



CITY OF LONG BEACH

DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

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June 2, 2011

CHAIR AND PLANNING COMMISSIONERS
City of Long Beach
California

RECOMMENDATION:

Review and verify compliance with conditions of approval for the project consisting of conversion of the AMC Pine 16 movie theaters into 69 residential units, located at 250-270 Pacific Avenue within the Downtown Planned Development District (PD-30) (District 2).

APPLICANT: Carlos Losada for Meruelo Group
For Tweedy Properties, LLC
9550 Firestone Blvd., Suite 105
Downey, CA 90241
(Application No. 0706-16)

DISCUSSION

At the April 7, 2011 Planning Commission meeting, the Commission approved Site Plan Review and certified a Negative Declaration for the conversion of the closed AMC Pine Square 16 movie theaters into 69 residential apartment units on two levels, located at 250-270 Pacific Avenue (Exhibit A – Location Map). As part of that approval, the Planning Commission included certain conditions of approval (Exhibit B – Conditions of Approval), including a condition requiring the applicants to return to the Planning Commission to demonstrate that they have revised plans to comply with said conditions of approval.

The applicants have revised plans to meet a number of these conditions, including revisions to make parking garage circulation clear, to include more natural light from frosted glass doors and transoms in the dwelling units, to change the type of stucco used, to provide adequate private open space, to provide storage space in the units, and to provide bicycle parking. Rather than continue to work with staff on design issues, the applicants have requested an expedited return to a Planning Commission hearing.

The subject conditions of approval, issues they concern, and the applicants' actions to address each condition, are as follows:

Condition 2a: This condition requires the reconfiguration of the 3rd Street garage entrance to eliminate conflicting entrance/exit traffic patterns. The applicants have addressed this condition to staff's satisfaction.

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Condition 2b: This condition requested (not required) that the applicants close the Broadway garage entrance/exit, and maintain open the Pacific garage entrance/exit, in the interest of providing a more pedestrian-friendly environment on Broadway. The applicants were required to provide justification for why this could not be accomplished if they were to keep the Broadway garage entrance open. The applicants, as justification, provided the parking entrance/exit numbers for the garage's 3rd Street and Broadway entrances (Exhibit C – Letter from Applicants on Broadway Garage Entrance with Parking Counts). The numbers actually demonstrate a larger number of entrance/exit movements at the 3rd Street entrance and greater usage of the 3rd Street entrance by residents. Staff therefore is convinced neither of the necessity of keeping this entrance open, or that adequate justification has been provided. Staff also would point out that all of the new developments on Broadway in the downtown area feature only one garage entrance/exit, and that this project would still have the Pacific Avenue and 3rd Street garage entrances open even if the Broadway entrance was closed.

Condition 2c: This condition requires rehabilitation of the existing pedestrian entrance facing Broadway. Staff has worked with the applicants to refine the proposed design, the final iteration of which will be provided in the Planning Commission packets prior to the hearing. Staff requests that the Commission defer the design process and determination of the adequacy of the applicants' efforts regarding this condition to the staff level following the hearing.

Condition 2d: This condition prohibits the use of dark, tinted, or smoked glass on the ground floor. Staff is satisfied that the applicant will comply with this condition.

Condition 2e: This condition requires the use of high quality exterior finish materials and presentation of a new materials sample board. Staff is satisfied with the quality of materials chosen by the applicant.

Condition 2f: This condition requires the use of the largest possible exterior windows and glass doors, and prohibits use of vinyl windows and doors. Staff is satisfied that the applicant will comply with this condition (Exhibit D – Plans).

Condition 2g: This condition requires the applicants to provide adequate natural light sources to each dwelling unit to the greatest extent feasible. Staff has suggested a number of options to the applicants, including rearranging the floor plans, shrinking the size of units to make a wider corridor, combining some of the oddly-configured units, or providing smaller units. The applicants have revised plans to include frosted glass entry doors and operable transoms above the doors.

Condition 2h: This condition requires the applicants to provide usable open space in compliance with the PD-30 standards. The applicants have provided adequate common open space, and have provided a majority of the units with the minimum-required private open space. However, not all units have the minimum required area of private open space. Some units are under the required 80 square feet per unit. Staff requests the Planning Commission determine if these measures provide sufficient open space according to the intent of PD-30.

Condition 2i: This condition, derived from a PD-30 requirement, specifies that a minimum of 30 square feet of accessory storage space be provided for each unit. The applicants have integrated the required amount of storage space, and staff is satisfied that this requirement is met.

Condition 2j: This condition requires the applicants to provide one bicycle parking space per four dwelling units for the entire apartment complex, both existing and new units. Plans indicate a large area for a secured bike rack, but do not indicate the number of spaces.

Staff is satisfied that the applicants will meet all other special conditions of approval outside of conditions 2a through 2j. Staff requests the Planning Commission review the applicants' plans and proposals and verify compliance of these plans with the above conditions of approval.

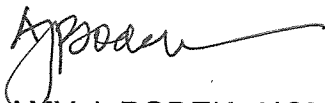
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

Public hearing notices were distributed on May 16, 2011, as required by the Long Beach Municipal Code. Staff has received no comments or inquiries on the item at the time of writing this report.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

In accordance with the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act, a Mitigated Negative Declaration (ND-09-08) was prepared for the project and was certified by the Planning Commission at the April 7, 2011 hearing.

Respectfully submitted,



AMY J. BODEK, AICP
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

AB:DB

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Attachments: Exhibit A – Location Map
 Exhibit B – Conditions of Approval
 Exhibit C – Letter from Applicants on Broadway Garage Entrance with
Parking Counts Exhibit D – Plans