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City of Sebastopol Design Review Board Staff Report

Meeting Date: Wednesday, April 21, 2021
Agenda Item: 7A
To: Design Review Board
From: Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director
Alan Montes, Associate Planner
Subject: Conceptual Review of Planned Community District
Recommendation: Provide Comments and Recommendations to the Planning Commission
Applicant/Owner: Bob Massaro/Huntley Square LLC
File Number: 2020-005
Address: 7950 Bodega Ave.
General Plan: High Density Residential (HDR)
Zoning: R7 (Existing); PC (Proposed)

Introduction:

The Applicant has submitted a zoning amendment to modify the zoning from R7 to a Planned Community, Use Permit, a Tentative Map, and an Environmental Review.

This project is being referred to the Design Review Board (Board) as a conceptual review as the Zoning Ordinance requires that Planned Community Rezoning be reviewed by the Board prior to the Planning Commission (Commission). The Board is required to review the proposal and provide comments and recommendations to the relationship of the proposed development to the surrounding area and the proposed project amenities to ensure that they are adequate for the development. The Board may also comment on the Policy Statement and Development Plan, and may provide any preliminary design review comments to the applicant. Comments and recommendations will be forwarded to the Commission.

Please keep in mind that this item will require a formal Design Review Application at a later time, should the Planned Community and other entitlements be approved.

Project Description:

The project proposes to construct ten (10) ownership studio “townhome” units that are all under 600 sq. ft. Six (6) of the units will include lofts, while the remaining four (4) units will be single story units. The residential structures would be located along the first two thirds of the property. Between the residential structures will be a landscaped pedestrian access path, going from the sidewalk to the parking area. The parking area is located along the northern third of the property and consists of carports, refuse enclosures and a drive aisle.

The property would be accessed by vehicles from Golden Ridge Ave. through an existing driveway easement that crosses 120-132 Golden Ridge Ave. This easement establishes ingress/egress rights and is included as an attachment in the Applicant’s Submittal documents.

Site Context:

The property is a vacant parcel in an established residential neighborhood fronting the North side of Bodega Ave. South of the subject site is the Sebastopol Memorial Lawn. To the North and East of the site there are residential Planned Communities Districts with ownership units. To the west there is a four (4) dwelling unit development with four separate structures. The surrounding properties are all residential and are one to two-story structures. The applicant has provided a map on Sheet A1.4 identifying the adjacent properties and their improvements as well zoning.

The subject site is 0.39 acres and is unique in that it has an approximate eleven (11) foot elevation change along the frontage, whereas the rest of the site is relatively flat. The site has several significant trees that are proposed to be removed. This includes a 27” coast live oak between proposed Lots 4 and 6, five coastal live oaks along the frontage due to the required frontage improvements and several small apple trees throughout the site. Most of the live oaks will be subject to a tree removal permit, which will be reviewed as part of the Design Review and Tree Removal Permit application.

Several of the trees located along the west property line are expected to have moderate impacts, and staff would request an updated Arborist report and a detailed description of the anticipated impacts upon the Design Review and Tree Removal Application. As some of the plan details have changed since the arborist report was prepared. One of the more significant changes is that there was originally a concrete landing pad in front of the refuse enclosure and that has since been revised to a permeable pavement.



General Plan Consistency:

The General Plan Land Use Designation for the site is High Density Residential (HDR). The General Plan states that the HDR designations “Designates areas suitable for multifamily dwellings at a density of 12.1 to 25 units per acre. This designation is suitable for duplexes, apartments, townhouses, and other attached dwelling units”. The project is consistent with the

intention of the HDR designation in that the project is proposing ten (10) studio units that are less than 600 sq. ft. and therefore count as .5 of a dwelling unit. Based on five (5) dwelling units the density per acre would be equivalent to 12.8 units per acre, which is consistent with the HDR Designation.

Zoning Ordinance Consistency:

17.20 Residential Districts and 17.49 PC - Planned Community District

The project proposes to create ten (10) new attached single-family residences, which is a permitted use in this district.

The project is also proposing a Planned Community zoning for their project to allow greater flexibility, particularly in regards to the interior setbacks. The purpose of the PC Planned Community District is to allow for comprehensively designed and well-planned residential developments which create an integrated community wherein all land uses are planned and designed in a comprehensive “master plan” approach, including such aspects as shared access and roadways, open space, infrastructure, architecture, and landscaping. The Planned Community District provisions are intended to encourage, through utilizing freedom of design which may deviate from the strict requirements of, but which will surpass the quality required by, the zoning. A comparison of the development standards is provided in the table below:

<u>Development Standards Comparison</u>		
	<u>Current R7 Zoning Standards</u>	<u>Proposed PC Zoning Standards</u>
Minimum Lot Area	8,000 sq. ft. (1,500 for “Small Lot Subdivisions”, with smaller lot size allowed when units are attached – 17.230)	Current rental: -686 to 848 sq. ft. for individual lots -9,535 sq. ft. for the common Parcel
Maximum Building Height	30’, 2-stories	30’, 2-stories
Accessory Buildings Height	17’	-Not Permitted on Individual lots -15’ Common Area
Front yard Setback	10’	Individual lots - 0’ Common Area - 10”
Interior side yard setback (setback between the new lots/units)	10% of lot width, or 5 ft., whichever is greater, not to exceed 9 ft.(3)	0’
Accessory Structure Side Setback	3’	-Not Permitted on Individual Lots -1’ on East side yard setback on Common Parcel -5’ on West side yard setback on

		Common Parcel
Rear yard setback*	20% of the lot depth, no less than 20 ft. nor greater than 25 ft. (currently the Interior side yard setback for the existing vacant parcel = 9')	Individual Lots - 8' (this setback for the individual lots would typically function as an interior side yard setback, which for this lot would require a 9' setback)
Accessory Structure Rear Setback	3'	-Not Permitted on Individual Lots -3' for rear yard setback for Common Area (North Property Line) (currently each lot will have a built-in storage space along either the front or rear of each home)
Max Lot coverage	40%	40% for entire site Current proposal = 38.2% lot coverage.
Density (Dwelling Units per Acre, DU)	1DU/3,600 SF min (4.7 DU) 1DU/1,743SF max. (9.75 DU)	5 DU (Section 17.200.020 counts studio units as .5 DU)
Parking	1 space per studio unit	10 parking spaces, applicant will be required to provide electric vehicle charging spaces, as discussed later in this report.
Bicycle parking	0.5 spaces per dwelling unit	5 bicycles spaces minimum
Open Space	50 sf/DU -Public or Private	140 sq. ft. of usable private open space

The proposed development standards are fairly similar to the existing R7 standards, in that:

- 1) the height requirements are the same or more strict;
- 2) the front setback for the development still maintains a 10' setback;
- 3) lot coverage for the overall development is still 40% of lot area;
- 4) parking (vehicle and bicycle) is the same; and
- 5) the open space requirement is more strict.

There are several significant differences:

- 1) the interior lot lines between the units would be zero as they are townhome developments;
- 2) the minimum lot size is smaller than the R7 zoning.
This is also smaller per unit, but overall meets, the requirements for a 'small lot subdivision (1,500 sq ft/unit, with smaller lot sizes allowed for attached units, 17.230.090). This application is utilizing the PC Zoning process, so is not subject to these standards, however the Board may find this comparative information useful in its development. Lot per unit overall for the development is just over 1,500 sq ft.);

- 3) the Accessory structure setback is proposed to be reduced to 1' along the east property line (however, should the carport be removed this would be compliant); and
- 4) the rear yard setbacks for the individual lots is 8', whereas development of the lot in its current configuration, this would be the interior side yard and would require a 9' setback

17.40.040 Planned Community Development criteria

The Planned Community Ordinance establishes several specific development criteria, specified below:

A. Buffering, which may include fencing, landscaping, or open space, between the proposed project and the surrounding area shall be provided by the proposed project so as to be compatible with adjacent uses.

Staff believes that the residential units that provide an 8' side yard setback could be appropriate if appropriately landscaped, and given the development will utilize the existing fences. Staff does have some concern regarding the buffering adjacent to the carports and refuse enclosures. However, the applicant has proposed significant landscaping in these areas including trees that should reach a mature height of 12'.

B. Proposed projects shall provide amenities on site to include landscaping, parking, and, as appropriate, storage space for residential units.

The onsite amenities are sufficient in that the project proposes a minimum number of parking spaces, private yards, a landscaped pedestrian pathway, and storage for each unit.

C. A PC District is required to be a minimum of 12,000 square feet in size.

The lot is 16,972 sq. ft. and exceeds the 12,000 sq. ft. minimum lot size.

D. Proposed projects shall provide not less than 10 percent of the gross site area for private open space and/or community or site-user activity. Individual yards that comply with the guidelines set forth in SMC 17.20.040 may be counted toward this requirement. Such activity space may be planned and designed for active or passive recreational use by employees, site visitors, and/or the general public. The space shall be in addition to parking and storage areas.

The project is compliant with this Section in that the lot provides 1,989 sq. ft. of private open space. Whereas the minimum 10% of the lot area equals 1,697.2 sq. ft.

17.110 Off-Street Parking Regulations

The project is required to provide one (1) parking space per studio unit. The project proposes ten (10) units, which requires ten (10) parking spaces, which has been met. The project is also required to provide a minimum of five (5) bicycle parking spaces. The applicant has identified this need and stated that it will be provided. The details will be finalized during the Design Review application.

However, there are a couple of concerns with the parking plan that have been discussed with the applicant and will need to be revised/finalized as part of their Design Review application.

These concerns are as follows:

- 1) The Code requires that Parking spaces proposed to be located in a garage or carport shall be not less than 20 feet in length and 10 feet in width, interior dimensions.
 - a) The plan currently identifies the spaces as 8'x18' (compact) and 9'x19'. Should the project eliminate the carports the parking would be compliant.

- 2) The carport located along the northeast corner is partially located within a private Sanitary Sewer Easement.
 - a) Should the project eliminate the carport or receive permission from the easement holder at this location the parking would be compliant. If the easement holder allows permission a condition of approval would be required that they are responsible for removal and any replacement, should it be needed for access to the easement for work.

- 3) Electric Vehicle Charging Spaces (EVC). The project is required to provide EVC as the parking lot will contain at least 10 parking spaces. The lot will need to provide/identify on their design review application one of the following:
 1. Electric vehicle charging infrastructure shall be sized to accommodate a minimum 40-amp 220 VAC charging to a minimum of 50 percent of parking spaces.
 2. A minimum of 20 percent of vehicle parking spaces and at least one ADA space shall have a fully operational 30-amp electric vehicle service equipment (EVSE) unit installed with a functioning payment system. All electric vehicle charging systems and infrastructure shall be sized for adequate capacity to meet all safety requirements.
 3. A 20 percent reduction in the total electric vehicle charging spaces required shall be provided for each 50 kW or above DC fast charger, up to a maximum reduction of 40 percent.

17.200 Residential Density Allowances

Section 17.200.020 establishes that studio units that are less than 600 sq. ft. count as one-half of a dwelling unit for the purposes of calculating allowable density. The project as proposed is electing to construct ten (10) studio units that are less than 600 sq. ft. in size. This means that for the purposes of calculating density the project is counted as a density of five (5) units, whereas the code specifies, based on the minimum and maximum permitted densities, as being 4.7-9.7 units (per the Zoning Ordinance, 17.10.030(E) this would be rounded to 5-10 units).

17.250 Inclusionary Housing Requirements

The project is exempt from providing inclusionary housing as they are proposing attached Single-family dwelling units that are less than 840 square feet and will be owner-occupied for a minimum of one year, following which they may be rented to a long-term renters with a minimum of a six-month lease. This requirement will be included as a requirement / condition of approval of the Final Map and CC&Rs (Codes Covenants and Restrictions) for the project.

17.310 - Public Art

The project is exempt from the Public Art requirements as this is a residential only project.

Tree Removal and Preservation

The applicant has submitted a Tree Preservation and Mitigation Report, prepared by Horticultural Associates on August 6, 2020. The Tree Preservation and Mitigation Report evaluated a total of 15 trees, which includes all trees present on the site and overhanging the site.

Of the evaluated trees, it appears that four (4) protected trees on site will be removed, as well as an additional four (4) nonprotected trees, also on site.

The report identifies that one (1) redwood and three (3) offsite Douglas firs on the west side will be moderately impacted primarily due to nonpermeable paving and potentially crown trimming. However, the arborist report will need to be updated prior to the design review and tree removal permit as the paving has been revised to be permeable paving, which occurred after the publication of the arborist report. These trees will need to be further assessed. Additionally, should one third of the crown/roots be trimmed or if there's significant lasting impacts, a tree permit will be required. Should the property line/offsite trees require a permit the application will require all impacted property owners' signatures on the application.

On the north is an offsite tulip tree and, on the east, there is an offsite coast live oak. The report indicates that these trees should have no impacts to minor impacts and provided mitigation measures.

The City Arborist is currently reviewing the arborist report and potential impacts. Staff would request that prior to the design review and tree removal permits that an updated arborist report be provided and that it provides more detail on the impacts to offsite trees.

Design Review Guidelines:

Please note that this application is not an official Design Review submittal at this time. As such, staff has limited the review of the guidelines to areas where staff has concerns that there may be potential conflicts. The Board should provide comments and recommendations on these items, as well as any items that may impact lot configuration, the proposed Planned Community development standards, as well as any other items the Board see as necessary. The complete Design Review Guidelines have been provided as an attachment.

I. Site Planning

B. Building Orientation

- 1: Buildings should generally be oriented parallel to the streets they face.*
- 2: Buildings should relate to the street and should be located on the site so that they reinforce existing street frontages and setback patterns.*

Analysis: The project proposes for the lots to face each other, while lots 9 and 10 have their side elevation facing the frontage. However, given the large embankment and that the finished project will be roughly 9' above the sidewalk staff is seeking the Board's input on the relation to the street frontage.

E. Grading and Storm Water Management

1.c: Terracing should be considered as an alternative to the use of tall or prominent retaining walls.

Analysis: As mentioned above, the site has a large embankment along the frontage and proposed project will be approximately 9' above the proposed sidewalk grade. To achieve frontage access and improvements the project is proposing a six to eight (6-8) foot tall retaining wall along the frontage. Terracing may be achievable, but staff has concerns that terracing could result in "chasing the topography" resulting in a taller retaining wall. Staff is seeking the Board's input as to whether terraced walls with landscaping in between is achievable or desired, or if another design method could be employed to reduce the effect of the proposed height.

II. Architecture

A. Relationship to Surrounding Architecture

1. Architectural design should be compatible with the developing character of the area and should complement the unique aspects of the site. Design compatibility includes complementary building style, form, size, color and materials. Consider architectural styles of existing structures on the site, as well as other structures in the area when designing a new building and provide for a harmonious integration of the new improvements.

Analysis: The existing developments were contemporary of their time and incorporate board siding (horizontal and vertical), light neutral colors, and one to two stories in height. Staff believes that this development incorporates similar elements, such as the board siding, but other elements such as the corrugated galvanized are not a feature seen within this neighborhood. Staff is explicitly seeking the Board's feedback on whether the design is compatible with the existing development.

Public Comment:

The Planning Department has two comments from the public stating concerns regarding the number of units, concerns regarding safety for access to the lot, noise, impacts to the street parking, and the preservation of an offsite tree (#780, which the arborist report identifies minimal potential impacts and mitigations). A copy of the public comments has been provided as an attachment.

The City Engineer has reviewed the access, and did not see any significant concerns regarding the added traffic going through the access easement.

City Departmental Comment:

The Planning Department circulated the application to the following City departments for review: Building and Safety, City Manager/City Attorney, Engineering, Fire, and Public Works. The Planning Department has received the following comments, listed below. The comments are listed below and have been added as conditions of approval.

Building and Safety:

1. All construction and construction related activities shall be in conformance with current California Building, Residential, Electrical, Mechanical, Plumbing, Fire, Energy and Green Building Codes, and the City of Sebastopol Municipal Code.
2. For the building permit submittal, 5 sets of plans are required along with 2 sets of calculations and reports.
3. Authorized Construction Hours:

Monday through Friday – 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Saturday and Sunday– 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Includes warm-up or servicing of equipment and any preparation for construction.

4. The Planning Conditions of Approval shall be printed on plan sheets in the plan set.
5. The project is required to comply with CalGreen at the Tier I level excluding Division A4.2 *Energy Efficiency*, as adopted and amended by the City. The worksheets can be located on the City's website on the building department page. The worksheets are to be printed on plan sheets in the plan set.
6. The project is required to comply with the City's Mandatory Photovoltaic System Requirements.
7. The project is required to comply with the City's Row House Policy.
8. A geotechnical report is required along with the building permit submittal.

Fire Department:

1. Automatic Fire Sprinklers Suppression System.
2. Fully monitored Building:
 - a. Fire Alarm Control Panel (FACP)
 - b. Smoke and Heat Detection
 - c. Horns and Strobes Notification
 - d. Rapid Entry SupraSafe System (Knox Box)
 - e. 24/7/365 Monitoring by Alarm Company
 - f. Emergency Vehicle Access
 - g. Hammerhead Turnarounds as Required
 - h. Additional New Fire Hydrants as required

Analysis:

Overall, staff is supportive of the project at this stage of its development, but is seeking the Board's feedback and recommendations on the following items as well as any other items they Board may have:

1. Appropriateness of proposed Development Standards
2. Appropriateness of the retaining wall along Bodega Ave.
3. Orientation of the units
4. Relationship to existing development
5. Impacts on offsite trees

Recommendation:

That the Board review the application and provide comments and recommendations on the relationship of the proposed development to the surrounding area, amenities to ensure that they are adequate for the development, and the overall design to the Planning Commission.

Attachments:

Application
Project Plans
Colors/Materials
Public Comments