead agency including any comments received, the lead agency finds that, with imposition of the mitigation measures described in the MND, there is no substantial evidence that the proposed project will have a significant effect on the environment. The attached modified Mitigated Negative Declaration reflects the lead agency's independent judgment and analysis. The records upon which this decision is based are with the South Valley Environmental Review Section of the Planning Department in Room 430, 6262 Van Nuys Blvd., Van Nuys.

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL - CDO

Pursuant to Section 13.08.E 3 of the Municipal Code, Community Design Overlay Plan Approval, the following limitations are hereby imposed upon the subject development project, in compliance with the Reseda Central Business District Community Design Overlay Q-Conditions and Design Guidelines.

A. Development Conditions:

1. **Landscaping.** In accordance with Standards 8a, 8b, and 8c of the Reseda CDO, all open areas not used for buildings, driveways, or walks shall be attractively landscaped, including an automatic irrigation system, and maintained in accordance with a landscape plan prepared by a licensed landscape architect or licensed architect, and shall be and submitted to the Council Office of the District for Review and to the Department of City Planning for approval that contains the following elements:
 - a. In accordance with Standard 2a of the Reseda CDO, appropriate trees and shrubs shall be planted along the western building façade and eastern wall/fence to adequately screen the first floor parking.
 - b. In accordance with Standard 8d of the Reseda CDO, hardscape materials can be used to accent and enhance the overall landscape plan, but shall not be used in-lieu of plant materials.
 - c. In accordance with Standard 8e, 9a, and 9b of the Reseda CDO, a minimum fifteen-foot wide planted landscape front yard setback is required. The landscape area shall include a minimum of four shade trees, 24-inch box in size, planted approximately every twenty-five feet on center.
 - d. The rear yard setback shall include a minimum five foot wide landscape buffer set back from the property line that shall include a minimum of three (3) 36 inch box trees at a minimum of 20 feet in height at planting.
2. **Driveway Material.** Per [Q] Condition D.4 of the Reseda CDO, the interior and exterior driveways and ramps for parking structures shall be broom-finished concrete.
3. **Pedestrian Walkways.** In accordance with Standard 5a of the Reseda CDO, a minimum 5-foot wide pedestrian walkway shall be provided from the sidewalk to the main entrance of the building.
4. **Balconies.** There shall be no balconies along the rear elevation facing the school.
5. **Equipment Screening.** In accordance with Standard 8d of the Reseda CDO, trash storage bins and recycling areas shall be located inside the building at the garage floor, and shall be fully enclosed. Each individual trash bin shall have a cover.
6. **Building Materials.** In accordance with Guidelines 10 and Standards 10a, 10b, and 10c of the Reseda CDO, materials and features for this project shall be in substantial conformance with those depicted in the Building Elevations (Exhibit A). Bare aluminum finishes, unfinished metal panels, metal windows/doors and the like shall be anodized or painted.

7. **Building Colors.** In accordance with Standards 12a and 12b of the Reseda CDO, a maximum of four exterior colors shall be used. Colors for this project shall be in substantial conformance with the colors depicted in the color renderings in Exhibit A.
8. **Lighting Design.** In accordance with Standard 14a of the Reseda CDO, a complete exterior lighting plan shall be prepared by a licensed landscape architect or licensed architect, and submitted to the Department of City Planning for approval.
9. **Roof Lines and Forms.** In accordance with Standards 20a and 20b of the Reseda CDO, the building's roofline shall be articulated with vertical relief provided approximately every 15-feet.

Determination Letter
APCSV-2013-1388-ZC-CDO
Mailing Date: 5/16/14

Council District 3
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Mail Stop 204

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9. **Roof Lines and Forms.** In accordance with Standards 20a and 20b of the Reseda CDO, the building's roofline shall be articulated with vertical relief provided approximately every 15-feet.