

Agenda Report

TO: City Council **DATE:** December 7, 1998
FROM: City Manager
SUBJECT: General Plan Amendment and Zone Change for property located at 982 Seco Street.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council following a public hearing:

1. Approve the Initial Environmental Study and the Mitigated Negative Declaration (Attachment 4);
2. Adopt the Environmental Mitigation Measures and the Mitigation Monitoring Program (Attachment 4);
3. Approve the De Minimis Impact Finding on the State Fish and Wildlife Habitat (Attachment 5);
4. Find that the proposed expansion of PD-7 is consistent with the General Plan, and meets the purposes of the Zoning Code, Section 17.44.010, as stated in the body of the report;
5. Approve the Zone Change from RM-32 (Multi-family Residential, 0-32 units/acre) to PD-7 (Planned Development-7) and General Plan Amendment from MHDR (Medium-High Density Residential, 0-32 units) to GC (General Commercial), as shown in the attached map, in accordance with the proposed development standards outlined in the attached Planned Development Plan (Attachment 1, Attachment 2, and Attachment 3) and direct the City Attorney to prepare an ordinance;
6. Direct the City Clerk to file a Notice of Determination (Attachment 6) and a Certificate of Fee Exemption for the California Department of Fish and Game, with the Los Angeles County Recorder;
7. Approve a General Plan Amendment for the property located at 982 Seco Street from MHDR to GC, as shown in the attached map, and direct the City Attorney to prepare a resolution.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this General Plan Amendment from MHDR to GC and Zone Change from RM-32 to PD-7 is to allow the construction of a 6,800 square foot addition to an existing printing service business at 980 Seco Street. This proposal would extend the current Zoning (PD-7) and General Plan (GC) designations of the business site onto an adjacent, vacant lot at 982 Seco Street. The proposed one-story addition consists of 5,800 square feet of warehouse/storage space and 1,000 square feet of office space.

A neighborhood meeting was held on September 17, 1998 where residents raised no opposition to the project. The Northwest Commission on October 14, 1998 reviewed and unanimously approved the proposal with no changes to staff's recommendation. The Design Commission reviewed and unanimously approved the proposal on October 26, 1998. They suggested modifications to proposed development standards numbers 9 and 11, which are reflected in Attachment 1. On October 28, 1998, the Planning Commission also unanimously approved the proposal with the modifications suggested by the Design Commission.

BACKGROUND

On April 15, 1998, the applicant, Dave Szany submitted a Pre-Development Plan Review (PPR) application for a 6,800 square-foot addition to be used as storage area and office space to an existing printing business, Licher Direct Mail, Inc. located at 980 Seco Street. The addition is proposed at 982 Seco Street on a 15,960 square-foot vacant parcel that is located adjacent to the printing business. At the PPR meeting, comments were received from various departments within the City, and it was determined that the Zoning and General Plan designation of the vacant parcel do not allow the proposed use. Therefore, a General Plan Amendment and Zone Change are necessary prior to the approval and construction of the addition.

ANALYSIS

The applicant is proposing to construct a one-story addition to the business consisting of 5,800 square feet of storage/warehouse space and 1,000 square feet of office space (Attachment 8). The existing building's design blends in well with the surrounding residential area. The business has been operating at this location for over forty (40) years with no record of complaints from the neighbors. The hours of operation of the business are 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Tuesday through Friday. They are expecting to hire up to four (4) additional employees as a result of the expansion.

In essence, this proposal would extend the current Zoning (PD-7) and General Plan (GC) designations of the existing business site onto the vacant lot. The PD designation is appropriate for the site because the proposal is for a commercial use within a residential area in need of its own specific standards. In addition, the expansion of the existing PD provides an opportunity to revisit the site's development standards and bring them up to date with the surrounding area.

General Plan: The addition is proposed on a lot that is designated MHDR (Medium-High Density Residential, 0-32 units/acre). Surrounding General Plan designations include GC (General Commercial) to the south where the printing business is located, MHDR to the north, LDR (Low Density Residential, 0-6 units/acre) to the west, and LMDR (Low-Medium Density Residential, 2 dwelling units per lot) to the east (Attachment 5). The new designation permits business service uses such as the proposed use, and is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Land Use Element.

Zoning: The zoning designation of the lot where the addition is proposed is RM-32 (Multi-family Residential, 0-32 units/acre). Surrounding Zoning designations include PD-7 (Planned Development-7) to the south where the printing business is located, RM-32 to the north, RS-4 HD (Single-family Residential, 0-4 units/acre, Hillside Overlay District) to the west, and RM-12 (Multi-family residential, 0-12 units/acre) and RS-6 (Single-family residential, 0-6 units/acre) to the east (Attachment 6). The newly created PD-7 is consistent with the use proposed as a result of the addition. The PD Zone designation is appropriate for the proposed development because it meets the specific purposes of the Planned Development District as established in the Pasadena Municipal Code, Section 17.44.010.

Land Uses: The project site is currently vacant. Sole access to the existing printing business is a driveway entrance from Seco Street into the parking lot on the southern portion of the site. An additional driveway exists leading into the vacant parcel where the addition is proposed. The applicant has stated that this driveway will lead into the proposed warehouse to serve as a secondary loading area.

NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING

A neighborhood meeting was held September 17, 1998 at the City Yards. Initially, a concern in regards to noise was raised by one of the residents. The applicant responded that no new equipment is being installed, and that the additional space would be used solely for storage of material and additional office space. A neighbor who has lived in the area for many years complimented the business' operation and their continual ability to exist in the neighborhood with minimal impact. In addition, staff received calls from neighbors prior to the meeting in support of the project.

The Planning and Permitting Department received a letter dated October 6, 1998 from a resident of the adjacent condominiums in favor of the project. However, concerns were raised in the letter regarding the side setback, traffic, and visual impacts. Staff suggests in the attached Proposed Development Standards the planting of trees and full landscaping of the entire side setback along the shared property line. The Public Works and Transportation Department have determined that the increase in traffic as a result of the project is negligible.

NORTHWEST COMMISSION

The proposal was presented to the Northwest Commission for review and comments at its October 14, 1998 meeting, and it was unanimously approved. No changes to staff's recommendation were made.

DESIGN COMMISSION

The proposal was presented to the Design Commission for review and comments at its October 26, 1998 meeting. The Commission commented on the purpose and intent of the 6-foot block wall recommended by staff along the north property line. Because of the difference in elevation of the adjacent condominiums, the Design Commission felt that the block wall would not serve its purpose, and may also be unsightly. As a result, the Design Commission suggested changing development standard number 11 to require an ornamental steel fence treated with planting material rather than the block wall. In addition, development standard number 9 was changed at the request of the applicant to not require turf block along the northerly driveway, and allow more flexibility with its treatment to be determined in design review.

PLANNING COMMISSION

The Planning Commission reviewed the proposal at their hearing on October 28, 1998. There were questions regarding the designation and use of the property in the future when the property is sold or the operation of the business is terminated. Staff addressed the question by noting that the proposed PD substantially limits the allowable uses for the property. Any changes or amendments to the PD would require a formal application submittal and review. No one spoke in opposition to the project. The Commission unanimously approved the General Plan Amendment and Zone Change with the suggestions made by the Design Commission and minor modifications to staff's Proposed Development Standards (Attachment 9).

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

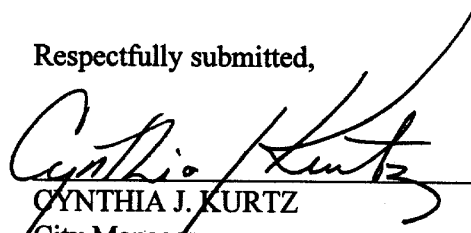
An Initial Study was prepared for the proposal (Attachment 4) in conformance with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). According to a soils report prepared in September, 1992, poorly compacted fill underlies the site, and cadmium and lead contamination were detected in the surficial samples. The contamination of the soil has been addressed through mitigation measures added to the project.

Therefore, it was found that there will not be a significant effect on the environment because of the mitigation measures added to the project (details of mitigation measures are discussed in the attached Mitigation Measures Monitoring Program). A Mitigated Negative Declaration has been prepared. The staff report recommends that the City Council approve the Initial Study and the Mitigated Negative Declaration, and direct the City Clerk to file a Notice of Determination with the County Recorder.

CONCLUSION

A General Plan Amendment and Zone Change are necessary to permit the applicant to construct a 6,800 square foot storage and office area. The proposal is consistent with the goals and objectives of the General Plan, and it meets the intent of the PD Zoning regulations. If approved, the addition will support a business that has been located in Northwest Pasadena for over 40 years, and improves the appearance of a lot that has been vacant for several years.

Respectfully submitted,



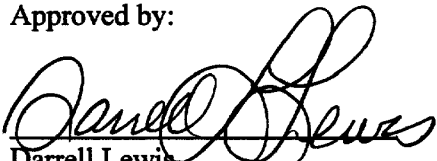
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City Manager

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Darrell Lewis
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Michelle Beal Bagneris
City Attorney

Attachments

1. Proposed Development Standards for Expanded Planned Development – PD-7
2. Map of Surrounding General Plan Designations
3. Map of Surrounding Zoning Designations
4. Initial Environmental Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration
5. De Minimis Impact Finding
6. Notice of Determination
7. Site Plan & Elevations of Proposed Storage Area and Office Addition
8. Planning Commission Recommendation