



Item No: 1  
Meeting Date: Nov. 12, 2013

**To:** Planning Commission

**Date:** November 7, 2013

**Authorized By:** Ron Munekawa  
Chief of Planning  
City of San Mateo

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**Subject:** PA 13-047 AVALON MOTEL REDEVELOPMENT PRE-APPLICATION, preliminary review for demolition of the existing Avalon Motel and construction of 12 two-story and 30 three-story residential townhomes with attached garages totaling 92,910 square feet; 220 N. Bayshore Blvd. San Mateo; APN: 033-101-160.

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## RECOMMENDATION

That the Planning Commission review the proposed residential project on a preliminary basis and provide input to the applicant and staff.

## SITE DESCRIPTION

The project site is approximately 2.13 acres and located on the east side of Highway 101 in the Shoreview Planning Area (Attachment 1, Location Map). The project site is located off North Bayshore Boulevard, which is a frontage road that runs parallel to Highway 101. The site is currently the location of the Avalon Motel, a motor court style motel built in 1936 (Attachment 2, Historic Evaluation). The existing motor court design of the Avalon Motel includes rooms

connected by garages and built in a row. The site is predominately covered with one story buildings and paving. Approximately three Yew trees (that have been topped in topiary style) will require removal as a result of the proposed construction. The project site is zoned R4 (Multiple Family Dwellings High Density) and is surrounded by existing single family and multi family residences, as well as, the Highway 101 freeway.

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The project includes demolition of the existing Avalon Motel and construction of 12 two-story and 30 three-story residential townhomes with attached two car side-by-side garages. The two-story units include three bedroom floor plans and the three-story units include two bedroom floor plans. The two bedroom units range in size from 1,182-1,197 square feet and the three bedroom units are 1,828 square feet. The 42 units proposed are accessed via a single vehicle access point proposed off North Bayshore Boulevard.

As presently designed, the project requires Site Plan and Architectural Review (SPAR), a Site Development Planning Application for tree removal; and a Vesting Tentative Map. Sample findings for these entitlements are included as Attachment 3.

The proposed three-story homes are located along North Bayshore Boulevard, as well as, along the interior of the site. The proposed two-story residential units buffer the three-story residential buildings along the side property lines of the project site and are also located at the rear of the site (adjacent to the existing single family homes). A common open space is also proposed at the rear of the site. The plans indicate the proposed open space area may include a community clubhouse. Ten surface parking spaces are proposed throughout the site

The design of the proposed residential buildings is traditional in form, architecture, and materials. It includes low pitched gable rooflines, porches and porticos with a variety of roof overhangs and columns; and board-and-batten, shingle and horizontal siding. Decorative elements include stone accents and window boxes. Vehicle access to the individual garages are provided from the interior of the development as opposed to directly off of the public streets. This approach minimizes curb cuts and impacts to on-street parking and enhances the streetscape by making the garage doors less visible from public view.

## **NEIGHBORHOOD INPUT**

City Staff attended the applicant's formal neighborhood meeting which was held on October 24, 2013 along with ten attendees from the neighborhood (Attachment 4, Neighborhood Meeting Minutes). The applicant presented the scope of work proposed and engaged with the attendees in a general question and answer session regarding the proposed scope of work, neighborhood concerns, feedback, and process.

The attendees provided several comments on the following topics:

- Concern about traffic generated by the proposed project and adequacy of surface parking available on site.
- Inquiry of availability of on street parking along N. Bayshore.
- Concern of overflow parking in the single family neighborhood.
- Request to increase the width of the sidewalk along the project frontage on N. Bayshore Blvd.
- Quality construction desired, as well as, a cohesive design and materials.
- Inquiry on the timeline of project, pricing of homes, floor plans, number of bedrooms, and floor area, as well as, the ratio of garages per unit.

There were several comments made at the meeting that the ten surface parking spaces proposed were not adequate to support the proposed development and concern was expressed that the surrounding neighborhood would absorb additional on street parking. City Staff noted that a traffic and parking study while not prepared at this time (during the Pre-Application stage) would be performed when the applicant submits a formal application. There was interest expressed by the attendees, in enhancing the sidewalk and pedestrian walkway along the project frontage on N. Bayshore Boulevard and in ensuring the project design and materials will be cohesive and well-built. Two letters of public comments have been received to date (Attachment 5, Public Comments).

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

A Project Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will be prepared for the project. A historic report prepared for the City in 2006, by the City's Historic Architect concluded that the Avalon Motel appears to meet eligibility criteria for the California Register of Historic Resources (Attachment 2, Historic Evaluation). Therefore it is anticipated that an Environmental Impact Report will be required to assess demolition of the existing motel during review of the formal application.

Since the proposal calls for demolition of the building, the project will cause a significant unavoidable impact on the environment. Mitigation measures such as documentation and the salvage of character-defining features will be carried out to reduce the impact, but do not mitigate the loss of an historic structure under CEQA. Only the no project alternative avoids significant environmental impacts and approval of the project would require adoption of a statement of overriding considerations.

Findings of overriding considerations are required by Section 15091 of the CEQA Guidelines. The Statement of Overriding Considerations is a written statement explaining why the City is willing to accept the significant effect. CEQA requires the City to balance the benefits of a proposed project against unavoidable environmental risks in determining whether to approve the project. The statement sets forth the specific overriding social, economic, legal, technical or

other beneficial project aspects supporting the City's decision and must be based on substantial evidence in the Final EIR or elsewhere in the record.

The Planning Commission will ultimately make a recommendation to the City Council regarding certification of the EIR. In 2004, the City certified an EIR for the demolition of a Historic Resource known as the Palm Theater with a Statement of Overriding Considerations. This 2004 Statement of Overriding Considerations is attached as an example (Attachment 3, Sample Findings).

Additional technical studies will also be completed and reviewed by City staff during the environmental review phase of the formal application. These studies include but are not limited to traffic, noise, and air quality. Additional environmental factors potentially affected include:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Cultural/Historic
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use
- Noise
- Public Services and Utilities

Staff will be preparing and distributing a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the EIR. The RFP will be sent to environmental planning consultants. A scoping meeting for the EIR will be held at a date to be determined.

## **ZONING AND GENERAL PLAN COMPLIANCE**

Zoning Code and General Plan compliance will be reviewed in its entirety during the formal application review process. At this time, during the Pre-Application stage, the proposed project appears to meet zoning code standards detailed on the attached project data form; with the exception that some surface parking spaces may be located in side setbacks which is not permitted.

The proposed project is consistent with the R4 (High Density Multiple Family Dwellings) zoning classification and generally complies with development standards at this preliminary stage. The project data form is provided as Attachment 6.

The floor area of the proposed residential units including garages totals approximately 92,910 square feet with a floor area ratio (FAR) of 1.0 which is .5 less than the maximum allowable FAR

of 1.5. The maximum building height is 30 feet which is under the permitted height of 45 feet. The residential density is approximately 20 units per net acre which is less than half the maximum allowable General Plan density of 50 units per acre.

A draft GreenPoint Rated checklist was submitted at this time which identifies the project could achieve 82 points by incorporating a variety of sustainability elements and measures which exceeds the City's minimum standards of 75 points (Attachment 7, Project Plans Sheet BG1 and BG2).

The Zoning Code requires project developers to assist with the relocation of existing residential rental tenants displaced by development projects. The Zoning Code requires the following to be provided by the developer to each household prior to any notice of relocation as follows:

- a) A list of available comparable housing within San Mateo County; and
- b) A relocation allowance in cash or check equivalent to three (3) months' rent; and
- c) Other reasonable assistance and allowance, as determined by the final approval body in a condition of approval.

City staff will be reviewing the applicability of Tenant Relocation assistance further in conjunction with the formal Planning application.

This project will require design review by the City's Design Review Consultant. His review will focus on conformance with the City's Urban Design Element and Multi Family Design Guidelines as applicable.

Also applicable to the proposed project will be the City's Below Market Rate (BMR) Inclusionary program which requires developers of new housing to provide a certain percentage of the units within the project to be affordable to very low, low or moderate income residents. For developments consisting of 11 or more units:

- 15% of ownership units will be affordable to moderate income families, or
- 10% of ownership units will be affordable to low income families.

At this time it is undetermined which approach above the developer will choose to satisfy the City's BMR requirement.

The General Plan Land Use Diagram designates the project site as High Density Multi Family. The proposed multi family land use is consistent with this designation; however, the proposed density is less than the 50 dwelling units per acre permitted under the General Plan. In the event that the status of the site changes as a result of the proposed project, an amendment to the City's Historic Resources General Plan Map Figure C/OS-5 may be required. Applicable General Plan policies have been attached for your reference, review, and feedback (Attachment 8, General Plan Policies).

### **NOTICE PROVIDED**

In accordance with Government Code section 65090, notice of this hearing was published in the Examiner newspaper 10 days before this Study Session. In accordance with Government Code section 65091 and the City's Municipal Code noticing requirements, this hearing was noticed to the following parties ten days in advance of the November 12, 2013 neighborhood meeting:

- Property owners, residential tenants and business tenants within 1,000 feet of the project site;
- The City's "900 List" which contains nearly 100 Homeowner Associations, Neighborhood Associations, local utilities, media, and other organizations interested in citywide planning projects.
- The interested parties list which includes interested individuals who contacted the City and requested to be added to the project notification list.

### **SUMMARY AND NEXT STEPS**

At this time, staff is seeking Planning Commission comments and input on the following issues:

- Site Plan – Site layout of residential buildings and internal streets, open space, vehicle access, surface parking, and sidewalk enhancements.
- Preliminary Design – Architectural style, materials, massing, residential entries, and building form. Input is specifically desired on the proposed three-story multifamily building elevations with garage doors located on the front elevations along with the entries.
- Environmental Review – Recommended topics to identify and examine in the EIR.

Following this study session, the applicant will revise the plans as necessary to respond to comments from the Planning Commission, neighborhood, and City staff; and submit a formal Planning application. The EIR Scoping meeting will also be scheduled once the EIR process commences.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Location Map
2. Historic Evaluation, dated January 20, 2006
3. Sample Findings for Approval (Statement of Overriding Considerations, SPAR, SDP, Vesting Tentative Map)
4. Neighborhood Meeting Minutes, dated October 24, 2013
5. Public Comments
6. Project Data Form
7. Reduced Project Plans including
  - Project Description (refer to Project Plans, sheet CS2)
  - Green Point Checklist (refer to Project Plans, sheet BG1 and BG2)
8. Applicable General Plan Policies

**CC (AR and attachments (hardcopy) via USPS First Class Mail)**

Property Owners

Applicant

**CC (AR only (hardcopy) via USPS First Class Mail)**

**CC (Website link to AR and attachments via Email)**

Interested Parties (if email address was provided)