

**PLANNING DEPARTMENT TRANSMITTAL
TO THE CITY CLERK'S OFFICE
SUPPLEMENTAL
*CF 18-0118***

CITY PLANNING CASE:	ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT:	COUNCIL DISTRICT:
DIR-2017-2481-SPP-1A	ENV-2017-2482-CE	13 – O'Farrell
PROJECT ADDRESS:		
1118 North Heliotrope Drive		
PLANNER CONTACT INFORMATION:	TELEPHONE NUMBER:	EMAIL ADDRESS:
Ricky Reiser, Planning Assistant	(213) 978-1326	richard.reaser@lacity.org

NOTES / INSTRUCTION(S):	
Transmitting Corrected Letter of Determination	
TRANSMITTED BY:	TRANSMITTAL DATE:
Rocky Wiles	March 29, 2018



CENTRAL LOS ANGELES AREA PLANNING COMMISSION

200 North Spring Street, Room 532, Los Angeles, California, 90012-4801, (213) 978-1300

www.planning.lacity.org

**CORRECTED LETTER OF DETERMINATION

MAILING DATE: MAR 29 2018

Case No.: DIR-2017-2481-SPP-1A

Council District: 13 – O'Farrell

CEQA: ENV-2017-2482-CE

Plan Area: Hollywood

Project Site: 1118 North Heliotrope Drive

Applicant: David Vivanco, Lo Joma Corporation
Representative: Lucio Rivera, R.D.C.S., Incorporated

Appellant: Doug Haines

At its meeting of **January 9, 2018**, the Central Los Angeles Area Planning Commission took the actions below in conjunction with the approval of the following project:

The demolition of an existing one-story, single-family dwelling and the construction of two (2) three-story duplexes within Subarea A (Neighborhood Conservation) of the Vermont/Western Station Neighborhood Area Plan (SNAP).

1. **Determined** based on the whole of the administrative record, the Project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, Section 1, Class 3, Category 2 and there is no substantial evidence demonstrating that an exception to a categorical exemption pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, Section 15300.2 applies;
2. ****Granted** the appeal in part, and **sustained** in part the Planning Director's determination to approve a Project Permit Compliance Review pursuant to Section 11.5.7 C of the Los Angeles Municipal Code, Section 5.B of the Vermont/Western Station Neighborhood Area Plan (SNAP), Ordinance No. 184,888 for the Project,
3. **Adopted** the attached Findings.

This action was taken by the following vote:

Moved: Mendez
Seconded: DelGado
Ayes: Barraza
Absent: Chung Kim

Vote: 3 - 0

Jason Wong, Commission Executive Assistant
Central Los Angeles Area Planning Commission

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

Effective Date: The decision of the Central Los Angeles Area Planning Commission is final upon the mailing date of this determination letter, and it is not further appealable.

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: Findings

c: Jane Choi, Senior City Planner
Ricky Reaser, Planning Assistant

FINDINGS

The subject property consists of one rectangular parcel located on the easterly side of Heliotrope Drive between Lexington Avenue and Santa Monica Boulevard. The project site has 50 feet of frontage along Heliotrope Drive and a uniform depth of approximately 135 feet for a total lot size of 6,750 square feet. The property is zoned RD1.5-1XL and is located within Subarea A (Neighborhood Conservation) of the Vermont/Western Station Neighborhood Area Plan (SNAP).

The surrounding area is characterized by level topography, improved streets and residential development. Properties to the north, east and west are zoned RD1.5-1XL, and the property to the south is zoned R4-1D. Adjacent properties are also located within Subarea A (Neighborhood Conservation) and developed with single-family dwellings.

The project site is currently vacant. The Applicant requests a Project Permit Compliance to permit an after-the-fact demolition of an existing one-story, single-family dwelling and the construction, use and maintenance of two (2), three-story duplexes. The first duplex (Building 1) is located at the front half of the property facing Heliotrope Drive; the second duplex (Building 2) is located at the rear half of the property. Both buildings have an approximate height of 30 feet and contain one four-bedroom and one two-bedroom unit each. The project provides a total of 681 square feet of open space level via a rear yard and private decks and six (6) parking spaces and one (1) guest parking space within a carport located between the two units of Building 2.

1. **The project substantially complies with the applicable regulations, findings, standards, and provisions of the specific plan.**
 - a. **Parks First.** Section 6.F of the Vermont/Western Specific Plan requires the Applicant to pay a Parks First Trust Fund of \$4,300 for each new residential unit, prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy. The project includes an after-the-fact demolition of an existing single-family dwelling and the construction, use and maintenance of two (2), resulting in a net increase of three (3) residential units, thus requiring a payment of \$12,900 to the Parks First Trust Fund. As conditioned, the project complies with Section 6.F of the Specific Plan.
 - b. **Residentially Zoned Properties.** Section 7.A of the Vermont/Western Specific Plan states that residential uses allowed by the existing residential zoning classification of any lot located within Subarea A shall be permitted, provided that no more than two lots have a total combined lot area of 15,000 square feet may be tied together to form a single building site. Furthermore, parking shall be prohibited in the required front yard areas. The proposed residential development is located within the RD1.5-1XL Zone, which permits one dwelling unit for every 1,500 square feet of lot area. The subject site is approximately 6,750 square feet in size, which allows a maximum density of four (4) dwelling units. The project proposes two (2) dwelling units in Building 1 and two (2) units in Building 2, for a total of four (4) units, which does not exceed the density allowed per the underlying zone. In addition, all parking is located within private garages with a guest parking space located within a carport located between the two units of Building 2. Therefore, the project complies with Section 7.A of the Specific Plan.
 - c. **Commercially Zoned Properties.** Section 7.B of the Vermont/Western Specific Plan states that commercial uses on commercially zoned properties are limited to those uses defined as "Neighborhood Retail" and "Neighborhood Serving" in LAMC Section

13.07 and limited to the ground floor only. The Project Site is not commercially zoned nor does the project propose commercial uses. Therefore, Section 7.B of the Specific Plan does not apply.

- d.* **Schools, Child Care and Community Facilities.** Section 7.C of the Vermont/Western Specific Plan states that public or private schools, child care facilities, parks, community gardens, community facilities, shall be permitted on any lot or lots provided that the building site for those uses has no more than two acres of combined lot area. The project does not include any school, child care or community facilities uses. Therefore, Section 7.C of the Specific Plan does not apply.
- e.* **Transitional Height.** Section 7.D of the Vermont/Western Specific Plan states that the maximum height of any new building within Subarea A shall not exceed a height that is within 15 feet of the height of the shortest adjacent building on any adjacent lot. However, in no circumstance can the project exceed the height limit of the underlying zone, or 30 feet for the RD1.5-1XL Zone. The site plan shows that the two adjacent properties have building heights of approximately 16 feet. As such, the maximum permissible transitional height for the project is 31 feet. The project proposes maximum height of approximately 30 feet for each building to comply with the height of the underlying zone. Therefore, the project complies with Section 7.D of the Specific Plan.
- f.* **Building Setback.** Section 7.E of the Vermont/Western Specific Plan states that all buildings shall face a public street. The proposed development consists of two duplexes, Building 1 and Building 2. Building 1 fronts along Heliotrope Drive and has a main pedestrian entrance located along the street frontage. Section 7.E. of the Vermont/Western Specific Plan also states that the exterior wall of the building frontage shall be located no closer to the street and no farther from the street than the exterior walls of the adjacent buildings. The adjacent structures to the north and south are both located 29 feet from the front property line. The proposed development will also be located 29 feet away from the front property line. Therefore, the project complies with Section 7.E of the Specific Plan.
- g.* **Usable Open Space.** Section 7.F of the Vermont/Western Specific Plan states that residential projects with two or more dwelling units must provide specified amounts of common and private open space pursuant to the standards set forth in LAMC 12.21 G.2. The Specific Plan further stipulates that 50 percent of the total open space must be provided at ground level or first habitable room level of the project. The proposed duplexes both contain a (2) two-bedroom unit and a (4) four-bedroom unit. All units contain a great room which counts as a habitable room. A residential unit with three habitable rooms requires 125 square feet of open space and a residential unit with four or more habitable rooms requires 175 square feet of open space, requiring a total of 600 square feet of open space for the entire Project Site, where a minimum of 400 square feet must be provided as common space. The Applicant proposes 520 square feet of common open space at the ground level in the rear yard and 161 square feet of private open space via private decks for the duplex units, for a total of 681 square feet of usable open space. Therefore, the project complies with Section 7.F of the Specific Plan.
- h.* **Project Parking Requirements.** Section 7.G.1 of the Vermont/Western Specific Plan sets forth a minimum and maximum parking standard for residential projects. The Specific Plan requires a minimum of one and one-half (1.5) spaces and a maximum of two (2) spaces per dwelling unit with three or more habitable rooms, as defined by the Department of Building and Safety for parking purposes, and one-quarter (0.25) space per dwelling unit for guest parking. Each dwelling has three or more habitable rooms.

This equates to a minimum parking requirement of six (6) residential parking spaces and one (1) guest space, for a total of seven (7) parking spaces; or a maximum eight (8) residential parking spaces and one (1) guest space, for a total of nine (9) parking spaces. The project proposes six (6) residential parking spaces and one (1) guest space, for a total of seven (7) parking spaces, therefore, satisfying the minimum parking requirements.

In addition, Section 7.G of the Vermont/Western Specific Plan requires any residential project with two or more dwelling units to provide one-half (0.5) bicycle parking space per residential unit. The proposed development consists of four residential units, thus, requiring two (2) bicycle parking spaces. The project proposes two (2) bicycle spaces which are located in the carport designated for the guest parking space. Therefore, the project complies with Section 7.G of the Specific Plan.

- i.* **Conversion Requirements.** Section 7.H of the Vermont/Western Specific Plan sets forth requirements pertaining to the conversion of existing structures to residential condominium uses. The project includes an after-the-fact demolition of an existing one-story, single-family dwelling and the construction, use and maintenance of two (2), three-story duplexes. The project does not include the conversion of existing structures to residential condominium uses. Therefore, Section 7.H of the Specific Plan does not apply.
- j.* **Development Standards.** Section 7.I of the Vermont/Western Specific Plan requires that all Projects be in substantial conformance with the following Development Standards and Design Guidelines.

Development Standards

- k.* **Landscaped Focal Point.** This Development Standard requires all new development projects to be designed around a landscaped focal point or courtyard. The Applicant has submitted a Landscape Plan showing landscaped areas within the front, rear, and portions of the side yards for the project site. The front yard will be landscaped with Dymondia for groundcover and Western Redbud as the drought tolerant tree of choice. In between the two Western Redbuds is a walkway to the front entrance of Building 1. Therefore, the project complies with this Development Standard.
- l.* **Landscape Plan.** This Development Standard requires that all open areas not used for buildings, driveways, parking, recreational facilities, or pedestrian amenities shall be landscaped by lawns and other ground coverings. The Applicant has submitted a Landscape Plan which includes landscaped front yard as described above. In addition the rear yard will consist shrubbery such as Pink Diosma, Day Lily, and the Trailing Lantana. Dymondia will be used for the groundcover in the rear yard. Therefore, the Project complies with this Development Standard.
- m.* **Usable Open Space.** This Development Standard requires that common usable open space must have a dimension of 20 feet and a minimum common open space area of 400 square feet for projects with less than 10 dwelling units. The Development Standard further stipulates that private usable open space, such as balconies with a minimum dimension of six feet and patios with a minimum dimension of 10 feet may reduce the required usable open space directly commensurate with the amount of private open space provided. The Applicant proposes a private yard area that measures 26 feet by 20 feet for an area of 520 square feet, located in the rear yard. The Applicant also proposes three private balconies with the minimum width and depth

dimensions of six (6) feet for a total of 161 square feet of private open space. Therefore, the project complies with this Development Standard.

- n.* **Street Trees.** This Development Standard requires one (1), 24-inch box shade tree to be planted and maintained in the public right-of-way for every 20 feet of street frontage. The subject site occupies 50 feet of street frontage along Heliotrope Drive, requiring two (2) street trees in the public right-of-way. The Development Standard further requires that an automatic irrigation system be provided within the tree well. The project site proposes two (2) Western Redbud street trees in the public right-of-way along with the appropriate irrigation. Therefore, as proposed and conditioned, the project complies with this Development Standard.
- o.* **Utilities.** This Development Standard requires all new utility lines which directly service the lot or lots to be installed underground. No new utilities have been proposed as part of the project work scope. In the event that utilities be installed in the future, a Condition of Approval has been included requiring all proposed utilities on the Project site to be placed underground. If underground service is not currently available, provisions shall be made for future underground service. Therefore, as conditioned, the project complies with this Development Standard.
- p.* **Pedestrian Access.** This Development Standard requires that pedestrian access shall be in the form of walks provided from the public street to the main building entrance and that they provide a view into any existing interior courtyard or landscaped open area. The proposed development offers pedestrian access from Heliotrope Drive, with a path to both duplexes. The front yard and pathway are landscaped with softscape and permeable ground covers. Therefore, the project complies with this Development Standard.
- q.* **Alley Access.** This Development Standard requires vehicle and pedestrian access from existing alleys or side streets to be preserved and enhanced. The subject site is not accessible via an alley. Therefore, this Development Standard does not apply.
- r.* **Curb Cuts.** This Development Standard allows no more than one curb cut per lot for 100 feet of lot frontage and further requires curb cuts to be a maximum of 20 feet in width unless more is required by the Department of Transportation (DOT) or the Department of Building and Safety (DBS). There is an existing curb cut of approximately nine feet (9'-0") in width that will be widened to 12 feet (12'-0") along the southerly side of the property that provides vehicular access to the parking spaces from Heliotrope Drive. Therefore, the project complies with this Development Standard.
- s.* **Driveways.** This Development Standard requires that the first 25 feet in length of driveways to be constructed of Portland cement concrete, pervious cement, grass-crete, or any other porous surface that reduces heat radiation and/or increases surface absorption, thereby reducing runoff. The proposed development is accessible from Heliotrope Drive via an approximate 12-foot driveway that is designed using permeable pavers. Therefore, the project complies with this Development Standard.
- t.* **Parking Lots and Structures.** This Development Standard requires surface parking lots, structures, garages and carports to be located at the rear of buildings. Furthermore, surface parking lots shall be paved with Portland cement concrete, pervious cement, grass-crete, or any other porous surface that will reduce the heat radiation and/or increase the surface absorption. The project includes seven (7)

covered parking spaces. The paving leading to these parking spaces is designed with permeable pavers. Therefore, the project complies with this Development Standard.

- u.* **Trash, Service Equipment and Satellite Dishes.** This Development Standard requires that trash, service equipment and satellite dishes to be located away from streets and enclosed or screened by landscaping, fencing or other architectural means. Additionally, the trash area shall be enclosed by a minimum six-foot high decorative masonry wall. The Applicant proposes a trash area and recycling area located in the rear of the lot. The plans submitted as part of this application do not indicate the location of service equipment and satellite dishes. In the event that any service equipment or satellite dishes are installed in the future, a Condition of Approval has been included requiring that they be located away from Heliotrope Drive. Therefore, as conditioned, the project complies with this Development Standard.
- v.* **Roofs and Rooftop Appurtenances.** This Development Standard requires that all rooftop equipment be screened from public view or architecturally integrated into the design of the building. In the event that additional rooftop mechanical equipment is proposed in the future, a Condition of Approval has been included requiring said equipment and ducts be screened from view from any street, public right-of-way or adjacent property and the screening wall be solid and match the exterior materials, design and color of the building. Therefore, as proposed and conditioned, the project complies with this Development Standard.
- w.* **Roof Lines.** This Development Standard requires that all roof lines in excess of 40 feet in horizontal length must be broken up through the use of gables, dormers, plant-ons, cutouts or other appropriate means. Both duplexes have a north and south elevations of 37 feet in horizontal length. Building 1's east and west elevations are 32 feet in horizontal length. Building 2's east and west elevations are 38 feet in horizontal length. The roof lines for both projects do not exceed 40 feet in horizontal length. Therefore, this Development Standard does not apply.
- x.* **Privacy.** This Development Standard requires that buildings be arranged to avoid windows facing windows across property lines, or the private open space of other residential units. The project abuts residential uses to the north, south and west. The Applicant has provided elevations that superimpose the window locations of the existing adjacent structures onto the elevations of the proposed project. The elevations show that, while there are a few windows on each elevation which partially overlap with the windows of the adjacent structures, there are none which directly face those of the adjacent structures, and are generally staggered and/or off-set. Given the constraints as an infill development located in an urbanized area, the applicant has demonstrated efforts to arrange windows to avoid directly facing windows across property lines, or private open space of other residential units. Therefore, the project complies with this Development Standard.
- y.* **Façade Relief.** This Development Standard requires that all exterior building elevations, walls or fences provide a break in the plane for every 20 feet in horizontal length, and every 15 feet in vertical length created by an architectural detail or a change in material. The Specific Plan further requires architectural treatments on the building front elevation to be continued on the sides and back of buildings. All facades of the proposed building comply with the requirement by providing various breaks in the plane through the use of varied building materials, modulation of the first floor, and balconies. The project includes a redwood stained perimeter fence, along the side and rear yards, that provides vertical breaks every 20 feet through six-foot light gray posts.

This wooden fence is not proposed in the front yard area. Therefore, the project complies with this Development Standard.

Design Guidelines

- z. **General Building Design.** This Design Guideline recommends that buildings should be compatible in form with the existing neighborhood atmosphere. The surrounding area is currently developed single and multi-family residential developments varying from one to two-stories in height. Three parcels to the south are commercial buildings along Santa Monica Boulevard which are approximately 30 feet in height. The two proposed, three-story duplexes are consistent with the height and massing of adjacent structures and are compatible with the surrounding area. Therefore, the project satisfies this Design Guideline.
 - aa. **Architectural Features.** This Design Guideline recommends that courtyards, roof gardens, porches, balconies, arbors and trellises be used to add interest to the buildings. The project includes open landscaped areas in the front and rear yards with various landscaping elements, including trees, shrubs, and groundcover. The project proposes façade materials such as colored stucco and lap siding. In addition, the balconies utilize exposed metal and railings in their design. Therefore, the project satisfies this Design Guideline.
 - bb. **Shade.** This Design Guideline recommends that canopies, building overhangs and arbors be incorporated into the design of new structures to provide shade. Both duplexes include projecting overhangs, thus providing shade. Building 1 has a front porch cover over the front entrance. The proposed Western Redbud trees will have a mature height and width of 25 feet. Therefore, the project satisfies this Design Guideline.
 - cc. **Building Color.** This Design Guideline encourages buildings be painted three colors: a dominant color, a subordinate color and a “grace note” color. The project proposes a mystic pine colored smooth stucco as its dominant color, an oatmeal colored exterior as its subordinate color, and timber colored lap sidings as its grace note façade color. Therefore, the project satisfies this Design Guideline.
2. **The project incorporates mitigation measures, monitoring measures when necessary, or alternatives identified in the environmental review, which would mitigate the negative environmental effects of the project, to the extent physically feasible.**

On October 12th, 2017, the Planning Department determined that the City of Los Angeles Guidelines for the implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 and the State CEQA Guidelines designate the subject project as Categorical Exempt under Article III, Section 1, Class 3, Category 2 (multi-family residential structure with no more than four units) Case No. ENV-2017-2481-CE.

There are six (6) Exceptions which the City is required to consider before finding a project exempt under Class 15303 and 15332: (a) Location; (b) Cumulative Impacts; (c) Significant Effect; (d) Scenic Highways; (e) Hazardous Waste Sites; and (f) Historical Resources.

While the subject site is located within an Active Fault Near-Source Zone, specific Regulatory Compliance Measures (RCMs) in the City of Los Angeles regulate the grading and construction of projects in these particular types of “sensitive” locations and will reduce

any potential impacts to less than significant. Regulatory Compliance Measures (RCMs) include conforming to seismic standards and complying with the Southern California Air Quality Management District provisions. These RCMs have been historically proven to work to the satisfaction of the City Engineer to reduce any impacts from the specific environment the project is located. Furthermore, the project does not exceed the threshold criteria established by LADOT for preparing a traffic study. Therefore, the project will not have any significant impacts to traffic. Thus, the location of the project will not result in a significant impact based on its location.

There is not a succession of known projects of the same type and in the same place as the subject project. As mentioned, the project includes an after-the-fact demolition of an existing one-story, 1,969 square foot, single-family dwelling and the construction two (2), three-story duplexes in an area zoned and designated for such development. All nearby lots are developed with one and two story single family homes, and the subject site is of a similar size to nearby properties. The project proposes a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 0.84 on a site that is permitted to have a maximum FAR of 3.0. The project size is not unusual for the vicinity of the subject site, and is similar in scope to other existing Low Medium II Residential uses in the area. Thus, there are no unusual circumstances which may lead to a significant effect on the environment. According to Appendix B of the City of Los Angeles Mobility Plan, the subject site is not designated as a scenic highway, nor are there any designated scenic highways located near the project site. According to Envirostor, the State of California's database of Hazardous Waste Sites, neither the subject site, nor any site in the vicinity, is identified as a hazardous waste site. Furthermore, the project site has not been identified as a historic resource by local or state agencies, and the project site has not been determined to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, California Register of Historical Resources, the Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monuments Register, and/or any local register, nor has the site been found to be a potential historic resource based on the City's HistoricPlacesLA website or SurveyLA, the citywide survey of Los Angeles. Finally, the City does not choose to treat the site as a historic resource.