



CITY OF LONG BEACH

DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

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May 24, 2012

CHAIR AND PLANNING COMMISSIONERS
City of Long Beach
California

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the Resolution certifying an Addendum to the Downtown Plan Program Environmental Impact Report (SCH#2009071006) for a proposed six-story, approximately 127,000-square-foot office building that will retain the north and west elevations of the Meeker-Baker Building, a designated local historic landmark. (District 1)

APPLICANT: Nathan Morries for Millworks
900 N. Rock Hill Road
St. Louis, MO 63119
(Case No. 1203-17)

DISCUSSION

The subject property at 650 Pine Avenue is located at the southeast corner of Pine Avenue and 7th Street in PD-30 (Downtown Plan) and is currently developed with the two-story landmark Meeker-Baker Building (Exhibit A- Location Map). The current proposal consists of a new, six-story approximately 127,000-square-foot building within and above the retained exterior street façade of the Meeker-Baker Building. The new building will be setback a few feet from the Pine Avenue and 7th Street façades. The proposed project calls for the removal of the interior spaces of the Meeker-Baker Building related to its historic use, as well as the attachment of new construction to the historic building. The project description also calls for the restoration of the exterior building façade to its historic appearance, and the installation of aluminum and glass storefronts within the existing storefront openings. The proposal will be a modification to the previously approved Press Telegram Lofts (PT Lofts) project that still has active entitlements.

The other building on the site is the five-story, 73,213-square-foot Press Telegram Building that is not part of the current proposal. The applicant will be reusing the building after it is modified by removing a portion of the building to create a courtyard that will open to the north. Since the Press Telegram is neither historic nor being expanded, the proposed modifications qualified for administrative review and no Planning Commission action is required.

The PT Lofts project was designed as a 22-story mixed-use development with 542 residential condominium units, 14,000 square feet of commercial space, 23,000 square feet of office and gallery space with 1,186 parking spaces. The entitlement history of the project is as follows:

- January 17, 2007 – The Cultural Heritage Commission approved a Certificate of Appropriateness for the PT Lofts project that incorporated the historic Meeker-Baker Building into the project.
- February 15, 2007 – The Planning Commission certified the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and recommended approval of a Planned Development Amendment, Site Plan Review, Tentative Tract Map and Standards Variance to the City Council.
- April 17, 2007 – The PT Lofts project received approval for the project from the City Council.
- July 27, 2008 – The Planning Commission approved a Modification to the Approved Permit to reduce the project from two high-rise towers to one; reduce the office/commercial space from 37,000 square feet to 30,000 square feet; reduce the required parking from 1,186 spaces to 947 spaces; increase the building setbacks; and decrease the residential unit size.

On January 10, 2012, the City Council certified the Downtown Plan Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) that provided the necessary environmental clearance for the adoption of the Downtown Plan and provides a document from which environmental review of subsequent development projects within the Downtown Plan Area can be tiered (Exhibit B- Downtown Plan PEIR).

The applicant is requesting that the Planning Commission approve a Resolution with Findings, Statement of Overriding Consideration and a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan (Exhibit C- Resolution) certifying an Addendum to the Downtown Plan PEIR for a six-story office building approximately 127,000-square-foot in size that will maintain the north and west elevations of the Meeker-Baker Building (Exhibit D- Addendum).

The Addendum addresses impacts specific to the proposed project that were identified as significant and unavoidable in the Downtown Plan PEIR. These include aesthetics, air quality, cultural resources, greenhouse gas emissions, vibration, population and housing, public services, and transportation and traffic. In addition, it incorporates, by reference, additional material that was included as part of the PT Lofts project EIR such as the Meeker-Baker Building Historic Assessment.

The proposed project is consistent with the City of Long Beach Downtown Plan and within the growth parameters considered within the Downtown Plan Final EIR that was certified by the City in January 2012. Consequently, the proposed project would not create any new significant impacts or increased severity impacts as compared to what was identified in the Downtown Plan Final EIR and an Addendum is the appropriate environmental document under CEQA.

ENTITLEMENT PROCESS

Since the proposed project includes the local historic landmark Meeker-Baker Building, additional review by the Cultural Heritage Commission is required, which modifies the standard entitlement process. In this case, the following three-step process is required for the proposed entitlements:

1. Consideration of the Addendum to the Downtown Plan PEIR by the Planning Commission; and
2. Consideration of a Certificate of Appropriateness by the Cultural Heritage Commission to review the impacts of the proposed project on the Meeker-Baker Building; and
3. Consideration of a Modification to the Approved Site Plan Review by the Planning Commission.

Therefore, the Planning Commission is only considering the Addendum to the Downtown Plan PEIR. It is anticipated that the Cultural Heritage Commission will consider the Certificate of Appropriateness at their June 11, 2012 meeting. The Planning Commission will then be requested to consider the Modification to the approved Site Plan Review at an appropriate date in the future.

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

Public hearing notices were distributed on May 3, 2012 in accordance with the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance. As of the writing of this report, no responses were received.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

In accordance with the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act, an Addendum to the Downtown Plan PEIR (SCH#2009071006) for the proposed six-story, approximately 127,000-square-foot office building that will retain the north and west elevations of the Meeker-Baker Building was prepared.

Respectfully submitted,


DEREK BURNHAM
PLANNING ADMINISTRATOR


AMY J. BODEK, AICP
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

AJB:DB:jw

Attachments: Exhibit A – Location Map
 Exhibit B – Downtown Plan PEIR
 Exhibit C – Resolution
 Exhibit D – Addendum

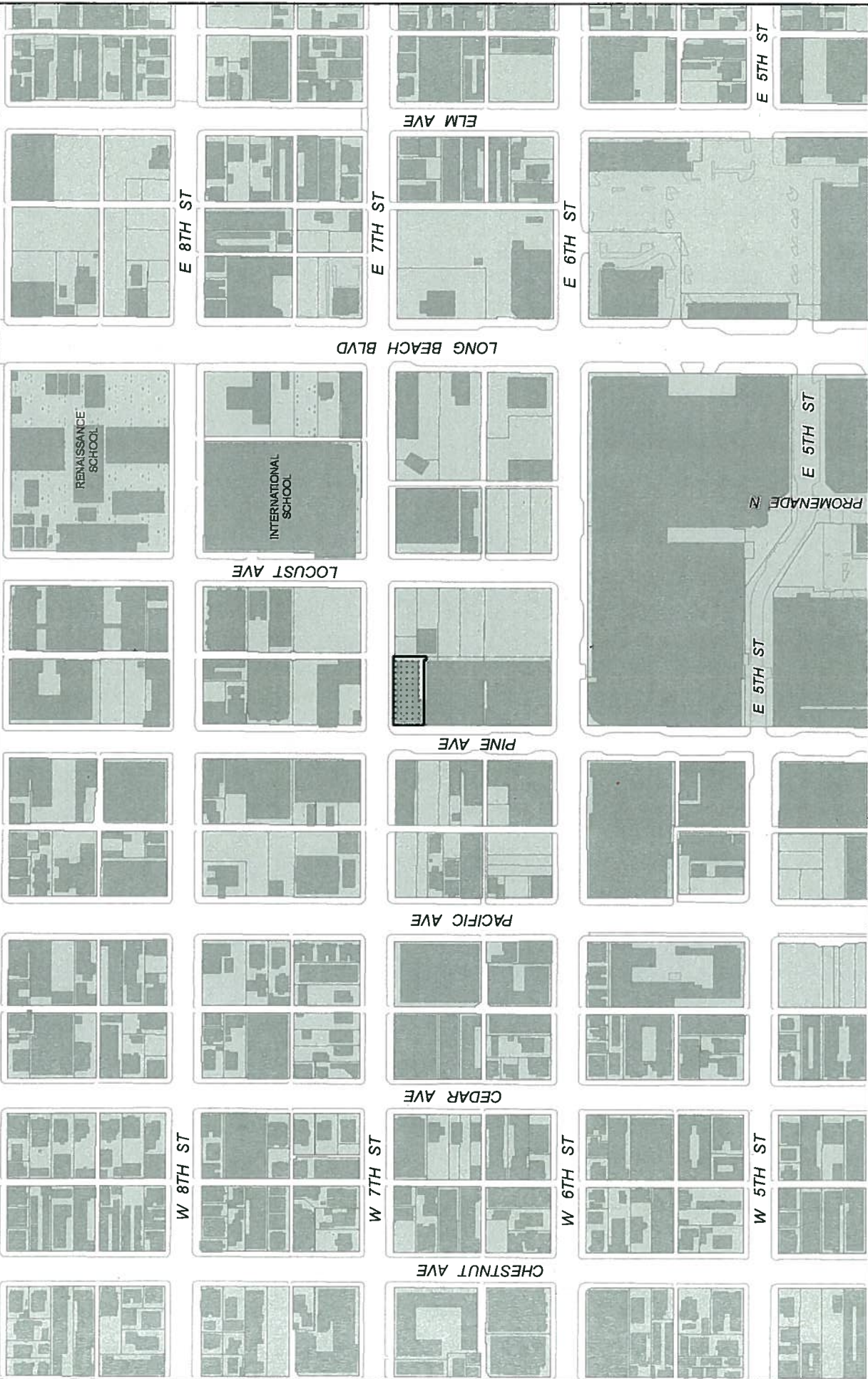


Exhibit A



Subject Property:
 650 Pine Ave
 Application No. 1203-17
 Council District 1
 Zoning Code : PD-30

