

January 21, 2021

CHAIR AND PLANNING COMMISSIONERS
City of Long Beach
California

RECOMMENDATION:

Determine the project is within the scope of the project previously analyzed as part of the General Plan Land Use Element and Urban Design Element Program Environmental Impact Report (State Clearinghouse Number 2015051054) of the General Plan and warrants no further environmental review pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15162;

Approve a Site Plan Review for the development of a market rate, for sale, townhouse style, condominium project that includes 23-units with up to 3-bedrooms plus office / 2.5 bathrooms, each with an attached 2-car garage, guest parking stalls, and 9,049-square feet of open space throughout the project;

Approve an Administrative Use Permit for the permanent sharing of four off-site parking stalls for guest use within 65-feet of the proposed townhome project at 621 Dawson Avenue to be guaranteed in perpetuity with a covenant and agreement;

Approve a Vesting Tentative Tract Map to create 23 for sale, market rate, condominiums at 2200 - 2212 East 7th Street, 600-620 Dawson Avenue and 621 Dawson Avenue; and

Recommend that the City Council find that the Zone Change is covered within the scope of the previous EIR; and approve Zone Change ZCHG 20-03 from Community Commercial Automobile-Oriented (CCA) to Community R-4-N (CCN) District. (Council District 2)

APPLICANT: Derek Burnham representing
Project Verve
3350 East 7th Street
Long Beach, CA 90804
(Application No. 2004-04)



DISCUSSION

This project is one of the first to seek a zone change that is consistent with and utilizes the Land Use Element (LUE) adopted in 2019. The project is also among a small number of projects located outside of downtown and smaller group of projects proposing new ownership units in the City. The privately-owned site is located on the south side of East 7th Street and the east side of Dawson Avenue (Exhibit A - Vicinity Map). East 7th Street is designated as a Boulevard in the City's Mobility Element. There is a combination of retail, commercial and higher density residential uses along the corridor. The site is located in the Rose Park Neighborhood. The building site encompasses four parcels for a total project area of 0.78 acres (approximately 33,976-square-feet); the site at 621 Dawson Avenue is proposed to accommodate four off-site guest parking stalls. All of the subject parcels are under single ownership. Table 1 below identifies all parcels, their current zoning, existing use:

Table 1: Project Site Characteristics

STREET ADDRESS	GENERAL PLAN PLACETYPE	CURRENT ZONING	EXISTING USE
2200 E. 7 th St.	Neighborhood-Serving Centers and Corridors - Moderate	CCA	Parking Lot
2212 E. 7 th St.	Neighborhood-Serving Centers and Corridors - Moderate	CCA	Parking Lot
620 Dawson Ave.	Neighborhood-Serving Centers and Corridors - Moderate	CCA	Parking Lot
600 Dawson Ave.	Neighborhood-Serving Centers and Corridors - Moderate	CCA	Parking Lot
621 Dawson Ave.	Neighborhood-Serving Centers and Corridors - Moderate	CNR	Parking Lot

The lot located at 621 Dawson Avenue is currently used as a parking lot for the church located at 2201 East 6th Street and will remain as such with the exception of four spaces which will be guaranteed in perpetuity with a covenant and agreement as guest parking for the project. The figure below shows the project site outlined in yellow and identifies the zoning designations of adjacent properties.



The table below identifies the current zoning and land uses on properties adjacent to the project site:

Table 2 – Adjacent Property Zoning and Current Land Use

DIRECTION	ZONING	LAND USE
North	CNR , (Neighborhood Commercial and Residential)	Dental Office
East	CCA , (Community Automobile Oriented District)	Retail Strip Center (DD's Discounts)
South	R-1-N , Single Family Residential with Standard Lots	Church, Multi-Family, Childcare facility
West	R-1-N , (Single Family Residential with standard Lots) and CNR (Neighborhood Commercial and Residential)	Two detached dwelling units and a vacant lot used for parking.

The site is currently paved and has been utilized in the past as a parking lot for the existing church at 2201 East 6th Street. An extensive review of city records as well as title reports found no recorded, formal documentation that requires the parking to be maintained for the church use.

Project Description

The proposed project involves construction of 23, three-story, townhomes that would be 36-feet in height to the rooftop deck railing each with a two-car attached garage¹. Six guest parking stalls are provided, two stalls would be on-site, and the remaining four guest stalls, guaranteed in perpetuity, would be located across the street at 621 Dawson Avenue. The site would include four buildings, one 'U' shaped building with ten units, and three linear-shaped buildings with six, three, and four units. Each of the townhomes range between 1,351sf and 1,902sf in floor area with 2 bedrooms/2.5 baths to 3 bedrooms/2.5 baths plus a first-floor office. The total amount of private open space in the project totals 5,294sf and includes private open space rooftop decks for each unit ranging between 168sf to 308sf and balconies that are 66sf. Common open space in the project area totals 3,755sf and includes a tot lot, shade structure, tables/benches and BBQ area. Total open space area throughout the site totals 9,049 square feet.

Required Entitlements

In order to allow the proposed project, the following entitlements are required:

- **Zone Change:** Proposed zone change from the existing zoning from CCA to CCN (which permits medium density residential development at the R-4-N densities) to allow the development of the proposed townhomes. The current zoning for most of the site only allows commercial uses; a zone change for the lots located at 2200-2212 E. 7th Street and 600-620 Dawson Avenue from CCA to CCN is proposed to permit residential uses, consistent with the 2019 General Plan Land Use Element PlaceType NSC-M (Neighborhood Serving Corridor-Moderate). The NSC-M PlaceType allows a mixture of both commercial/retail and multi-family residential uses.
- **Site Plan Review:** Site Plan Review required for a residential project with five or more units as one project².
- **Administrative Use Permit:** Required to allow four off-site guest parking stalls pursuant to LBMC 21.41.223.A (Joint Use of Parking Facilities).
- **Vesting Tentative Tract Map:** Required to consolidate four lots into a single parcel and allow the subdivision of airspace and creation of common areas, which enables the creation of 23 individual townhome units that can be sold separately³.

Per the City's Zoning Code, the Planning Commission acts in an advisory capacity on the Zone Change and makes a recommendation to the City Council. The Planning Commission is the decision-making body on the Site Plan Review, Vesting Tentative Tract Map, and Administrative Use Permit. Customarily, the Site Plan Review Committee is the body that approves the Site Plan Review for projects of this size (market rate residential projects that total 50 units or less),

¹ Portions of the building exceed the 36-foot height limit, however portions of the building, including the rooftop stairwell extend up to 39'2" and are exempt from the maximum height per LBMC 21.31.220.B.5 in the City's Zoning Code.

² Long Beach Municipal Code (LBMC) §21.25.502.A.1.a

³ LBMC §20.12 and §20.14

and the Zoning Administrator is typically the decisionmaker on the Administrative Use Permit. In this case, to streamline the project review process for the applicant, and public and because the determination on the AUP has the potential to impact the site plan, the requests are being combined and referred to the Planning Commission for review and approval.

Zone Change

The site is currently zoned Community Commercial Automobile-Oriented (CCA) which permits retail and service uses; residential uses are not permitted. However, the General Plan's Land Use Element, adopted in December 2019, designates the project site as Neighborhood Serving Center or Corridor - Moderate Density (NSC-M). This NSC-M PlaceType is a mixed-use land use designation that allows neighborhood-serving, moderate-intensity commercial uses and moderate-density apartment and condominium buildings on larger parcels of land⁴.

This PlaceType benefits the surrounding community by promoting or reinforcing a neighborhood's unique identity, accommodating daily retail and service needs, enhancing pedestrian and bicycle connections to neighborhoods, and providing convenient access to transit. This subject location is within the major areas of change established in the 2019 Land Use Element for the purpose of promoting infill and redevelopment to support transit in the form of residential and mixed-use development. Additionally, the subject site is within one-half mile from a High-Quality Transit Corridor and Major Transit Stop as shown in the City's CEQA Transportation Thresholds of Significance Guide⁵ (Exhibit B - Long Beach Transit Priority Areas Map). The NSC-M designation allows up to five stories in height at the project site and is characterized by average residential densities of 54 dwelling units per acre (du/acre), depending on lot size. In contrast the project will only be three stories in height. The proposed CCN (R-4-N) zoning designation is a lower density than what is allowed under the General Plan Land Use PlaceType. At the proposed density of 29.53 du/acre, the project is 33 percent below the maximum allowable density of 44 du/acre permitted in the CCN (R-4-N) zoning district.

The applicant seeks a Zone Change to CCN (Community R-4-N, Medium Density) zoning district to allow for the construction of the proposed townhomes, in accordance with the R-4-N development standards (Exhibit C - Zone Change Map). The CCN zoning district is consistent with the General Plan's Land Use Designation, NSC-M PlaceType (Neighborhood Serving Center or Corridor - Moderate Density). This area along East 7th Street has a combination of not only neighborhood-serving commercial uses, but also moderate to higher density residential uses. The rezoning of the project site will be consistent with the CNR zoning district along East 7th Street, which allows for commercial and moderate density residential uses. The action is also consistent with LUE and Housing Element policies promoting the development of a variety of new housing units to update and diversify the City's housing stock, including through townhome ownership units. The proposed 3-bedroom units address a specific shortage of large units for families in the City, a need specifically called-out in the adopted Housing Element.

⁴ Land Use Element (LUE 2019) pg. 65

⁵ www.longbeach.gov/globalassets/lbds/media-library/documents/planning/environmental/environmental-planning/tia-guidelines

Site Plan Review

The site plan review process is established to ensure that the highest quality of land planning and design are incorporated into development projects. The process ensures that new projects are compatible with existing neighborhoods and meet required project development standards. On November 11, 2020, the Site Plan Review Committee reviewed the project architecture and site layout and recommended approval of the project to the Planning Commission pursuant to LBMC 21.25.503. The final approval of the project is contingent on the Zone Change.

The applicant proposes to build 23, three-story, townhomes 36-feet in height, on a currently underutilized site, located on properties at the southeast corner of East 7th Street and Dawson Avenue. Four of the proposed townhomes are oriented toward East 7th Street and six of the proposed townhomes are oriented toward Dawson Avenue with front doors and pedestrian walkways accessible from the adjacent public right-of-way. There are two driveway approaches along Dawson Avenue that provide access to internal driveways which in turn provide access to the individual garages and two guest parking spaces. Table 3 below provides a summary of the proposed project's compliance with the proposed CCN (Community R-4-N) Zoning District.

Table 3 - Summary of Project Consistency with the Proposed CCN (Community R-4-N) Zoning District

7th STREET AND DAWSON AVENUE PROJECT	REQUIRED	PROPOSED
<i>Density</i>	44 units/acre max	29.53 units/acre
<i>Height</i>	38' (3 stories)	36' (3 stories)
<i>Open Space</i>	150 square feet (sf)/unit = 3,450 SF total Common open space: 1,725 SF Private open space: 1,725 SF Plus, a 300-SF recreation room	393 SF/unit average = 9,049SF total Common open space: 3,755 SF Private open space: 5,294 SF Waiver of recreation room is requested ⁶
<i>Parking</i>	46 garage spaces + 6 guest spaces = 52 total	46 garage spaces + 6 guest spaces = 52 total

As noted in the table above, the proposed project complies with requirements of the proposed zoning district and applicable development standards, as well as required Site Plan Review findings. The proposed project abuts streets on two sides, and Dawson Avenue separates it from single family

⁶ Pursuant to LBMC 21.25.508, through the Site Plan Review process, the Site Plan Review Committee may waive certain development standards, including open space if it finds that such waiver improves project design.

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residential uses to the west. The three-story townhome development project would serve as an appropriate transition between the existing uses along East 7th Street (which is designated a Boulevard in the City's Mobility Element) and the single-family neighborhoods to the south of the subject site, which are generally one to two stories. The three-story townhomes provide a step-down transition from the 7th Street corridor to the approximately two-story church and multi-family structures along the southern property line; this transition is also enhanced by a 24-foot setback along property line. As such, the proposed project is harmonious, consistent and complete within itself and is also compatible in design, character and scale with neighboring structures and the surrounding community. The location of the proposed project at the subject site ensures that new residential units have access to nearby commercial uses and transit, consistent with the General Plan, which aims to encourage mixed use development as a means to provide greater mobility choices and reduce vehicle miles traveled.

Design

The design of the proposed townhome development reflects a modern architectural style with a variation of roof pitch and parapets consisting of a singular scheme that achieves cohesiveness among each of the four townhouse buildings. The style includes a combination of smooth stucco and brick veneer at the base of each unit with smooth stucco and lap siding along the upper elevations to create individual units. A variety of materials including the use of asphalt shingle roofing, lap siding, decorative metal railings, and angular windows enhance the modern traditional style of the proposed project.

Open Space

The project requires a total of 3,450-square-feet of common and private open space, and the applicant proposes a total of 9,049 square feet of common and private open space combined. Common open space is proposed largely as a single space located near the southwest corner of the property. Private open space will be provided in the form of private rooftop decks. In addition to the private and common open space requirement, projects with 21 or more units are required to provide a recreation room of 300 square feet or more unless this requirement is waived at the discretion of the Site Plan Review Committee or Planning Commission. A waiver may not be granted if it would in any way degrade the environment or change the land use classification or density. In lieu of the recreation room, the applicant proposes to more than double the required 3,450 square feet providing 9,049 square feet of total open space (common and private) for this project that are improved with a variety of amenities. The common open space area would include high-quality amenities that enhance the overall project design, including a tot lot with rubberized surfacing, a built-in BBQ island, dining seating atop enhanced paving while under a shade structure and enhanced landscaping. (refer to sheets L-1 to L-4 in Exhibit D - Plans & Renderings). As conditioned, the common open space areas and their amenities proposed in exchange for the 300-square-foot recreation room shall be maintained in perpetuity and reflected in both the conditions of approval and the required Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions (CC&Rs) for the project (Exhibit E - Conditions of Approval). With incorporation of the aforementioned conditions of approval, overall, the project design ensures a livable residential project that offers ample open space and amenities that serve various age groups and recreational activities and results in a development that is harmonious with the surrounding community.

Administrative Use Permit

The project requires approval of an Administrative Use Permit for the four proposed off-site guest parking located across from the project site at 621 Dawson Avenue per Section 21.41.223 of the City's Zoning Code.

As part of the application submittal, the applicant submitted a parking summary and a preliminary title report. Upon review of the submitted documentation and past records, the project site once provided 70 parking spaces for uses on adjacent properties at 2201 and 2209 East 6th Street. However, as indicated above, there are no deed restrictions listed on title that restrict or specifically designate those 70 parking spaces as required parking for the adjacent 6th Street properties. The developer of the project proposal also owns the lot at 621 Dawson Avenue, which is currently developed as a parking lot and is not designated as required parking for an adjacent property. The developer is proposing to share four of those stalls with the proposed project permanently. The four parking stalls would be held in perpetuity by a covenant and agreement as guest parking stalls for the proposed townhouse development. As conditioned, signage would be required that states the stalls are for only guests of the townhouse development project and that others could be towed. This eliminates any potential conflict with other vehicles accessing the site. Additional conditions of approval include refreshed landscaping, application of a new parking lot slurry seal and restriping, as well as stucco of the perimeter wall adjacent to the sidewalk.

Vesting Tentative Tract Map (VTTM 83035)

The project includes a request for a Vesting Tentative Tract Map (Exhibit D - Plans), which proposes to merge four parcels into a single approximately 33,927-square-foot lot an airspace subdivision to create 23 condominium units to allow the individual sale of townhomes, not including the common area lot. The proposed units are market rate units. The proposed project was deemed complete prior to the effective of date of the local inclusionary housing ordinance making it exempt from the requirements. As a condition of project approval, the applicant is required to dedicate and improve a 4'6" by 14' area along East 7th Street, including relocation of the bus stop shelter. Irrevocable offers of dedication of ten feet are also required along East 7th Street and three feet along Dawson Avenue adjacent to the project site for future street widening purposes. The proposed subdivision, including required dedications supports the orderly development of land consistent with the Zoning Code and General Plan.

The proposed Vesting Tentative Tract Map is consistent with the Land Use Element of the General Plan, which designates the project site as Neighborhood Serving Center or Corridor - Moderate Density (NSC-M), and the design of the subdivision is consistent with uses, heights and densities contemplated by the General Plan Land Use Element PlaceType designation. The project is therefore consistent with the General Plan and findings in support of the subdivision can be made.

Based on the previous discussion, positive findings can be made for each of the four entitlements needed to allow the development of the proposed 23-unit townhome project. Overall, staff finds that the proposed project conforms to the requirements of the

applicable zoning regulations and that all relevant findings of fact necessary for approval are met. The detailed findings for each entitlement are attached in Exhibit F - Findings.

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

A total of 349 public hearing notices were distributed on December 30, 2020 in accordance with the requirements of Chapter 21.21 of the Long Beach Municipal Code.

As of the writing of the report, Staff received 13 public comments (12 letters of support; one letter of concern) on the project. The public comments are provided in Exhibit G - Public Comments Received.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Staff prepared an Environmental Compliance Checklist to the Program Environmental Impact Report for the General Plan Land Use and Urban Design Elements to ensure that the project is consistent with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the State CEQA Guidelines. The document finds that the proposed project could not have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the project. As such no further action is required (Exhibit H - Environmental Checklist).

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Respectfully submitted,



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Attachments:

- Exhibit A - Vicinity Map
- Exhibit B - Long Beach Transit Priority Areas Map
- Exhibit C - Zone Change Map
- Exhibit D - Plans
- Exhibit E - Conditions of Approval
- Exhibit F - Findings
- Exhibit G - Public Comments Received
- Exhibit H - Environmental Checklist