

Agenda Report

TO: CITY COUNCIL

DATE: FEBRUARY 11, 2008

FROM: CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: PREDEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW FOR TWO NEW OFFICE BUILDINGS TOTALING 72,000 SQUARE FEET AT 221 E. WALNUT STREET (PARK CENTER)

RECOMMENDATION:

This report is being provided for information only.

BACKGROUND:

The owner of the property, Park Center Limited Partnership, has submitted a proposal to construct two new office buildings totaling 72,000 square feet with underground parking and storage areas and retain the existing office building totaling 63,000 square feet. Since this project is of community wide significance, as defined by the City's Preliminary Plan Review guidelines, staff is presenting this item to the City council for information purposes.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The project site is bounded by Corson Street and the 210-Freeway on the north, Garfield Avenue and Ninde Place Alley on the east, Walnut Street on the south and Marengo Avenue on the west. The southern portion of the site is developed with a 2-story office building and the northern portion is developed with a surface parking lot. The applicant proposed to construct two new building with underground parking where the surface parking lot is currently located. The first building (at the southern portion of the parking lot) would be two-stories high and have an area of 50,000 square feet. The second building (along Corson Street) would be three-stories high and have an area of 22,000 square feet. The parking structure would include 359 parking spaces and various storage areas. Access to the site would remain off Marengo Avenue with emergency access off Garfield Avenue.

The site is located in the Central District Specific Plan, Sub-Area 2 (Civic Center/Midtown). Therefore, the project must conform to the City's Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Standards.

DISCRETIONARY REVIEWS:

The project will require three zoning entitlements, a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a project over 25,000 square feet in size, a Minor Conditional Use Permit (MCUP) for a Transit Oriented Development (TOD) and MCUP for tandem parking. Following approval of the CUP and MCUPs by the Hearing Officer, the Design Commission will review the design of the new construction.

PREDEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW SUMMARY:

On January 8, 2008, staff conducted a meeting between the applicant and the interested City Departments. The meeting identified the following issues:

Environmental Review: An initial environmental study will be prepared. This study will identify potential areas of impact. Areas anticipated to require further study included traffic and air quality. The initial study will determine if the project will require an Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

Traffic and Parking: The existing office building provides 2.4 parking spaces per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area, for a total of 150 spaces, as required by the Zoning Code when the building was constructed in 1975.

The TOD reduced parking standards and parking caps typically apply to new construction located in the Central District and near Gold Line stations. However, since the applicant is demolishing the surface parking lot and constructing a new parking structure for the existing and new buildings, the TOD parking standards have been incorporated for the entire project. The TOD parking standard for office uses is 2.25 spaces per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area. The existing building would then require 142 parking spaces and the new buildings and underground storage areas would require 215 spaces for a total of 357 spaces. This would be the minimum and maximum number of parking spaces permitted.

The applicant proposes to construct a 359 space subterranean parking structure, which would be two spaces over the maximum permitted. The applicant will be required to reduce the number of parking spaces, or submit a CUP application to provide commercial parking for public use. This CUP would be reviewed concurrently with the other zoning entitlements.

The traffic study will evaluate increased traffic in the immediate area and access to the subterranean parking structure. The Transportation Department anticipates the project may require secondary access to the subterranean parking.

Transit Oriented Development: Due to the project's location in the Central District, the project must obtain an MCUP in order to ensure compliance with the City's TOD standards. One of the findings will require the applicant to design the project in such a way as to enhance pedestrian access and other non-motorized modes of transportation to public transit. The project must also encourage pedestrian activity. The applicant will need to further enhance the Marengo Avenue frontage by incorporating building design elements that will help encourage pedestrian activity and enhance pedestrian access.

TIMELINE:

The date the applicant will choose to submit is uncertain at this time. Therefore, the following is an outline of the approximate time involved in the stages of review for this project. A precise schedule will be prepared when the application is submitted.

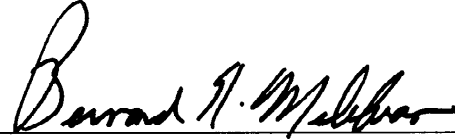
Date	Activity
January 8, 2008	Convene Preliminary Plan Review meeting with the applicant
February 11, 2008	Present Preliminary Plan Review to City Council
Unknown	Applicant submits CUP and MCUP applications
30 days	Review and determine completeness of the applications
60 days	<u>Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Review studies o Prepare draft environmental documents o Circulate environmental documents for review and comment
30-45 days	<u>Hearing Officer reviews environmental documents and application</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Prepare, mail and post the public notice o Post the environmental determination at LA County o 20-day review for the environmental determination o Preparation of the staff report o Hearing Officer public hearing
60 days	<u>Design Review process</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Applicant submits Design Review application o Review and determine completeness of application o Prepare, mail and post the public notice o Preparation of the staff report o Concept Design Review with Design Commission o 50 Percent and Final Design Review with Design Commission

The above timeline assumes the project will not need an environmental impact report. If one is required, at least an additional six months will be necessary.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The applicant would pay fees for the discretionary actions. The project would also generate plan check and permit fees. In addition, the project would generate property tax revenues not currently assessed.

Respectfully submitted,



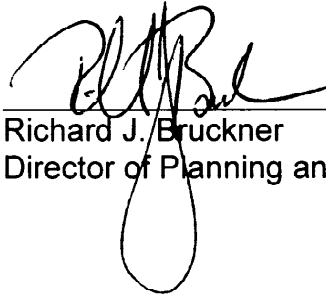
BERNARD K. MELEKIAN
City Manager

Prepared by:



Jason C. Mikaelian
Senior Planner

Approved by:



Richard J. Bruckner
Director of Planning and Development

Attachment: PPR Plans