

PLANNING
COMMISSION
AGENDA STATEMENT



Item: 1
Meeting Date: 12/9/15

ITEM TITLE: **Public Hearing:** DR15-0003; Consideration of a Design Review Permit to allow for the construction of an 87-unit multi-family residential project on a 4.35 acre parcel in the Apartment Residential zone with Precise Plan modifying district (R-3-P) located at 701 "D" Street Applicant: City Ventures.

Resolution DR15-0003 of the City of Chula Vista Planning Commission approving Design Review Permit DR15-0003 for a multi-family residential project at 701 "D" Street.

SUBMITTED BY: Jeff Steichen, Associate Planner

REVIEWED BY: Kelly Broughton, Director of Development Services

INTRODUCTION

The Applicant submitted a Design Review Permit application to allow for an 87-unit multi-family project on 4.35-acre parcel within the Apartment Residential zone with Precise Plan modifying district (R-3-P). The project requires approval by the Planning Commission. The project site is located at 701 "D" Street at the northwest corner of "D" Street and Woodlawn Avenue. The project site is comprised of one parcel (See Locator Map, Attachment 1).

The proposed project is comprised of 87 townhomes in 15 three-story buildings, 186 parking spaces, common open space, along with a large centralized recreation area and pedestrian access to a future linear park. The project is separated from the Interstate 5 right-of-way by a 7-foot high masonry wall along the western property line which would provide for both sound attenuation and privacy.

A tentative parcel map (TPM 15-0002) is also being processed for this project for condominium purposes for approval by the City Engineer.

BACKGROUND

While the project site is vacant today, it previously housed the Jade Bay Mobile Lodge until its closure in 2006. Historically, the site was zoned R-3 (Apartment Residential), but in 1978 the City Council established the MHP (Exclusive Mobile home Park) Zone and that zone was subsequently applied to this property in 1980. In July 2008 the applicant requested to rezone the property from MHP to the original R-3 to allow for future development of a high density multi-family project. Because no project was proposed at that time, a "P" Precise Plan Modifying District was added to the zoning since there were site constraints that could inhibit a future development from the ability to meet all of the required development standards of the R-3 zone.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The Director of Development Services has reviewed the proposed project for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and has determined that the project qualifies for a Class 32 categorical exemption pursuant to Section 15332 (In-Fill Development Projects) of the State CEQA Guidelines. Thus, no further environmental review is necessary.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Planning Commission adopt Resolution DR15-0003 approving the project based on the findings and subject to the requirements contained in the attached Planning Commission Resolution (Attachment 2).

DISCUSSION

Project Site Characteristics:

The 4.35-acre site is located within the urbanized area of Western Chula Vista. The site is located at the northwest corner of D Street and Woodlawn Avenue. The western boundary of the site is located just east of the Interstate 5 Freeway right-of-way. Primary access to the site is proposed from Woodlawn Avenue. The existing site is relatively flat, and was previously occupied by a mobile home park. The existing surrounding land uses include apartments to the north, single- and multi-family residential to the east, a mobile home park to the south, and Interstate 5 to the west.

General Plan, Zoning and Land Use

The following is a summary of existing uses and General Plan and Zoning designations:

	<u>General Plan</u>	<u>Zoning</u>	<u>Current Land Use</u>
Site	RH High-Density Residential (18-27 du/ac)	R-3-P (Apartment Residential with Precise Plan Modifying District)	Vacant
North	RMH (Medium-High Residential) (11-18 du/ac)	R-3 (Apartment Residential)	View Point Apartment Homes
South	RH (High Density Res.) (18-27 du/ac)	MHP (Exclusive Mobile Home Park)	Mobile Home Park
East	RMH (Medium-High Residential) (11-18 du/ac)	R-3 (Apartment Residential)	Single and Multi-Family Residential
West	Open Space	Unzoned	San Diego Trolley Interstate 5

ANALYSIS

Environmental Review

Technical Studies including an Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas Analysis and a Noise Study were prepared and analyzed to determine whether or not the Project could qualify for a categorical exemption. Based upon the conclusions of these studies, it was determined that a Class 32 categorical exemption could be granted based upon Section 15332 (In-Fill Development Projects) of the State CEQA Guidelines. In regards to the noise assessment, project features including a 7-foot tall sound attenuation/privacy wall along the western property line would result in exterior noise levels compatible with City Standards.

Compliance with Development Standards:

R-3 Development Standards-

Although the current zoning contains a P modifier that would allow the applicant to request from the R-3 development standards, the applicant has been able to achieve a project site layout that does not necessitate such a request. Therefore, the applicant must demonstrate that they are in compliance with all development standards of the R-3 zone unless exceptions are provided for elsewhere in the Chula Vista Municipal Code (CVMC).

Required for project		Proposed for Project	
Building Height	45 feet or 3 ½ stories*		38 feet and 3 stories
Setbacks:			
Front	15 feet	Front	15 feet
Side Yard (interior)	7 feet	Side Yard (interior)	12 feet
Side Yard (exterior)	12 feet	Side Yard (exterior)	12 feet
Rear yard	17 feet	Rear Yard *	17 feet (with minor projections)**
Maximum lot coverage	50%	Lot coverage proposed	36%
Parking 2 spaces/unit	<u>174</u>	Covered	174
		Open-Guest	10
		Open-Accessible	<u>2</u>
Total Parking Spaces Required	174	Total Provided	186
Open Space:			
three bedroom unit 480 square feet31 units	14,480 square feet	Common open space	28,502 square feet
Four bedroom unit 560 square feet56 units	31,360 square feet	Private Open Space	18,767 square feet
Total required	46,240 square feet	Total Open Space Provided	<u>47,269 square feet</u>

		Proposed	
Minimum floor area per dwelling unit:			
Three bedroom Unit	750 square feet	Three bedroom unit	1,790 square feet
Four Bedroom Unit	850 square feet	Four bedroom unit	1,714 square feet

* Section 19 28 060(A)(2) states that principal buildings up to 45 feet and 3 ½ stories may be approved by the Planning Commission provided findings can be made that the height, bulk, mass and proportion of all structures are compatible with the site, as well as in scale with structures on adjoining and surrounding properties in the area. This will be described in further detail in the “building height” section below.

**Limited architectural projections would encroach six inches within required rear yard setback pursuant to the encroachment allowances detailed in Section 19 16 060 of CVMC

Building Height-

Section 19.28.060(A)(2) allows for principal buildings up to three and one-half stories or 45 feet in height based upon findings that the proposed structures are compatible with the site, as well as in scale with structures on adjoining and surrounding properties in the area. The applicant is proposing 3-story buildings with a maximum height of 38 feet. The adjoining property to the north contains an existing three story multi-family apartment complex (54 Woodlawn Avenue). The remainder of the site is separated from other parcels by public streets and the San Diego Trolley/Freeway 5. Due to the similar height on adjoining property to the north and separation by right-of-way to the east, south and west, staff supports the applicants requested building height.

Compliance with the City of Chula Vista Design Manual

The Project has been analyzed for compliance with the design standards delineated in “Section II: Multiple Family” of the City of Chula Vista Design Manual (CVDM). Text shown in italics describes design standards contained in the CVDM with narrative following which describes Project compliance with each of them.

Site Orientation, Scale and Compatibility:

- *The arrangement of structures, parking and circulation areas, and open spaces should recognize the particular characteristics of the site and should relate to the surrounding built environment in pattern, function, scale, character and materials;*
- *The scale of multiple family projects should be considered in the context of their surroundings. Large projects should be broken up into groups of smaller structures and taller structures should provide increased setbacks so as not to dominate and impose on surrounding uses and the character of the neighborhood.*

The Project contains 87 units which are divided up into 15 separate buildings which are arranged strategically on the site. There are two building types: rowhomes and courtyard homes. To add additional variation, rowhomes will consist of three sizes: 5-plex, 6-plex and 7-plex.

The proposed Project engages the public streets by orienting front doors and porches toward the street, with large windows above providing eyes on the street. On the interior of the site, homes are oriented toward a large, centrally located recreation area. Toward the western edge of the site, homes are oriented toward landscaped paseos that run between rows of homes.

The surrounding neighborhoods consist of a mix of building typologies, including a 3-story multi-family building adjacent to the north, single family homes to the east and a mobile home park to the south. The closest development is the existing multi-family development to the north, which is only separated by a distance of approximately twenty-two feet from the property line of the proposed project. Because the existing multi-family building to the north contains buildings of a similar size (3 stories), staff believes that the proposed height is compatible with the existing adjacent land use. Other surrounding residential properties to the east, south and west are surrounded by right-of-way which creates a visual barrier between them and the proposed project. As required by the CVMC the project has been designed with additional side yard setbacks based on the requested building height. Lastly, visual interest created by the horizontal and vertical plane offsets of the rear elevation of the buildings closest to the rear property line will soften the impact to the adjacent multi-family.

Building and façade articulation

- *To the extent possible, each of the dwelling units should be individually recognizable. This can be accomplished with the use of roof lines, setbacks, projections and balconies which help articulate individual dwelling units or collection of units, and by the pattern and rhythm of windows and doors*

Each of the dwelling units within each of these rowhomes is individually recognizable. While each of the ground floor elements are the same for each of the units, the use of plane offsets (both vertical and horizontal) combined with variations in color blocking between units helps to provide units which are both individually recognizable, and at the same time contain different colors and architectural features which break-up an otherwise long massive look to the elevation.

Architecture

- *The architecture should consider the compatibility with surrounding character, including harmonious building style, form, size, color, material and roofline. In developed areas, the new project should meet or exceed the standards of quality which have been set by surrounding development*
- *Heights and setbacks within the same building should be varied, and wall planes should be staggered both horizontally and vertically in order to create pockets of light and shadow and provide visual relief from monotonous, uninterrupted expanses of wall.*

The project features contemporary architecture characterized by a variety of geometric forms and the use of bold colors to provide clean articulation. The facades of each building are broken up by variations in the wall planes and parapet heights which are designed to create a shadow effect and to provide visual relief from uninterrupted expanses of walls. Color changes occur at changes in wall planes. Setbacks for the courtyard buildings have been varied in order to create additional visual interest.

Materials/Colors

- *Colors and materials should be complementary to the chosen architectural style and compatible with the character of surrounding development. Materials for multiple family projects should be durable and require low maintenance. They should be consistently applied and work harmoniously with adjacent materials. Piecemeal embellishments and frequent changes in materials should be avoided. Materials tend to appear substantial and integral when material changes occur at changes in planes.*
- *Colors and materials should be consistent with the chosen architectural style and compatible with the character of surrounding development. Sensitive alteration of colors and materials can produce diversity and enhance architectural form.*

Stucco is the primary exterior building material proposed for the Project, which is similar to both the multi-family building to the north and many of the single family homes to the east. The stucco color palette consists of two light background tones, with selected areas finished in bright hues of red, yellow and blue. The lighter background tones are consistently applied at each building to help the project to fit in with the variety of surrounding architectural styles, while the color accents provide visual interest. Color changes occur at the changes in wall planes, and the colors are picked up again in each home's front door. Windows are grouped into a mix of large and small openings in a variety of rectangular geometries for additional articulation of the facades. Metal railings and awnings provide a final layer of accent.

Landscaping/Screening

- *Landscape planting is to be used to frame, soften, and embellish the quality of the environment, to buffer units from noise or undesirable views, to break up large expanses of parking, and to separate frontage roads within a project from public streets. To accomplish these design objectives, landscape elements need vertical dimension. Trees and tall shrubs are needed in addition to grass and groundcover. Trees can also be used to provide shading and climatic cooling.*
- *Landscaping around the base of buildings is recommended to soften the edge between pavement and the structure. Entrances should be accented to provide focus. Trees should be located throughout the parking lot and not simply at the ends of parking aisles.*

The Project uses extensive landscaping to soften the edges of both the surrounding urban community and the contemporary architecture within the project itself. Both public streets are lined with a proposed mix of Sycamore, Strawberry and Trumpet trees along the perimeter of the site to help shade front yards and provide an additional layer of visual interest at the edges.

Jacaranda trees, used sparingly throughout the Project, are located at the main entrance to the site from Woodlawn Avenue and at the pedestrian entrance at D Street, in order to accent these entrances and mark them as areas of focus. The plant palette emphasizes the use of low water use plant material in order to comply with the Landscape Water Conservation Ordinance, Chapter 20.12 of the Chula Vista Municipal Code.

A mix of trees, shrubs, and ground cover have been placed in quantities throughout the interior of the site, with an emphasis on placement at the ends of buildings to soften the edge between pavement and structure. In addition they are provided along pedestrian routes, and at the "green waste" enclosure. A large complement of trees and other planting at the recreation area in particular, help to provide shade for residents who are using this facility. Cypress trees are planted at evenly spaced intervals along all internal alleys in order to delineate paths of travel and bring some additional green plant material to these narrow spaces.

Open Space

- *Required common open space and recreation areas are expected to be centrally and conveniently located for all of the residents. Private open spaces should be contiguous to the units they serve and screened from public view.*

The applicant is providing a total of 47,269 square feet of open space, which includes a large centrally located 14,078 square foot recreational area with the remainder in common and private open space areas. As an extension of the internal circulation, a landscaped pedestrian entrance corridor is provided for access to D Street and to a potential future proposed lineal park. Said park would require a separate approval apart from this request for a Design Review permit. Private open space is provided contiguous to the units.

DECISION-MAKER CONFLICTS:

Staff has reviewed the property holdings of the Planning Commissioners and has found no property holdings within 500 feet of the boundaries of the property that is subject to this action. Staff is not independently aware, nor has staff been informed by any Planning Commissioner, of any other fact that may constitute a basis for a decision maker conflict of interest in this matter.

CONCLUSION:

The project is consistent with the goals and policies of the General Plan and R-3-P (Apartment Residential with Precise Plan Modifying District) Zone with the permitted exceptions noted. Staff supports the requested building height and the minor encroachments into the rear yard setback in order to provide for additional building articulation, per the analysis provided in this staff report. Based on the preceding information in this report, staff recommends the Planning Commission adopt the Resolution approving the proposed multi-family project.

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FISCAL IMPACT:

The application fees and processing costs are paid for by the Applicant.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Locator Map
2. Planning Commission Resolution
3. Disclosure Statement
4. Project Plans

Prepared by: Jeff Steichen, Associate Planner, Planning Division

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