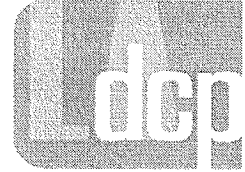


ITEM 5



DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING
RECOMMENDATION REPORT



City Planning Commission

Date: May 22, 2014
Time: After 8:30 am
Place: Van Nuys City Hall Council Chamber
2nd Floor
14410 Sylvan Street
Van Nuys, CA 91401

Case No.: CPC-2013-551-ZC-CUB-
CU-ZAA-SPR
CEQA No.: ENV-2013-552-MND
Council No.: 10 – Wesson
Plan Area: Wilshire
Certified NC: Wilshire Center –
Koreatown

GPLU: Regional Center
Commercial
Zone: P2, CR-2

Public Hearing: February 14, 2014
Appeal Status: Zone Change is appealable by the
Applicant to the City Council,
Zoning Administrator Adjustment,
Site Plan Review, are appealable to
City Council.

Applicant: Maxsum Development, LLC
Milan L. Garrison
Nest on Catalina, LLC
Representative: Maxsum Development, LLC
Milan L. Garrison

Expiration Date: July 16, 2014

PROJECT LOCATION: 621-631 S. Catalina Street. Legally described as Lots 6, 7 and 8 of Elsinore Tract

PROPOSED PROJECT: The proposed project is a new 75 feet in height (six-story) apartment hotel with 82 units, including 75 hotel guest rooms and 7 apartment units. The development includes 1,564 square feet of retail/restaurant space on the ground floor, a 1,285-square foot fitness center on the second floor, and 84 on-site parking spaces in two levels, one at-grade and one subterranean. The site consists of three contiguous lots situated on the west side of Catalina Street between 6th Street to the north and Wilshire Boulevard to the south, all of which are currently improved as a 97-space paved surface parking lot. The site is approximately 24,350 square feet and the total project size is 102,099 square feet. The site is zoned P-2 and CR-2 with a General Plan Land Use designation of Regional Center Commercial.

- REQUESTED ACTIONS:**
1. Pursuant to Section 21082.1(c)(3) of the California Public Resources Code, **Adopt** the Mitigated Negative Declaration (ENV-2013-552-MND-REC1) as adequate environmental clearance;
 2. Pursuant to Section 12.32 F of the Los Angeles Municipal Code, a **Zone Change** (ZC) from P-2 (lot 8) and CR-2 (lots 6 and 7) to C2-2 for lots 6, 7 and 8;
 3. Pursuant to Section 12.24 W.1 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code, a **Conditional Use** (CUB) for the on-site sale of alcoholic beverages as an incidental business in or accessory to the operation of hotels or apartment hotels, in conjunction with the proposed apartment hotel restaurant and within each guest room mini-bar;

4. Pursuant to Section 12.24 W.24.(a) of the Los Angeles Municipal Code, a **Conditional Use (CU)** for a hotel use to be located within 500 feet of a residentially zoned area;
5. Pursuant to Section 12.28 of the Municipal Code, a **Zoning Administrator's Adjustment (ZAA)** from the following: Section 12.21 C.6. (b), to permit a loading space height of 11 feet and 6 inches in lieu of the required minimum height of 14 feet;
6. Pursuant to Section 12.28 of the Municipal Code, a **Zoning Administrator's Adjustment (ZAA)** from the following: Section 12.14 C and 12.11. C. 2. to permit a 1'0" side yard setback (north side) and a 6'8" side yard setback (south side) in lieu of the required 9 feet;
7. Pursuant to Section 12.28 of the Municipal Code, a **Zoning Administrator's Adjustment (ZAA)** from the following: Section 12.14 C and 12.11. C. 3. to permit a 1'0" rear yard setback in lieu of the required 18 feet; and
8. Pursuant to LAMC Section 16.05.C.1(b), **Site Plan Review (SPR)** for a development with 50 or more dwelling units or guest rooms, or combination thereof.

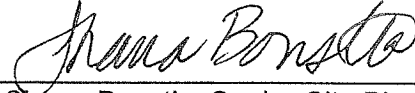
RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:

1. **Adopt** the Mitigated Negative Declaration (ENV-2013-552-MND-REC1) as adequate environmental clearance;
2. **Recommend** that the City Council **Approve a Zone Change (ZC)** from P-2 (lot 8) and CR-2 (lots 6 and 7) to C2-2 for lots 6, 7 and 8;
3. **Approve a Conditional Use (CUB)** for the on-site sale of alcoholic beverages as an incidental business in or accessory to the operation of hotels or apartment hotels, in conjunction with the proposed apartment hotel restaurant and within each guest room mini-bar, as conditioned;
4. **Dismiss as Not Necessary, a Conditional Use (CU)** for a hotel use to be located within 500 feet of a residentially zoned area;
5. **Approve a Zoning Administrator's Adjustment (ZAA)** from the following: Section 12.21 C.6. (b), to permit a loading space height of 11 feet and 6 inches in lieu of the required minimum height of 14 feet;
6. Pursuant to Section 12.28 of the Municipal Code, a **Zoning Administrator's Adjustment (ZAA)** from the following: Section 12.14 C and 12.11. C. 2. to permit a 1'0" side yard setback (north side) and a 6'8" side yard setback (south side) in lieu of the required 9 feet;
7. Pursuant to Section 12.28 of the Municipal Code, a **Zoning Administrator's Adjustment (ZAA)** from the following: Section 12.14 C and 12.11. C. 3. to permit a 1'0" rear yard setback in lieu of the required 18 feet;
8. **Approve a Site Plan Review (SPR)** for a development with 50 or more dwelling units or guest rooms, or combination thereof; and
9. **Adopt** the attached Findings.

MICHAEL J. LOGRANDE
Director of Planning



Daniel Scott, Principal City Planner



Shana Bonstin, Senior City Planner



Debbie Lawrence, AICP, Hearing Officer
213-978-1163

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PROJECT ANALYSIS

Project Summary

This report contains discussions, recommendations, conditions and findings for the construction of a new apartment hotel on Catalina Street in the Koreatown neighborhood of the Wilshire Community Plan Area. The Wilshire Community Plan Area is often referred to as the Mid-City Section of Los Angeles - the eastern edge of the approximately 2.5-mile wide by 6-mile long plan area is about 6 miles west of downtown Los Angeles, while the western edge abuts the City of Beverly Hills. The area includes about 8,954 acres, which is approximately 3 percent of the total land in the City of Los Angeles.

The requested entitlements would facilitate the development of a new six-story 82-room apartment hotel, including 75 guest rooms and 7 apartment units. The Project will be 75 feet in height and built to an FAR of 4.2:1. The development is proposed for 1,564 square feet of restaurant space on the ground floor, a 1,285-square foot fitness center on the second floor, a 3,375 square-foot garden on the second level, and 84 on-site parking spaces in one at-grade and one subterranean level. The site consists of three contiguous lots situated on the west side of Catalina Street between 6th Street to the north and Wilshire Boulevard to the south, all of which are currently improved as a 97-space paved surface parking lot. The site is approximately 24,350 square feet.

The site is zoned P-2 and CR-2 with a General Plan land use classification of Regional Center Commercial. The applicant has requested a Zone Change to C2-2, which is consistent with the Regional Center Commercial land use designation. Additionally, the applicant has requested Zoning Administrator's Adjustments (ZAA) to: 1) allow for a loading space height of 11 feet and 6 inches in lieu of the required minimum height of 14 feet; 2) permit a 1'0" side yard setback (north side) and a 6'8" side yard setback (south side) in lieu of the required 9 feet; and 3) permit a 1'0" rear yard setback in lieu of the required 18 feet. Conditional Use entitlements are requested to permit hotel use within 500 feet of a residentially zoned area, and for the on-site sale of alcoholic beverages in the ground floor restaurant and guest room mini-bars.

General Plan Land Use

The Project site is located in the Wilshire Community Plan area, which is one of 35 community plans in the City of Los Angeles. Together, these plans comprise The Land Use Element of the General Plan and regulate how land is to be utilized. Each plan contains goals and policies to guide development in the plan area.

The General Plan Framework Element and the Wilshire Community Plan map designates the site for Regional Center Commercial land use with corresponding zones of CR, C1.5, C2, C4, P, PB, RAS3, RAS4, R3, R4 and R5. The site is located in the Wilshire Center Regional Commercial Center. As described in the Framework Element, Regional centers are intended to serve as the focal points of regional commerce, identity, and activity. They contain a diversity of uses such as corporate and professional offices, retail commercial malls, government buildings, major health facilities, major entertainment and cultural facilities and supporting services. The development of sites and structures integrating housing with commercial uses is encouraged in concert with supporting services, recreational uses, open spaces, and amenities. They are typically high-density places whose physical form is substantially differentiated from the lower-density neighborhoods of the City. Generally, regional centers will range from FAR 1.5:1 to 6:1 and are characterized by six- to twenty-story (or higher) buildings as determined in the community plan. Their densities and functions support the development of a comprehensive and inter-connected network of public transit and services. Accordingly, hotels are permitted in Regional Centers.

The Wilshire Center Regional Commercial Center area is approximately 100 acres in size and includes a dense collection of high rise office buildings, large hotels, regional shopping complexes, churches, entertainment centers, and both high-rise and low-rise apartment buildings. It includes Wilshire Boulevard in the eastern central portion of the Plan Area and is generally bounded by 3rd Street on the north, 8th Street on the south, Hoover Street on the east, and Wilton Place on the west. The Wilshire Center includes the Vermont, Normandie, and Western Metro Red Line subway stations along Wilshire Boulevard.

Additionally, the Wilshire Community Plan supports applicable commercially zoned portions of the Wilshire Center (Commercial areas within the area bounded by 6th Street, Vermont Avenue, 8th Street, and Western Avenue) as mixed-use boulevards and districts.

Zoning and FAR

The subject property is situated on three (3) contiguous parcels where two are zoned CR-2 (lots 6 and 7) and the third (Lot 8) is zoned P-2. The CR (Limited Commercial) zone expressly allows hotel uses. However, under the development regulations of the CR zone, restaurants as an accessory use are only permitted within an office building, provided that entrances to the restaurant are located inside of the building (LAMC 12.12.2.A.13). The C2 zone allows a ground floor restaurant with an outdoor eating area, such as the one proposed. Thus, a zone change to C2-2 has been proposed. Height District 2 allows unlimited height. The FAR limitation that applies to the C2-2 zone is a maximum 6:1 FAR. The proposed project will be built to a height of 75 feet and an FAR of 4.2:1.

Density

The Project is a hotel development in the proposed C2 Zone, which permits R4 residential density. The maximum permitted is one guest room per 200 square feet and one apartment unit per 400 square feet. Based on the lot size and the approval of the proposed zone, a total of 75 guest rooms and 7 apartment units can be constructed.

Automobile Parking

Parking is provided within the building in one subterranean level and one ground level. Because the site is located within a State Enterprise Zone, the Project may utilize a lower parking ratio per Section 12.21A4(x)(3) for the commercial portions of the Project. The intent of this standard was to allow a lower amount of parking for commercial office, business, retail, restaurant, bar and related uses, trade schools, or research and development buildings thus increasing the buildable area of the parcel which is critical in older areas of the City where parcels are small. Based on this requirement, the applicant need not provide more than 68 parking spaces. However, the applicant is requesting 84 parking spaces.

Bicycle Parking

Twenty-nine bicycle parking spaces pursuant to the City's Bicycle Ordinance (No. 182,386) will be provided: 17 for long-term use and 12 for short-term use. Also, the Bicycle Ordinance would allow for a further reduction in parking due to the Project's location near ample public transit options.

Site Design

The site is located on the western side of Catalina Street north of Wilshire Boulevard and south of Sixth Street. The Project proposes two driveways from the front of the building on Catalina Street; the southerly one will serve as the main vehicular entrance to the hotel and provide ground level access only, and the northerly driveway will access the basement level of parking. Passenger drop-off and the primary entrance to the hotel lobby are provided from the southerly driveway. On the second floor, there is a 3,375 square-foot garden that provides a buffer for the 6-story apartment complex on Kenmore Avenue to the rear. The restaurant will be located along the Catalina Street frontage on the ground level, with a door for pedestrian access from Catalina

Street and another door from the hotel lobby. The guest rooms and apartment units are located on floors two through six, and designed in an L-shaped layout, which allows the second level garden to be open to the sky.

Landscaping

A combination of shrubbery and trees including palms, canopy shade trees, vertical screen and accent trees and shrubs and groundcover are provided on the second level garden and at the front façade of the hotel along Catalina. This includes an estimated 11 palms and 30 trees, such as Queen Palm, Gingko, Magnolia, Eucalyptus, Brisbane Box, and Jacaranda. Additional shrubbery will be planted around the electrical transformer located at the northerly portion of the site.

Wilshire Community Plan Urban Design Guidelines and the Professional Volunteer Program

The Citywide Urban Design Guidelines had not yet received final approval from City Council and the Mayor at the time this case was filed; therefore the design was reviewed according to the Wilshire Community Plan Urban Design Guidelines. These Guidelines are similar to, and in some cases more specific than, those in the Citywide Urban Design Guidelines. The Project has been evaluated against these design policies for individual projects and is found to be in substantial conformance with them, with the exception of Site Planning design policy (e) on page V-3, which states:

"Prohibit driveway openings, or garage or parking lot entries in exterior frontage walls of buildings, or between frontage buildings, unless the Los Angeles Department of Transportation determines that driveways cannot be practically be placed elsewhere."

The Project has proposed two driveways in the exterior frontage wall along Catalina Street. There is no alley, thus the applicant had designed the Project with vehicular access from the frontage street. However, the two driveways comprise roughly 38 percent of the building frontage, which impacts the pedestrian-oriented character of the design.

Additionally, the Project was taken to the Planning Department's Urban Design Studio Professional Volunteer Program (PVP) for an architectural critique. Some participants believed the design could be improved, while others considered it to be a contemporary design that was appropriate for the area. The concerns expressed were primarily focused on the ground floor and the presence of the two driveways along the primary frontage on Catalina Street. In particular, they said that the hotel lobby was very impressive and they liked the modern look, but they felt that there was little visibility of this space from the outside. They recommended enhancing the transparency of the ground floor façade to better show the interior and create a more inviting and pleasant environment for hotel guests and pedestrians. They also recommended that one driveway be eliminated, which would also allow for more transparency, and enhance the pedestrian-oriented character of the street. In response to the PVP recommendation, the applicant has revised their design to increase transparency along the Catalina façade through more glass storefront walls, and the Project has been conditioned to provide only one driveway.

Requested Entitlements

Zone Change. The Project proposes a Zone Change from P-2 and CR-2 to C2-2.

Conditional Use. A Conditional Use entitlement was requested pursuant to Section 12.24 W 24.(a) of the Los Angeles Municipal Code to permit hotel use within 500 feet of a residentially zoned area. Hotels are permitted by right in commercial zones if they are not located within 500 feet of an A or R zone. Otherwise, a Conditional Use permit is required. However, a Conditional Use Permit is not required in order to establish a hotel, motel or apartment hotel in CR, C1,