



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO
MANAGER'S REPORT

DATE ISSUED: May 29, 2002
REPORT NO.
02-129

ATTENTION: Honorable Mayor and City Council
Docket of June 4, 2002

SUBJECT: YMCA Friars Road, Appeal of Decision by Planning Commission,
Conditional Use Permit/ Site Development Permit/MHPA Boundary Line
Adjustment, Council District 6, Process 4

OWNER/
APPLICANT: YMCA of San Diego

SUMMARY:

Issues - Should the City Council deny the appeal and uphold the Planning Commission's decision to approve Conditional Use Permit (amending Conditional Use Permit No. 91-0215)/Site Development Permit (SDP) No. 5244 to modify an existing YMCA facility and a deviation to allow a 13-foot front yard setback where 25 feet is required and approve a Multi-Habitat Planning Area (MHPA) Boundary Adjustment?

City Manager's Recommendations - The City Manager recommends that the City Council deny the appeal of the Planning Commission action and uphold the approval of the YMCA project by taking the following actions:

1. CERTIFY Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) No. 40-0596 and adopt (MMRP); and
2. APPROVE CUP/SDP/DEVIATION Permit No. 5244 and MHPA Boundary Adjustment, subject to conditions (Attachment 4).

Planning Commission Recommendation - On April 4, 2002, the Planning Commission voted unanimously to approve Conditional Use Permit/Site Development Permit No. 5244.

Community Planning Group Recommendation - The Mission Valley Unified Planning Organization voted 16-0-0 to recommend approval of the project on December 6, 2000 (Attachment 5).

Environmental Impact - Mitigated Negative Declaration No. LDR 40-0596 has been prepared for this project in accordance with State CEQA guidelines. The Mitigated Negative Declaration concludes that the project will have no significant environmental effect and the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will not be required.

Fiscal Impact: The cost of processing this project is paid for by the applicant by deposit account.

Code Enforcement Impact - None with this action.

Housing Affordability Impact - None with this action.

BACKGROUND

The project before the City Council is an appeal of the Planning Commission's decision to approve a Conditional Use Permit(CUP)/Site Development Permit (SDP) and a Multi-Habitat Planning Area (MHPA) Boundary Adjustment and to certify the associated MND No. LDR 40-0596. The project was approved by the Planning Commission on April 4, 2002 and was appealed by the River Valley Preservation Project and the Sierra Club. The project is located at 5505 Friars Road in Mission Valley on an 8.3-acre site leased from the City of San Diego and contains an existing YMCA, *built in 1981*. The project proposes to modify the existing facility by demolishing 2,801 square feet of space and renovating 7,913 square feet of building area, adding 24,372 square feet of building area, adding a 50-meter pool, removing three tennis courts and an in-line hockey rink, and adding 146 paved parking stalls within two surface parking areas.

The project is located within the RS-1-1 (Residential Single Unit) and OF 1-1 Zones (Open Space Floodplain) in the Mission Valley Community Planning Area. As the site contains Environmentally Sensitive Lands (ESL) a Site Development Permit is required per Section 143.0110 of the Land Development Code (LDC). The CUP would amend existing Conditional Use Permit 91-0215 approved by Planning Commission on January 10, 1980 (Attachment 6) which permitted the original YMCA facility, and proposes to allow a 13-foot front yard setback where 25 feet is required.

DISCUSSION

The project is located on the south side of Friars Road east of Interstate 5 between Napa Street

and Colusa Street, and is west of the Fashion Valley Shopping Center and the River Walk golf Course (Attachment 1). The project is bounded by Friars Road on the north, existing condominium units to the east, the San Diego River to the south and west. Surrounding properties to the south are zoned OF-1-1 (Open Space Floodplain) and to the west are zoned RS-1-1 (Residential Single Unit) and OF-1-1 (Open Space Floodplain) and are designated for Open Space land uses in the Mission Valley Community Plan, to the east are zoned RM-3-7 (Residential Multiple Unit) and are designated for Residential land uses and to the north are zoned CO-1-2 (Commercial Office) and are designated for Institutional land uses in the Linda Vista Community Plan.

The YMCA project is consistent with the adopted Mission Valley Community Plan which designates this property for commercial recreation land uses. The environmentally sensitive portion of the site along the San Diego River will be protected as recommended by the community plan by the permit conditions and environmental mitigation measures.

The project proposes to modify the existing YMCA by increasing on-site building area to 73,957 square feet. This is comprised of 35,730 square feet of existing building space and 24,372 square feet of new construction, 7,913 square feet of renovated building area, and the existing 8,743 square-foot indoor pool facility and demolition of 2,801 square feet. Included in the project is a proposal to provide a 13-foot front yard setback for fencing and lighting standards to accommodate a proposed 50-meter pool where 25-foot setback is required by the RS-1-1 zone.

PROJECT ELEMENTS

MHPA Boundary Line Adjustment

Approximately 1.0 acre of the southern portion of the project site is presently a part of the Multi-Habitat Planning Area (MHPA), or preserve area of the City of San Diego's Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) Subarea (see Attachment 7). The on-site MHPA area is presently comprised of 0.97 acre of disturbed dirt parking and lawn area, 0.03 acre of developed area, 87 square feet of southern willow scrub and 0.03 acre of southern willow scrub canopy. The applicant proposes to adjust the MHPA boundary by removing the 0.34 acre of disturbed area on-site, and adding 0.45 acre of non-native grassland and southern willow scrub located to the southwest of the project site. The proposed addition is contiguous to the MHPA and owned by the City of San Diego. City staff has determined, with concurrence from the wild life agencies (United States Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Game), that the proposed adjustment would be consistent with the biological resource goals of the City MSCP Subarea Plan and the Final MSCP Plan.

Front Yard Setback Deviation

The project as proposed complies with all relevant regulations of the Land Development Code except for the front yard setback requirement. The proposed fencing and light standards at the north end of the 50-meter pool would observe a 13-foot six-inch setback where 25 feet is

required. Staff has determined that the deviation is justified due to physical constraints on the southern portion of the site. The 100-year flood plain of the San Diego River cuts diagonally across the southern half of the property limiting the placement of the pool. Locating the pool any further south than proposed, to accommodate the 25-foot requirement, would encroach into the flood plain.

Hydrology

Because of a prohibition against raising the grade of the proposed lower parking lot expansion within the floodway, storm runoff is proposed to be eliminated through the use of Pervious Concrete Pavement (PCP), which is a fine mixture of mineral aggregate (pea gravel), Portland Cement, and water. The PCP allows infiltration at a high rate, but is limited by the percolation rates of the subgrade materials. To assess the viability of PCP for the site, percolation tests were performed in the subgrade materials beneath the lower parking area. The tests results indicate an average percolation rate of approximately 15 minutes per inch in the subgrade material one foot below the existing grade. This would allow the infiltration of storm water at an average rate of four inches per hour per square foot of pavement. The rainfall intensity for the 10-year and 100-year storms is on the order of 1.9 inches per hour and 2.6 inches per hour, per square foot respectively. Therefore, it appears the PCP and subgrade would adequately accommodate either storm level.

To reduce the impacts of an increase in peak runoff to the drain system along the eastern boundary of the site, a portion of the new upper parking lot in the eastern portion of the site would be utilized as a storm water detention basin. It is estimated that 32,000 cubic feet of water can be detained within the new upper parking lot and would allow for the detention of 10-year peak discharge for approximately 3.1 hours and the 100-year peak discharge for approximately 2.6 hours.

Water Quality

Proposed post-construction water quality Best Management Practices (BMPs) consist of Pervious Concrete Pavement and a catch basin filter at the outlet on the storm drain along the easterly boundary of the site referred to above. Discharge from the pool area would diverted be to the sanitary sewer to prevent highly chlorinated pool water from entering the natural environment. With the implementation of the BMPs and the proposed on-site storm drain system, staff has determined that the proposal is consistent with the MHPA Land Use Adjacency Guidelines with respect to drainage and toxics. Urban pollutants transported by storm water would be filtered on site, and therefore, would not drain directly into the MHPA directly south of the project. In addition, the project design for the parking area also incorporates a vegetative wetland buffer between the proposed parking area and adjacent riparian habitat within the MHPA. The buffer would range from 10 to 25 feet in width and would be revegetated with native species.

APPEAL

After the hearing held on April 4, 2002, an application to appeal the Planning Commission's decision was filed by the River Valley Preservation Project and the Sierra Club. The appellants listed 9 items for the appeal, primarily indicating that the property is designated as open space and not an office zone, that the project would add building area in the floodplain and that building parking is inconsistent with the Open Space Zoning portion of the property. Staff has reviewed the appeal issues and believes that the project as proposed meets the requirements of the underlying zoning regulations and is consistent with the land use designation identified within the Mission Valley Community Plan. A detailed response to each issue is attached as a separate report (Attachment 9).

CONCLUSION

Staff recommends denial of the appeal and approval of the project. Staff's analysis of the issues identified in the appeal indicates that the office space is appropriate for the Commercial Recreation land use designation and the RS-1-1 (Residential) and OF-1-1 (Open Space Floodplain) zoning, that the parking is not the primary use and as such is allowed in the Open Space zone and that the project is consistent with the Mission Valley Community Plan. Other than the frontyard setback deviation for which the project seeks a CUP amendment, the project is in conformance with all development regulations of the underlying zones.

The Mission Valley Unified Planning Organization voted 16-0-0 to recommend approval of the project on December 6, 2002. The Planning Commission also received a letter from the Mission Valley Community Council supporting the project.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Approve the appeal and deny the project
2. Uphold the Planning Commission's decision and approve the project with modifications.

Respectfully submitted,

Tina P. Christiansen, A.I.A.
Development Services Director

Approved: P. Lamont Ewell
Assistant City Manager

CHRISTIANSEN:MED

Note: Only Attachment No. 9 is available in electronic format. A copy of all other attachments is available for review in the Office of the City Clerk.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Project Location Map
2. Project Data
3. Project Site Plans
4. Draft Permit
5. Draft Permit Resolution/ Findings
6. Copy of recorded (existing) CUP No. 91-0215
7. Figure 5, Proposed MHPA Boundary Line Adjustment
8. Community Plan Map
9. [YMCA Friars Road CUP/SDP Appeal Issues and Responses](#)