



Legislation Text

File #: 17-0075, **Version:** 1

Recommendation to receive supporting documentation into the record, conclude the public hearing, adopt resolution certifying Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR 04-16), and make certain findings relative thereto, adopt a Statement of Overriding Considerations and a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for 40 new detached single-family homes located at 3655 North Norwalk Boulevard (SCH#2016081047);

Uphold the Planning Commission's recommendations to the City Council and deny an appeal by Warren Blesofsky and Long Beach Citizens for Fair Development;

On January 5, 2017, the Planning Commission held a public hearing and voted 6-0 to recommend that the City Council: certify the Environmental Impact Report (EIR 04-16); adopt Findings and a Statement of Overriding Considerations; adopt a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program; approve a General Plan Amendment from Land Use Designation No. 10 (Institutional and School) to Land Use Designation No. 1 (Single-Family District); approve a Zone Change from Institutional (I) to Single-Family Residential (R-1-M); approve a Vesting Tentative Tract Map (VTTM) for a subdivision of 5.76 acres into 40 residential lots; and approve a Site Plan Review (SPR) for 40 new detached single-family homes on a site located at 3655 N. Norwalk Boulevard.

The 5.76-acre project site is bounded by the Artesia-Norwalk drainage channel to the west, a multi-family senior housing development within the City of Hawaiian Gardens to the north, single-family dwellings to the south, and single-family dwellings to the east across Norwalk Boulevard (Exhibit A - Location Map). The project site was developed with a church in 1963, and the church has been vacant since February 2016. No church services or activities are currently being conducted at the site. The applicant proposes to demolish the existing church and build a new residential community with gated access, private streets, common open space areas, and open space trails within the project site.

A General Plan Amendment is required in order to develop a residential project on the site, because the current General Plan designation of the site is Land Use District (LUD) No. 10 Institutional and School, reflecting the site's former use as a church. The applicant is requesting LUD No. 1 Single-Family as the appropriate designation for the project site, as it allows the construction of detached single-family dwellings at moderate densities up to seven dwelling units per acre (Exhibit B - General Plan Amendment Map). The proposed project conforms to LUD No. 1, and maintains the character of the surrounding neighborhood. Further, the land use designation proposed will be consistent with the pending update of the Land Use Element of the General Plan, as well as the Housing Element goal to create opportunities for homeownership that will contribute to the stability and quality of the

surrounding neighborhood.

The General Plan identifies LUD No. 1 as an area that will benefit from a wide variety of lot sizes in different locations of the City, offering the single-family lifestyle as a choice across a spectrum of incomes and environmental preferences. Should the update to the Land Use Element be adopted as currently proposed, the project site's designation of LUD No. 1 would change to the Neighborhood Place type, Founding and Contemporary Neighborhood.

The project requires a Zone Change as the current Institutional (I) zone reflects the site's former use as a church. The Institutional zone is primarily intended for government offices, hospitals, college campuses, and churches, among other large and intense land uses. However, this zone also permits R-1-N single-family, low-density for residential uses on a minimum lot size of 6,000 square feet per lot.

The applicant is requesting a Zone Change to R-1-M, to facilitate a project that offers a typical lot size of 3,600 square feet with private streets, and open space amenities in a gated community (Exhibit C - Zone Change Map). The proposed R-1-M development standards provides opportunities to cluster density on certain areas of a site, while reserving other portions as community open space, such as a secured entry driveway, a meandering pedestrian "paseo," an outdoor play yard, a picnic and barbecue area, and shaded bench areas that serve as an extra community yard for all its residents. An R-1-M development also enables the provision of an internal street system for the development.

Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. 73385 allows the subdivision of the site into 40 new residential lots ranging from 3,696 to 5,681 square feet in area, accessed from a private street (Dorado Circle). The gated community will have a secondary access lane for fire emergency purposes to be located south of the main entrance at Dorado Circle, similarly accessed through North Norwalk Boulevard. The secondary access fire lane will be gated and will have secured access only (Exhibit D - Plans and Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. 73385).

Site Plan Review is required for projects containing more than four residential units. The Site Plan Review Committee reviewed the project on February 10, 2016, and expressed overall support. The development provides for three, two-story single-family plan types (Plan 1, Plan 2 and Plan 2x), all designed with Craftsman influence, featuring high pitched gabled roofs, board and batton lap siding in combination with smooth stucco walls. These plan types will be distinguished by the use of their own paint color palettes. Plans 1 and 2 are specifically designed to be side-by-side to provide breaks between front yard setbacks and driveway lengths, contributing to an open street view design. Plan 2x includes larger living areas and are placed on larger lots within the project.

The development provides for sixteen Plan 1 unit types of 2,475 square feet, fifteen Plan 2 unit types of 2,530 square feet, and nine Plan 2x unit types of 2,700 square feet. All three unit plan types feature four bedrooms and three baths with a two-car garage. Street parking is

provided on one side of the street and additional parking spaces are located adjacent to the larger recreation area.

The street (Dorado Circle), sidewalks, street trees, and driveways within the development, as well as all common facilities and amenities, will be commonly owned and maintained by the Homeowner's Association (HOA). This includes the recreation area, perimeter walls, fences and gates, as well as the retention basin and storm drain connection, and sewer connection. The HOA will be responsible for enforcing the maintenance and appearance standards for each dwelling, as well as enforcing parking restrictions and managing the placement of trash carts for refuse collection. Through the inclusion of Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions (CC&Rs), adequate provisions will be made for the long-term maintenance and upkeep of the development by the HOA.

Staff is able to make positive findings for each of the requested entitlements, including the General Plan Amendment, Zone Change, Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. 73385, and Site Plan Review as discussed above, demonstrating that the project meets the requirements and the intent of the Zoning Regulations (Exhibit E - Findings). Staff has included conditions of approval to ensure that the objectives of consistent, high-quality design for this project will be met, and the interests of the City will be protected (Exhibit F - Conditions of Approval).

The Planning Bureau received an appeal of the Planning Commission's recommendation within the ten-day appeal period. Since the City Council is the final decision-making body on this project, an appeal of the Planning Commission's decision is not warranted. Nevertheless, an appeal was filed by Warren Blesofsky as an individual, and the Long Beach Citizens for Fair Development. In summary, the reasons stated for the appeal were "inadequate openness and transparency of planning, development with respect to CEQA, EIR and historic buildings" (Exhibit G - Appeal Application).

A notice was published in a newspaper of general circulation on January 25, 2017, and public hearing notices were mailed and distributed on January 30, 2017, in accordance with the requirements of Chapter 21.21 of the Long Beach Municipal Code. Notices were also sent to those who spoke at the Planning Commission meeting on January 5, 2017, and to those individuals who submitted comments on the Environmental Impact Report. All public comments not received as part of the EIR process (discussed below) are attached (Exhibit H - Public Comments).

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the CEQA Guidelines, an Environmental Impact Report (EIR 04-16) (Draft EIR) was prepared for the proposed project. The Draft EIR found that the proposed project would have potentially significant and unavoidable environmental impacts in the area of cultural resources with regard to the chapel structure. The chapel is significant from a cultural resources standpoint as it was the first drive-in church in the region and is an example of mid-century modern architecture applied to an institutional use. The Draft EIR considered alternatives to the demolition of the structure, but did not find options that were feasible while still accomplishing

the goals of the project. The Draft EIR found that even after mitigation requiring archival documentation of the chapel structure, impacts related to demolition of this building would remain significant and unavoidable. Therefore, a Statement of Overriding Considerations has also been prepared, and has been recommended by the Planning Commission for approval.

The Draft EIR was made available for public review and comment for a 45-day review period from October 20, 2016 to December 5, 2016. The City received three separate written comments on the Draft EIR during this review period. These written comments, and the City's written responses to these comments, are provided in the Final EIR, which also includes the Draft EIR text with minor edits based on public comments and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (Exhibit I - Final EIR 04-16, Findings, Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, and Statement of Overriding Considerations). Text edits provided in the Final EIR did not substantially alter the Draft EIR environmental analysis or change the conclusions of the Draft EIR regarding the potential environmental impacts of the project.

This matter was reviewed by Assistant City Attorney Michael J. Mais on January 26, 2017 and by Budget Analysis Officer Julissa Jose-Murray on January 27, 2017.

City Council action is requested on February 14, 2017. Section 21.25.103 of the Zoning Regulations requires presentation of this request to the City Council within 60 days of the Planning Commission hearing, which took place on January 5, 2017.

There is no direct fiscal or local ongoing job impacts associated with this recommendation.

[Enter Body Here]

AMY J. BODEK, AICP
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

APPROVED:

PATRICK H. WEST
CITY MANAGER