



City of Santa Ana
20 Civic Center Plaza, Santa Ana, CA 92701
Staff Report
January 19, 2021

TOPIC: GPA No. 2020-07, AA No. 2020-05 - Westview Housing

AGENDA TITLE:

Public Hearing – Environmental Review No. 2020-48, General Plan Amendment No. 2020-07 and Amendment Application No. 2020-05 for the Westview Housing Residential Community at 2530 and 2534 Westminster Avenue (Property Owner: Westminster & Fairview, LLC and Applicant: Community Development Partners)

RECOMMENDED ACTION

1. Approve and adopt Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, Environmental Review No. 2020-48.
2. Adopt a resolution approving General Plan Amendment No. 2020-07.
3. Adopt an ordinance approving Amendment Application No. 2020-05 to establish Specific Development No. 97.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION & BACKGROUND

At its regular meeting on December 14, 2020, and after receiving public testimony on the item, the Planning Commission voted unanimously (5:0 with Contreas-Leo absent) to recommend that the City Council approve and adopt Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, Environmental Review No. 2020-48, General Plan Amendment No. 2020-07, and Amendment Application No. 2020-05 to establish Specific Development No. 97. At the meeting, the Planning Commission added conditions to the Specific Development to conduct a warrant analysis for traffic control measures at 16th Street and Huron Drive and 16th Street and Fairview Street and to refine the elevation along Westminster Avenue (Exhibit 4).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Brian Hendricks, representing Community Development Partners, is requesting approval of two entitlements for Westview Housing, an 85-unit multi-family affordable housing development proposed at 2530 and 2534 Westminster Avenue. Specifically, the applicant is requesting approval of a General Plan Amendment (GPA) to change the property's General Plan land use designation from General Commercial (GC) to Urban

Neighborhood (UN) and approval of an Amendment Application (AA) to change the property's zoning district from General Commercial (C2) to Specific Development No. 97 (SD-97). Staff is recommending approval of the applicant's request as the project provides quality affordable housing along a major transit corridor as well as high-quality site planning and architecture that will bring new investment to the area.

DISCUSSION

Project Background and Chronology – On July 2, 2019, the Community Development Agency issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) soliciting applications to develop affordable housing projects in the City with funds available from the HOME Investments Partnership Program, Community Development Block Grant Program, Rental Rehabilitation Program and Inclusionary Housing Fund. Four proposals were submitted in response to the RFP and a panel consisting of City staff and a consultant reviewed the proposals and interviewed the developer and service provider teams. Community Development Partners, in partnership with Mercy House Living Centers, was the top rated proposal. As such, on April 7, 2020 the City Council approved a pre-commitment of \$3,904,341 of affordable housing funds to Community Development Partners and Mercy House for the proposed development.

In June of 2020, the applicant submitted an application to the City's development review committee. As required by the Sunshine Ordinance, on July 20, 2020 the applicant held a virtual Sunshine Meeting. At the meeting, community members raised concerns about parking and traffic. The Public Works Agency conducted a follow-up meeting on November 12, 2020, to overview the traffic impacts related to the project and future capital improvement projects. A total of five residents participated in the meeting.

Community Development Partners has a portfolio of 22 projects, including three projects in Santa Ana (Tiny Tim/La Placita Cinco, The Aqua, and The Orchard), comprising over 1,600 units.

Table 1: Project and Location Information

Item	Information	
Project Address	2530 and 2534 Westminster Avenue	
Nearest Intersection	Fairview Street and Westminster Avenue	
General Plan Designation	Existing	Proposed
	General Commercial (GC)	Urban Neighborhood (UN)
Zoning Designation	General Commercial (C2)	Specific Development No. 97 (SD-97)
Surrounding Land Uses	North	Commercial
	East	Commercial
	South	Single-family residential
	West	Single-family residential and Commercial
Site Size (combined)	89,559 square feet (2.056 net acres)	
Existing Site Development	Vacant	

Project Analysis

The applicant is requesting approval of the subject entitlements in order to construct an 85-unit affordable housing project. The site is located along Westminster Avenue just west of Fairview Street and has access to Orange County Transportation Authority bus service via Route 560 along Westminster Avenue and Route 47 along Fairview Street. Table 2 provides a detailed summary of the proposed development.

Table 2: Project Summary

	Building A
Units	85 units
Total Building SF	98,169 SF
Unit Mix/Room	23 one-bedrooms (27%) 4 two-bedrooms (5%) 34 three-bedrooms (40%) 24 four-bedrooms (28%)
Unit SF	489 to 523 SF one-bedrooms 756 SF two-bedrooms 933 to 1,101 SF three-bedrooms 1,178 to 1,187 SF four-bedrooms
Height & Stories	3-stories, 35 feet 4-stories, 47 feet
Parking	136 spaces (1.60 spaces per unit)
Open Space/ Amenities	10,655 SF (12%) Common Open Space 4,725 SF Private Open Space (balconies/patios)

The project includes 85 units, office space for service providers, a community room, a meeting room, and laundry rooms. Of the units, 58 will be set aside for extremely low-income households at 30 percent of the Area Median Income, 26 units will be for permanent supportive housing for persons experiencing chronic homelessness, and one unit will be used as a manager's unit. In particular, 10 of the 26 permanent supportive housing units will be for transitional aged youth (i.e. emancipated foster youth). The three- and four-bedroom units will be designated for large families, while the one and two bedroom units designated for permanent supportive housing.

Common open space includes a 5,000-square foot playground and picnic area, two residential rooftop patios, internal courtyards, and community rooms. The playground, lawn and picnic area along Huron Drive will be accessible to the public, but maintained by the property owner and managed by the on-site property manager. The development consists of two buildings that vary from three to four stories in height. The portions of the buildings that are closest to the single-family residential homes will tier-down to three-stories in height. In addition, the playground and parking lot will serve as a buffer between

the multi-family buildings and the single-family homes. The closest home on Huron Drive will have a setback of 50 feet and the properties along 16th Street will be 185 feet from the nearest building. The perimeter of the property will be planted with trees to screen the project.

The project has contemporary architecture with a variety of materials including glass tile arches, wood veneer, batten board siding, art graphics, plaster, and a mix of warm and cool colors. On-site vehicular circulation is designed to provide access from Westminster Avenue (with right-turn in and right-turn out access) to the parking lot that is located behind the buildings. There is no access or egress along Huron, a local residential street.

Additionally, the Public Works Agency obtained input from the neighborhood to the south regarding future street improvements. This included construction of a median on northbound Fairview Street which would remove the ability for a left-hand turn movement onto 16th Street. The neighborhood opted to have the median at Fairview and 16th Streets constructed in the future at a date uncertain and after the completion of Phase I of the Fairview Widening project.

Parking

Table 3: Parking Data

Standard	Rate	Demand	Project Spaces Provided	Difference
State Law	0.5/unit	44 spaces	136 spaces	+92 spaces
The Orchard	0.4/bedroom	91 spaces	136 spaces	+45 space
LADOT Parking Study	0.85/family unit 0.29/permanent supportive housing	57 spaces	136 spaces	+79 spaces

The project provides 136 off-street parking spaces (1.6 parking spaces per unit) with 42 of the spaces in a tandem configuration. The State's Housing Laws requires cities to approve reduced parking ratios at a rate of 0.5 spaces per unit for 100 percent affordable developments within one-half mile of a major transit stop. The project will be 100 percent affordable with major transit stops located at the intersection of Westminster Avenue and Fairview Street. Therefore, per State law, the project requires only 44 parking spaces, but an excess of 92 parking spaces is provided.

In addition, the applicant's traffic and parking consultant Fehr & Peers prepared a parking study which documents that 136 parking spaces are adequate for the project. Fehr & Peers collected parking counts at The Orchard, another affordable housing project in Santa Ana managed by Mercy House and redeveloped by Community Development Partners. A parking rate of 0.40 spaces per bedroom was factored. When applying the

parking demand of 0.40 spaces per bedroom to this project the analysis concluded that 91 parking spaces would be adequate for the project. The study also notes the Los Angeles Department of Transportation's (LADOT) conducted an affordable housing parking study. LADOT collected parking data from affordable housing projects across Los Angeles County and developed rates of 0.85 parking spaces per family unit and 0.29 parking spaces per permanent supportive housing unit. When applying the LADOT rates to the project, the parking demand would result in a higher parking demand of only 57 spaces, which is still less than the 136 spaces provided for the project.

In addition, the project will be managed by an on-site property manager and includes a parking management plan to allocate parking per unit, implement use of stickers/placard identification system and will allocate and manage the tandem stalls which are intended for use by the three and four-bedroom units. In addition, Huron Drive immediately adjacent to the project site is permit-only parking (1510 to 1606 N. Huron Drive and 1605 N. Huron Drive to 2605 W. 16th Street), which will minimize parking intrusion in the neighborhood.

General Plan Amendment

The applicant is requesting approval of a General Plan Amendment to change the General Plan land use designation from General Commercial (GC) to Urban Neighborhood (UN) with a floor area ratio of 1.09 and 42 dwelling units per acre (Exhibit 2). The UN land use designation applies primarily to residential areas with pedestrian oriented commercial uses, schools and small parks. The UN allows for a mix of residential uses and housing types, such as mid to low-rise multiple-family, townhouses and single-family dwellings; with some opportunities for live-work, neighborhood serving retail and service, public spaces and other similar uses. Street connectivity is desirable, allowing for a high degree of walkability, transit options, and other forms of transportation including pedestrian and bicycle travel. The intensity standard for the UN land use ranges from a floor area ratio of 0.5 to 3.0 with the residential density based on a combination of floor area ratio and zoning development standards.

The project is consistent with the intent, character and intensity standards of the UN land use designation. The Westminster Avenue/Seventeenth Street corridor has a variety of existing land use designations which includes Urban Neighborhood, Medium Density Residential, General Commercial, Professional and Administrative Office, District Center and Institutional. Moreover, the project supports and furthers several goals and policies of the General Plan. Specifically, the project supports Land Use Element Goal 1 to promote a balance of land uses to address basic community needs; Housing Element Goal 2 to provide a diversity of quality housing, affordability levels, and living experiences that accommodate Santa Ana's residents and workforce of all household types, income levels, and age groups to foster an inclusive community; and Housing Element Goal 3 to increase opportunities for low and moderate income individuals and families to find quality housing opportunities and afford a greater choice of rental or homeownership opportunities.

Amendment Application

The subject site is zoned General Commercial (C2). The development standards pertaining to the commercial zoning district would render the project unfeasible. Approval of an amendment application to change the zoning district is required for the project (Exhibit 3). The Specific Development (SD) designation allows flexibility of the uses and development standards that are tailored to a unique and specific project. There are two nearby Specific Developments along Westminster Avenue/17th Street: SD No. 36 (Solare Apartment Homes) and, SD No. 41 (San Tropez Apartment Homes). In addition, the proposed project is similar in scale and density with several existing multi-family apartment projects including Solare Apartment Homes, San Tropez Apartment Homes and Villa Portofino which are three-stories and range from 29 to 38 dwelling units per acre. Additionally, the density is similar to the density permitted within the Harbor Mixed-Use Transit Corridor Specific Plan - Transit Node North, which is west of the project site and permits a range of 30 to 50 dwelling units per acre and permits heights between four and ten stories.

If the zone change is approved, site-specific objectives, policies and development standards will be used to guide the development of the proposed project such as setbacks, parking and height to allow the exclusive entitlement of the affordable housing project. The SD document has been drafted to be consistent with the project and prohibits future modifications to enlarge or reduce the size of the project. The zone change needs to be approved in conjunction with the proposed General Plan Amendment in order for the project to be consistent with the General Plan.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

A Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) including several technical studies (Air Quality, Green House Gas, and Energy modeling, Cultural Resource Assessment, Preliminary Geotechnical and Infiltration study, Phase I Environmental Site Assessment, Traffic Impact Analysis, Preliminary WQMP, Noise and Vibration) was prepared for the project. No areas of significance or unavoidable impacts were determined to occur from the construction or operation of the proposed project with the implementation of mitigation measures (Exhibit 1). The MND was available for public review and comment for 20-days as required by CEQA. A total of two comments were received: one from the Orange County Fire Authority and the second from a resident. Written responses to the comments were prepared and incorporated into the environmental document.

As part of the MND and in response to comments received at the Sunshine meeting, a Traffic Impact Analysis prepared by Fehr & Peers and reviewed by the Public Works Agency. The study concludes that the project would generate 462 daily trips (31 a.m. peak trips and 37 p.m. peak trips). The study also analyzed if the project would substantially increase traffic on the adjacent residential streets (16th Street and Huron Drive). Although there is no direct vehicular access or egress to Huron Drive, the project

is anticipated to increase the number of average daily trips on 16th Street and Huron Drive by 83 trips per day. These additional trips would not substantially increase the total number of average daily trips on the neighborhood streets. Therefore, the project is not anticipated to result in a substantial increase to the neighborhood traffic conditions. The project will be required to pay its fair share contribution to improvements at the intersections of Westminster Avenue and Fairview Street, Mar Les Drive and Westminster Avenue, and 16th Street and Fairview Street.

In addition, a Noise and Vibration study was prepared to analyze the potential noise and vibration impacts of the construction and operation of the project including traffic. Construction noise from the project would not exceed 90 dBA Leq during daytime activities and would comply with the SAMC construction hours of 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Per the SAMC, the maximum exterior noise standard is 50 dBA and interior is 45 dBA for residential properties. The project would generate noise from rooftop heating, ventilation, and air conditioning equipment, delivery- and trash-hauling trucks, on-site vehicle circulation and parking, and light outdoor recreation. To mitigate these impacts a 6-foot high block wall will be around the project perimeter with an 8-foot high CMU wall constructed between the playground area and adjacent single-family residence. Mitigation Measures N-1 and N-2 require that the project incorporates exterior building materials (windows, walls, and doors) with sufficient Sound Transmission Class ratings to reduce interior noise levels below 45 dBA and sound attenuation features (i.e. double-paned or laminated glass, plexiglass, or wood) to reduce exterior noise levels for all private balconies/patios fronting Westminster Avenue and Fairview Street. Regarding traffic noise, a fifty percent increase is required for an audible 3 dBA increase in traffic noise levels. However, the increase in traffic generated by the proposed project would only be approximately 1.5 percent, which would increase traffic noise by less than 0.5 CNEL (less than 3 dBA). Therefore, operational noise generated by the project would not exceed the SAMC noise standards and impacts would be less than significant with implementation of the mitigation measures.

The project requires adoption of a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP), which contains mitigation measures to address biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, noise, and tribal cultural resources.

Community Outreach

The applicant held two outreach meetings prior to the Planning Commission hearing. In addition, the applicant knocked on the doors of the properties that immediately abut the site to overview the project, listen to concerns and provided their contact information as an open line of communication. At the Sunshine meeting comments/concerns were raised related to cut-through traffic on 16th Street and Huron Drive, parking intrusion, building heights/setback, the location of trash enclosures and overall management of the project. The site has been designed so that there are no vehicular driveways along Huron Drive therefore, reducing the number of vehicles that may travel through the local residential streets to the project. An excess of 92 parking spaces (per State Housing law) are

provided on site and parking counts at another affordable housing development were obtained and substantiate that the project provides adequate parking. The site has been designed to place the buildings along the northwest portion of the site away from the existing single-family dwellings and the buildings tier down to three-stories as the buildings get closer to the adjacent single-family dwellings. As shown on the landscape plan the south and west lot lines will be planted with a minimum of a 36-inch box tree every 25 feet to screen the project. These site specific designs and standards are codified within the Specific Development No. 97 plan. In addition, a detailed Traffic Impact Analysis was prepared, with the Public Works Agency and Planning staff conducting an outreach meeting to overview the results of the study.

Table 4: CEQA and Public Notification & Community Outreach

CEQA and Public Notification & Community Outreach	
CEQA	
CEQA Type	Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) Environmental Review No. 2020-48, with technical studies was prepared for the project. No areas of significance or unavoidable impacts were determined to occur from the construction or operation of the proposed project with the implementation of mitigation measures (Exhibit 1). The project requires adoption of a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP), which contains mitigation measures to address biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, noise, and tribal cultural resources.
Public Notification	A notice of intent and MND was circulated to interested parties and published in the Orange County Register on November 6, 2020. The draft MND was available for a 20-day public review at City Hall and on the project webpage on the City's website.
Public Notification & Community Outreach	
Required Measures	A virtual community meeting was held on July 20, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. in accordance with the provisions of the City's Sunshine Ordinance and in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Invitations/notices were mailed to property owners and occupants/tenants in a 500-foot radius from the project site. There were approximately 19 Zoom participants. The applicant provided all the required information to the City after the meeting. Details from the community meeting were posted to the project's webpage at https://www.santa-ana.org/pb/planning-division/major-planning-projects-and-monthly-development-project-reports/Westview-Housing
	Notification by mail was mailed to all property owners and occupants within 500 feet of the project site on January 8, 2021.
	Newspaper posting was published in the Orange County Register on January 8, 2021.

CEQA and Public Notification & Community Outreach	
Additional Measures	On November 12, 2020 the Public Works Agency and Planning Division staff held a neighborhood meeting to discuss the Traffic Impact Analysis for the project and future capital improvements. Five residents participated.
	On December 3, 2020, the applicant held a virtual meeting with the neighborhood to provide a status update on the project. On December 12, 2020, the applicant hand-delivered notices to the properties that share a property line with project inviting them to meet personally with the development team and providing their contact information.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis provided within this report, staff recommends that the City Council adopt Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, Environmental Review No. 2020-48, adopt a resolution approving General Plan Amendment No. 2020-07 and adopt an ordinance approving Amendment Application No. 2020-05.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with approval of this action.

EXHIBIT(S)

1. Resolution Adopting the MND and MMRP
2. Resolution Approving GPA No. 2020-07
3. Ordinance Approving AA No. 2020-05
4. Planning Commission Staff Report Dated December 14, 2020
5. Full Set of Plans

Submitted By:

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Approved By: Kristine Ridge, City Manager