



CITY OF LONG BEACH

THE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

333 W. Ocean Boulevard Long Beach, California 90802 562-570-6194 FAX 562-570-6068

September 5, 2006

HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

City of Long Beach

California

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive supporting documentation into the record, conclude the public hearing, and declare the Ordinance amending the Downtown Planned Development District (PD-30) related to creation of a Downtown Loft District read for the first time and laid over to the next regular meeting of the City Council for final reading. (Districts 1 and 2)

DISCUSSION

Project Description/Planning Commission Action

On December 13, 2005, the City Council directed the Planning Commission to investigate amendments to the Downtown Planned Development District (PD-30) to create a loft district that facilitates the adaptive reuse of commercial buildings as lofts, including both live/work uses and residential uses. The goal of the City Council was to develop a clear, defined set of regulations and possible incentives that would encourage adaptive reuse of existing buildings.

To assist in determining the appropriate course of action for the amendments, staff reviewed several previously approved adaptive reuse projects, including the Kress Lofts (449 Pine Avenue, Case No. 9109-10), Walker Building (401 Pine Avenue, Case No. 0001-13), Temple Lofts (835 Locust Avenue, Case No. 0110-05), and Newberry Building (433 Pine Avenue, Case No. 0307-15). In reviewing these cases, Staff determined that the City has been very accommodating to adaptive reuse projects, and that in general, the mechanisms to approve these projects currently exist, but are found in various sections of the Zoning Ordinance and the Downtown Planned Development District (PD-30).

However, in keeping with the City Council's goal of creating a loft district, staff determined that developers and other interested parties would benefit from additional clarity in the regulations. To that end, the proposed amendments are designed to consolidate all regulations related to adaptive reuse of existing buildings, including conversion to live/work use and conversion to residential use, and to establish a loft district within the Downtown area where the regulations will be in effect. In addition, the amendments provide an opportunity to memorialize Departmental practice with respect to required parking for adaptive reuse. Currently, no parking standard exists for conversion of commercial buildings to residential use. Departmental practice on previously approved projects has been to require a minimum of one parking space for each residential unit, as well as one guest space for every four units, and to waive the parking for ground floor commercial uses.

The Planning Commission conducted a public hearing on June 15, 2006 (see Attachment 1- Planning Commission Staff Report for June 15, 2006). After discussing the item, Commissioner Gentile made a motion to recommend that the City Council adopt the proposed amendments to the Downtown Planned Development District. Commissioner Sramek seconded the motion. The motion was passed 4-0, with Commissioners Greenberg, Rouse, and Winn absent. In approving the project, the Planning Commission agreed with the Staff recommendation that additional clarity in the regulations was appropriate and that creating a Loft District would be a benefit to the downtown area.

Assistant City Attorney Mike Mais reviewed this report on August 22, 2006.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Categorical Exemption CE-114 was prepared for the proposed amendments related to adaptive reuse and creation of the loft district.

TIMING CONSIDERATIONS

The Long Beach Municipal Code requires Planning Commission decisions to be transmitted by the Department of Planning and Building to the City Clerk for presentation to the City Council within 60 days following Planning Commission action. However, since the City is the applicant this time frame is not binding.

FISCAL IMPACT

To be determined.

SUGGESTED ACTION:

Approve recommendation.

Respectfully submitted,

MATTHEW JENKINS, CHAIR
CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

BY: 

SUZANNE M. FRICK
DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND BUILDING

SF: GC:CB:db

Attachments:

- 1) Planning Commission Staff Report dated June 15, 2006 Ordinance