

# Agenda Report

DATE: AUGUST 1, 2005

**TO:** CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** CYNTHIA KURTZ, CITY MANAGER

**SUBJECT:** PRELIMINARY PLAN REVIEW FOR PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT ON THE AMBASSADOR WEST CAMPUS AT 300 W. GREEN ST.  
PAC2005-00012 -- COUNCIL DISTRICT 6

## **RECOMMENDATION**

This report is being provided for information only at this time.

## **BACKGROUND**

The proposed project is located in the West Gateway Specific Plan. The Ambassador College has been closed for several years. Five homes along Orange Grove were sold for private residences. In 1999 – 2004, there were two unsuccessful attempts to redevelop the campus. Subsequently, Maranatha High School and Harvest Rock Church purchased an easterly portion of the block including the Ambassador Auditorium and the parking structure/track. The applicants for this PAC project, Sunrise Senior Living Inc., Standard Pacific Homes, and Dorn-Platz have purchased the remainder of the former Ambassador College West Campus (between S. Orange Grove Blvd., W. Green St., St. John Ave., and W. Del Mar Blvd.).

## **Project Description**

The proposed new construction consists of two new construction projects (Sheet 1.5 of Attachment 1). On the north edge of the block, Sunrise Senior Living, Inc., proposes to construct 32 senior assisted living units and 190 condominium units comprising a senior life/care facility in two six-story buildings with a total of 468,000 square feet. The facility will provide a continuum of care options, ranging from congregate meals to Alzheimer care.

The second form of new construction is proposed as 70 two- and three-story condominium units (228,000 s.f.) to be constructed by Standard Pacific Homes.

These will be grouped in three distinct portions of the block, at the northwest corner of the block, in the middle of the block and along Del Mar Blvd. All but a few of the new parking spaces will be subterranean, and existing driveways (sometimes slightly relocated) are proposed to access the parking.

In order to provide sites for new construction, demolition of the campus Library, Health Center, Television Facility, Fine Arts Hall, Science Hall, Olcott House, and Hall of Administration, totaling approximately 147,000 square feet, will need to be demolished (Section 6.6 of Attachment 1). Proposed new construction totals 696,000 square feet.

Several buildings in the block are proposed to be converted to new uses. For example, historic apartment buildings that had been used as dorms by the College are proposed to be converted back to apartments. A two-story mansion is proposed to become the main offices for Dorn-Platz. The lushly landscaped grounds will be preserved for use of the future residents, members of Harvest Rock Church, Maranatha High School students and staff, and the general public.

### **PREAPPLICATION CONFERENCE SUMMARY**

On July 20, 2005, staff conducted a Preapplication Conference, previously called Preliminary Plan Review (PPR), with the applicants. The purpose of the Preapplication Conference is to identify the requirements of the various city departments and to give developers direction regarding their projects. The meeting identified the following discretionary actions and issues:

**Land Use Entitlements:** The proposed 70 residential condominium units are permitted uses in the Zoning Code for this WGSP- 1b zoning district, and the proposed 222 unit senior life/care facility is permitted subject to approval of a discretionary Conditional Use Permit. In order to develop to this density, the applicant requests a transfer of development rights from other parts of the site.

Both projects are subject to the City of Gardens standards. Although, the architects anticipated the applicability of City of Gardens standards for the residential condominiums, they did not anticipate them for the senior units, 190 of which are also proposed as condominiums. Because the senior units include various levels of required services, it is difficult for the complex to meet the City of Gardens standards. The applicant is also requesting deviations from the City of Gardens standards for the residential condos because the project is designed to take advantage of the historic character of the site and because of a wealth of gardens that will be available to future residents. City staff acknowledges that the City of Gardens standards were not designed for a site of this size, nor for a site that includes surrounding gardens such as these.

The revised zoning code has a new option, called an Adjustment Permit, which is available to the City and applicants as a means of approving deviations to the

development standards that will result in an improved design. The submittal states that the applicant intends to file for an Adjustment Permit (see Section 6.9 for potential adjustments that will be needed).

Another discretionary review will be a Tentative Tract Map.

**Environmental:** Since the two previous projects on this site required Environmental Impact Reports, it is anticipated that this project will also require an EIR. Anticipated environmental issues are in the areas of Biological Resources (including the effects on significant trees), Aesthetics, Traffic and Circulation, Air Quality, Land Use, Utilities and Services (including Sewer impacts), and Cultural Resources.

**Traffic and Circulation:** A traffic study is required and will be submitted for review by the Transportation Department as part of the EIR. Any required traffic mitigation measures will be determined by the traffic study and EIR.

**Design:** The municipal code requires design review of all new construction of 25,000 square feet or more and all City of Gardens projects. Projects of this scale are reviewed by the Design Commission. Preservation of mature trees and design relationships (proximity, siting, design compatibility, etc.) of the new construction to the historic buildings and garden areas on the site will be evaluated as part of the entitlement process.

**Inclusionary Housing Plan:** The project will be required to submit an Inclusionary Housing Plan that fulfills the requirements of the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance. The ordinance requires that 15% of the residential units be available for families or persons of restricted income. The applicants have stated their intention to provide affordable units on the site for the residential condominium units. The developers do not believe the senior units are subject to the ordinance.

**Park Fees:** In-lieu of park fees, the applicant has proposed to provide public access and use of various gardens, lawns, and open spaces on the property via easements.

**Timeline:** The following timeline outlines the major steps in the process for reviewing and approving this project:

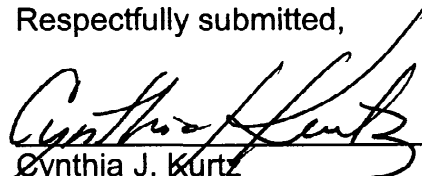
7/20/05	Preapplication Conference (PAC) between applicant and City department representatives
8/1/05	Preliminary Plan Review (PPR) before City Council
8/05	Application submitted for Tentative Tract Map, Conditional Use Permit and Zoning Adjustment permit
8/05	Authorization of EIR Contract by City Council
2/06	Completion of Draft EIR

- 2/06 to 3/06 Review of Draft EIR by Commissions (Historic Preservation, Design, and Transportation Advisory if it meets thresholds), City Council (Public Hearing), and Public
- 6/06 Certification of Final EIR by City Council
- 8/06 Review of CUP and Adjustment Permit by Planning Commission (Public Hearing)
- 9/06 Review of CUP and Adjustment Permit by City Council (Public Hearing)
- 9/06 Submittal of Concept Design Review
- 11/06 Design Commission Review of Concept Design Review (Public Hearing)
- 1/07 Submittal of Final Design Review
- 2/07 Review of Final Design by Design Commission

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The developer will pay fees for the required discretionary actions and the cost of the Environmental Impact Report. The project will also generate plan check, permit fees and construction tax.

Respectfully submitted,



Cynthia J. Kurtz  
City Manager

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Approved by:



Richard J. Bruckner  
Director of Planning & Development

Attachment: Submittal Package

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