

ADDITIONAL FINDINGS – SITE PLAN REVIEW (GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY)

The Determination Letter provides findings for consistency with the General Plan Framework Element, Palms – Mar Vista – Del Rey Community Plan (General Plan Land Use Element), Housing Element 2013-2021, and Citywide Design Guidelines (pages 16-19 of the Determination Letter).

In addition to the findings provided in the Determination Letter, additional findings for the Mobility Plan, Housing Element, Walkability Checklist, and City Planning Commission directives are provided below. Specifically, the project would provide a diverse set of uses that (1) facilitate vehicle trip reduction, reduce vehicle miles traveled, and reduce air pollution; (2) accommodate necessary residential growth and provide a mix of apartment sizes and affordability levels, including restricted very low income units; and (3) reinforce an existing community center by providing an array of retail choices, streetscape, and landscaping opportunities, and wide sidewalk that would be inviting to nearby residents and pedestrians along Venice Boulevard.

The findings in the Determination Letter are still applicable. The technical corrections for Floor Area Ratio are in substantial conformance with the original approval, and no substantial modifications have been proposed for the project. The Mitigated Negative Declaration (Case Number ENV-2016-2229-MND) analyzed the project based on an FAR of 3:1.

Palms – Mar Vista – Del Rey Community Plan

In addition to the findings provided in the Determination, the proposed project also conforms with the following additional policies of the Palms – Mar Vista – Del Rey Community Plan.

Objective 1-4: To promote the adequacy and affordability of multiple-family housing and increase its accessibility to more segments of the population.

Policy 1-4.1: Promote greater individual choice in type, quality, price and location of housing.

Objective 2-1: To conserve and strengthen viable commercial development in the community and to provide additional opportunities for new commercial development and services within existing commercial areas.

Policy 2-1.2: Protect commercially planned/zoned areas from encroachment by residential only development.

The project utilizes State Density Bonus Law for the provision of affordable housing units on a site currently only built out with commercial uses. This promotes a wider range of housing units and price points available in the neighborhood. In addition, the project proposes a combination of residential and commercial uses on the commercially-zoned lot, thereby preventing residential-only development along commercial corridors, and also providing a transition between the commercial corridor and adjacent residential uses.

Mobility Plan 2035

The proposed project also conforms with the following additional policies of the Mobility Plan, including:

3.1 – Access for All: Recognize all modes of travel, including pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and vehicular modes - including goods movement – as integral components of the City’s transportation system.

3.3 – Land Use Access and Mix: Promote equitable land use decisions that result in fewer vehicle trips by providing greater proximity and access to jobs, destinations, and other neighborhood services.

The project utilizes State Density Bonus Law for the construction of a mixed-use development that provides both housing opportunities and commercial spaces in close proximity to public transit along the Venice corridor. In addition, the project utilizes AB 744 (California Government Code Section 65915 (p)(2)) to decrease the number of required parking spaces by-right, encouraging multi-modal transportation and decreasing vehicle miles traveled in the neighborhood.

In addition, the site is located at the intersection of Venice and Wasatch, approximately 1,000 feet away from the intersection of Venice Boulevard and Centinela Boulevard. According to the Mobility Plan, this section of Venice Boulevard is identified as a “Comprehensive Transit Enhanced Street”, and this section of Centinela is identified as a “Moderate Transit Enhanced Street”. The Transit-Enhanced streets outlined in the Plan strive to:

“provide reliable and frequent transit service that is convenient and safe; increase transit mode share; reduce single-occupancy vehicle trips; and integrate transit infrastructure investments with the identity of the surrounding street”.

Therefore, these corridors are envisioned to receive:

“a number of enhancements to improve line performance and/or the overall user experience for people who walk and take transit. Enhancements may range from streetscape improvements to make walking safer and easier, to transit shelters, or bus lanes”.

The Mobility Plan also identifies Venice Boulevard as a key “Tier 1 Protected Bicycle Lane” street in its Bicycle Enhanced Network, which envisions “fully separated, protected bicycle lanes” along designated corridors.

The project is also within the future Coastal Transportation Corridor Specific Plan (“CTC”) and the future Livable Boulevards Streetscape Plan, both which implement the Mobility Plan. As planned, the CTC identifies a series of multi-modal enhancements to the Venice corridor, including streetscape improvements, cycle tracks, and rapid bus enhancements with increased service frequency and bus stop improvements. The CTC also identifies “Venice Rapid Bus Enhancements” along this portion of Venice Boulevard, which will increase frequency of service, and create a Venice Circulator Shuttle. The project is also consistent with the vision of the future Livable Boulevards Streetscape Plan, in providing pedestrian lights, outdoor seating, and stormwater collection along the project frontage on Venice Boulevard.

Housing Element 2013-2021

In addition to the findings provided in the Determination Letter, the proposed project also conforms with the following applicable policies of the Housing Element:

GOAL 2: A City in which housing helps to create safe, livable and sustainable neighborhoods.

Objective 2.2: Promote sustainable neighborhoods that have mixed-income housing, jobs, amenities, services and transit.

Policy 2.2.1: Provide incentives to encourage the integration of housing with other compatible land uses.

Policy 2.2.2: Provide incentives and flexibility to generate new multi-family housing near transit and centers, in accordance with the General Plan Framework element, as reflected in Map ES.1.

Objective 2.5: Promote a more equitable distribution of affordable housing opportunities throughout the City.

Program 98: In accordance with State law, provide a density bonus up to 35% over the otherwise allowable density as well as reduced parking requirements for all residential developments that include units affordable to very low-, low- and/or moderate-income households. Provide additional incentives and concessions to required development standards in order to provide the buildable area needed for the affordable units and increased density.

The proposed project will result in a net increase of 77 new residential units to the City's housing stock and conforms with the applicable provisions of the Housing Element. Pursuant to Density Bonus requirements, 11 percent of the base density, or 7 units, will be set aside for Very Low Income units. Additionally, this mixed-use development is sited in a Transit Priority Area and is in close proximity to multi-modal transportation options including major transit stops, and is within the Venice Boulevard portion included in the Great Streets Initiative Program. The project utilizes State Density Bonus Law to increase the allowable FAR from 1.5:1 to 3:1 and also reduce the parking requirements, thereby allowing the creation of affordable units around transit stops. Locating new housing in this portion of Venice Boulevard will allow residents to have better access to employment centers and places of interest in the downtown Mar Vista and Palms-Mar Vista-Del Rey Community Plan area.

The Housing Element states that the Framework Element "directs anticipated growth to high density, mixed use centers and to the neighborhoods around its 80 rail stations", and also that the Community Plan Update process will "coincide with the Framework Element's emphasis on designated centers, such as... along the City's current and proposed light-rail and bus rapid transit lines, where the City has made significant public infrastructure investments". Therefore, the proposed project is consistent with both the Framework Element and Housing Element's vision to target growth near public transit corridors.

In addition, this subject block of Venice Boulevard has been identified on the Housing Element's Inventory and Maps of Parcels Available for Housing by Community Plan Area. The Inventory of Sites for Housing identifies parcels suitable for additional residential development without the need for any discretionary zoning action by the City. Therefore, the project is consistent with the Housing Element's vision of providing housing on these applicable sites.

Walkability Checklist

The project would be consistent with the City's Walkability Checklist in that it would redevelop and enhance a key site along the Venice corridor, which is envisioned as a Great Street, Transit-Enhanced corridor, and Bicycle-Enhanced corridor, and is central to the downtown Mar Vista neighborhood. The project will replace the existing two-story, 16,420 square-foot L-shaped commercial shopping center that is primarily vehicular-oriented. The existing shopping center locates the buildings towards the rear corner of the site, with its surface parking lot towards the street frontage at the corner of Venice and Wasatch, and poses conflicts to pedestrian activity and walkability.

As shown in the project plans, the proposed project would include a combination of streetscape and building design features to enhance the visual quality of the area and the walkability of the project site along Venice Boulevard. Furthermore, as conditioned in the Determination Letter, the project shall incorporate streetscape improvements in accordance with the Great Streets Initiative of Venice Boulevard (Condition No. 14 in the Determination Letter). Specifically, the project will provide pedestrian-oriented retail, streetscape seating, off-street parking, bicycle parking and drought-resistant landscaping to enhance this area of Venice Boulevard; create a strong street wall with pedestrian-oriented retail and a residential lobby along Venice Boulevard; and create a distinct "base" for pedestrian scale through high-end finishes and landscaped areas to separate the ground floor retail from the residences above. As stated in the Determination, all design elements, including off-street parking facilities, loading areas, lighting, landscaping, trash collection, and other such pertinent improvements have been designed to be compatible with existing and future development on adjacent properties and neighboring properties, and better assist the walkability of the site.

SCAG 2016 RTP/SCS

The project is consistent with the policies and projections of the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). For instance, the site is within a "High Quality Transit Area" as defined by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). The project is within SCAG's 2020 population projections for the City in their 2016 Regional Transportation Plan¹. The types and amounts of development would be within the range anticipated in applicable policies and growth projections, including in the General Plan Framework, Palms-Mar Vista-Del Rey Community Plan, General Plan Housing Element, and regional/SCAG policies.

City Planning Commission Directives

The project would be consistent with the City Planning Commission directives including Do Real Planning, the Advisory Notice Relative to Above-Grade Parking, and policies regarding electric vehicle parking, solar panels, nighttime lighting, and place-making strategies.

The project would be consistent with applicable sections of the Planning Commission's Do Real Planning Document. As identified in the Determination Letter, the project would be consistent with objectives related to walkability, density around transit, housing opportunities for every income, green buildings, landscaping, and smarter parking requirements.

The project will comply with the City Planning Commission Advisory Notice Relative to Above-Grade Parking. The project will replace the existing surface parking lot with a mixed-use development that minimizes the appearance of parking. New parking will be provided

¹ Southern California Association of Governments, 2016-2040 Regional Transportation Program, <http://scagrtpscscs.net/Pages/default.aspx>

underground or at-grade and screened with a trellis wall, thereby promoting pedestrian-oriented design.

The project will configure twenty percent of the required parking as electric vehicle charging stations, and provide a photovoltaic space set-aside on the roof for future installation of solar-ready roofs. All exterior lighting shall be low-intensity and shielded to prevent glare or light spillover to pedestrians and adjacent properties. In addition, the project will incorporate place-making strategies that will contribute to the Great Streets Initiative of Venice Boulevard, including pedestrian-oriented retail, streetscape seating, off-street parking, bicycle parking and drought-resistant landscaping, trellis walls, and public art features.

ADDITIONAL FINDINGS – SITE PLAN REVIEW (COMPATIBILITY WITH EXISTING AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENT)

As provided in the Determination Letter, in accordance with LAMC Section 16.05, the following finding shall be made for Site Plan Review:

The project consists of an arrangement of buildings and structures (including height, bulk and setbacks), off-street parking facilities, loading areas, lighting, landscaping, trash collection, and other such pertinent improvements that is or will be compatible with existing and future development on adjacent properties and neighboring properties

As provided in the project plans (Exhibit A of the Determination Letter), the proposed building height is 83 feet tall, with residential floor heights of 11 feet and a mezzanine height of 10 feet. As stated in the Determination Letter, the subject property is zoned C2 and is located within Height District 1, which allows unlimited height by right. In addition, the site is within a Transit Priority Area, as defined by PRC Section 21099 (d)(1) and Zoning Information (“ZI”) File 2452, as shown in Exhibit G; therefore, the project’s aesthetic impacts (including height) shall not be considered a significant impact on the environment for CEQA purposes.

In addition, as provided in Exhibit F, the building code requires a minimum ceiling height of 7 feet 6 inches for residential uses with habitable spaces, and a minimum ceiling height of 7 feet for bathrooms, kitchens, storage rooms, and laundry rooms, etc.

The project area along the Venice Corridor near the Centinela Avenue intersection is comprised of a mix of low-rise and mid-rise residential buildings and commercial buildings, ranging from one-to five-stories in height. Condition 38 is imposed to ensure that the project bulk and height will be compatible with the existing and future development on neighboring properties per Site Plan Review findings. The reduction of residential floor heights (including the mezzanine level) by 1 foot each will have a net effect of lowering the overall building height by 6 feet total, thus bringing the overall building height to a maximum of 77 feet, without reducing the total number of units proposed by the applicant.

ADDITIONAL FINDINGS – ENVIRONMENTAL (MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION)

The Determination provides findings for the Mitigated Negative Declaration (ENV-2016-2229-MND). Additional findings pertaining to environmental review are provided below:

- **Transportation/Traffic and Greenhouse Gas Emissions.** This project is consistent with the Mobility Plan’s designation of Venice Boulevard as both a “Comprehensive Transit Enhanced Street” and a “Tier 1 Protected Bicycle Lane”, as it provides a combination of residential uses, commercial uses, and streetscape enhancements within close proximity

to major corridors and transit stops to encourage multi-modal transportation. The project site is within proximity of "Transit Stops" as defined by LAMC Section 12.22 A.25, "Major Transit Stops" as defined by California Public Resources Code ("PRC") Section 21064.3, and is within a "High Quality Transit Area" as defined by SCAG. In addition, the subject property is within the Venice Boulevard Great Street Initiative Program area, the Los Angeles Coastal Transportation Corridor ("CTC") Specific Plan, and the Livable Boulevards Streetscape Plan.

- **Population and Housing.** The residential uses and density are allowed by-right. Therefore, the increase in residential population resulting from the proposed project would not be considered substantial in consideration of anticipated growth for the Palms-Mar Vista-Del Rey Community Plan, and is within SCAG's population projections as stated above. The types and amounts of development would be within the range anticipated in applicable policies and growth projections, including in the General Plan Framework, Palms-Mar Vista-Del Rey Community Plan, General Plan Housing Element, and regional/SCAG policies.

Pursuant to PRC Section 21082.2 (b), the Department has determined that "the existence of public controversy over the environmental effects of a project shall not require the preparation of an environmental impact report if there is no substantial evidence in light of the whole record before the lead agency that the project may have a significant effect on the environment". Substantial evidence is defined as evidence that is of "ponderable legal significance" and is "reasonable in nature, credible, and of solid value" (Stanislaus Audubon Society, Inc., supra, 33 Ca1.App.4th at 152). It includes "fact, a reasonable assumption predicated upon fact, or expert opinion supported by fact"; it does not include "argument, speculation, unsubstantiated opinion or narrative, evidence that is clearly inaccurate or erroneous, or evidence of social or economic impacts that do not contribute to, or are not caused by, physical impacts on the environment." (PRC, 21082.2 (c) and Sections 15064(f)(5)-(6), 15384 of the State CEQA Guidelines).