



**DATE:** January 14, 2020

**CATEGORY:** Public Hearing

**DEPT.:** Community Development

**TITLE:** **Rowhouse Development at 851 and 853 Sierra Vista Avenue**

### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. Approve a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Sierra Vista Rowhouse Project in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (Attachment 1 to the Council report).
2. Adopt a Resolution Approving a General Plan Land Use Map Amendment for the Property Located at 851 Sierra Vista Avenue from General Industrial to Medium-Density Residential, to be read in title only, further reading waived (Attachment 2 to the Council report).
3. Introduce an Ordinance Amending the Zoning Map for the Properties Located at 851 and 853 Sierra Vista Avenue from the R3-2/sd (Multiple-Family Residential/Special Design) and MM-40 (General Industrial) Districts to R3-2 (Multiple-Family Residential), to be read in title only, further reading waived, and set a second reading for January 28, 2020 (Attachment 3 to the Council report).
4. Adopt a Resolution Conditionally Approving a Planned Unit Development Permit and Development Review Permit to Construct a Nine-Unit Rowhouse Development and Heritage Tree Removal Permit to Remove Six Heritage Trees at 851 and 853 Sierra Vista Avenue, to be read in title only, further reading waived (Attachment 4 to the Council report).
5. Adopt a Resolution Conditionally Approving a Tentative Map for Nine Residential Condominium Units Located at 851 and 853 Sierra Vista Avenue, to be read in title only, further reading waived (Attachment 5 to the Council report).

## **BACKGROUND**

### **Project Site**

The 0.56-acre project site is located on the northeast corner of Sierra Vista Avenue and Colony Street. Surrounding uses include three-story rowhouse projects to the east and south (across Colony Street), and one- and two-story single-family homes to the north and west (across Sierra Vista Avenue). There is a City park located just to the north of the site, at the southeast corner of Plymouth Street and Sierra Vista Avenue. The project site is currently developed with three single-family homes and a small industrial/warehouse building which would be demolished for the project.



**Location Map**

### **Previous Hearings and Meetings**

#### *Development Review Committee*

The project was reviewed by the Development Review Committee (DRC) in April 2019 and August 2019. The DRC recommended approval of the project with design conditions requiring that the applicant provide design details and introduce additional landscape and pavers in the design. The applicant has begun to address these conditions and will continue to work with staff to refine these elements through the building permit process.

#### *Environmental Planning Commission Public Hearing*

The Environmental Planning Commission (EPC) held a public hearing on December 4, 2019, where members unanimously recommended approval of the project ([Attachment 6](#)). No one from the public spoke at the meeting, and one letter of support was received regarding the project (Attachment 7).

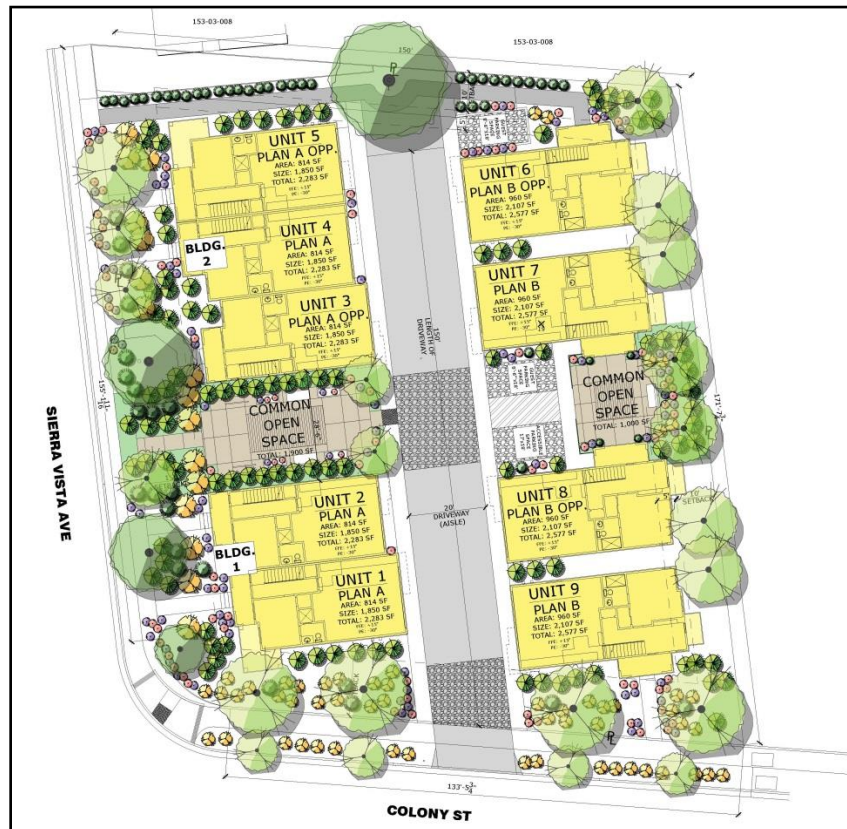
## ANALYSIS

### Project Description

The project proposes to redevelop the site with nine ownership rowhome units, a private driveway, guest parking spaces, and two common open space areas. All nine units are four-bedroom units and range in size from 2,283 square feet to 2,577 square feet (Attachment 8).

The proposed site layout consists of units facing Sierra Vista Avenue, Colony Street, and the common space areas. The site's driveway access is from Colony Street and serves the garages of all nine units. Internal sidewalks along the driveway and from the public streets connect to the units, common open space areas, and provide a pedestrian route to the internal portions of the site, where the garages and guest parking are located.

The architecture is traditional in nature with Craftsman elements, such as porches and balconies, composition shingles, railings and porch columns with stone bases, and gable and shed roof forms; architectural details include corbels and brackets. Units are differentiated through massing, exterior materials, projections and offsets, porch elements, exterior materials, and color, including the side and rear elevations for visual interest. The site is laid out with visible front doors and substantial porches facing the street. In addition, front doors and porches also face common open areas. The proposed architecture is compatible with the varied architectural styles in the neighborhood.



Site Plan



**View of the proposed project from Colony Street and Sierra Vista Avenue Intersection**

The project would demolish the existing three single-family homes, currently, all occupied by renters, and small industrial/warehouse building on the site. To facilitate the proposed project, a General Plan Land Use Amendment and Zoning Map Amendment are proposed, as discussed in more detail later in this report.

### **Gatekeeper Exemption**

The project site is comprised of two properties. One of the properties (853 Sierra Vista Avenue) is developed with three single-family homes which has a current General Plan Land Use Designation of Medium-Density Residential (13 to 25 du/acre) and R3-2/sd (Multiple-Family Residential/Special Design) zoning designation. The other property (851 Sierra Vista Avenue) is an industrial island with a warehouse use. This property has a current General Plan Land Use Designation of General Industrial and MM-40 (General Industrial) zoning designation.

The project is utilizing the Gatekeeper exemption provision under Section 36.52.15 and Section 36.52.55 – Special Application Requirements. The project site is under two acres in total size, owned by a single entity, within more than one zoning district; is abutting an existing residential-zoned property; and is proposed for conversion from an industrial to a residential zoning designation. Therefore, the project is exempt from the Gatekeeper authorization process.

## General Plan and Zoning Amendment

The properties that comprise the project site are currently under two separate General Plan and zoning designations. The southern half of the project site has a current General Plan Land Use Designation of General Industrial and MM-40 (General Industrial) zoning designation. The northern portion of the project site has a current General Plan Land Use Designation of Medium-Density Residential (13 to 25 du/acre) and R3-2/sd (Multiple-Family Residential – Special Design Overlay) zoning designation.

The project includes a proposed General Plan Land Use Map Amendment to change the southern portion of the project site to Medium-Density Residential (13 to 25 du/acre) and the zoning designation of the entire project site to R3-2 (Attachments 2 and 3).



**General Plan Amendment Map**



**Zoning Amendment Map**

Over the years, the surrounding area has gone through a conversion from industrial to residential land uses. The industrial portion of the project site is the last industrial use in this area and is completely surrounded with multi-family residential developments.

The proposed rowhouse development has a density of 16 dwelling units per acre, which is consistent with the proposed Medium-Density Residential Land Use Designation, allowing multi-family residential uses at 13 to 25 dwelling units per acre. The proposed General Plan Amendment aligns with City objectives to provide additional housing opportunities.

The R3 Zoning District allows rowhouse developments consistent with the Rowhouse Guidelines. The proposed development complies with all of the Rowhouse Standards, and no exceptions are requested. The following table shows the project’s compliance with the Rowhouse Development Standards:

<b>Standard</b>	<b>Required</b>	<b>Proposed</b>
Maximum Units	9 units maximum	9 units
Floor Area Ratio	0.90 maximum	0.89
Front Setback	15’ minimum	15’ minimum on all three stories
Side Setbacks	10’ minimum for the first and second stories 15’ minimum for the third story	10’ minimum on the first story and 15’ minimum on second and third stories
Rear Setbacks	15’ minimum for the first two stories 15’ minimum for the third story	15’ minimum on all three stories
Building Coverage	35 percent maximum	34 percent
Height	45’ maximum 36’ maximum to wall plate	37’5” 30’4”
Open Area	35 percent minimum 100 square feet minimum per unit private open space	46 percent Exceed 100 square feet per unit (139 square feet average)
Parking	2 covered spaces per unit + 0.3 guest space minimum per unit (21 total required)	2 car garages + 3 guest spaces (21 total spaces)

**Parking**

The minimum vehicle parking requirement is 2.3 spaces per unit (two spaces are to be provided for each unit, and the 0.3 fraction is for guest parking). The nine units require 18 garage spaces and three guest spaces, for a total of 21 spaces. The project proposes 21 parking spaces, which meets the minimum parking requirement. The bicycle parking requirement is one space per unit (which can be located in the garage) and one space for every 10 units to be located in an accessible area for guests. Bicycle parking for each unit is provided in the garages, and two bike racks are located in the common areas for guests.

**Open Space and Trees**

The project contains approximately 14,188 square feet of open space, including two centrally located 2,900 square foot common open-space courtyard areas, which meets the minimum 35 percent open-space requirement. The common area includes site amenities such as benches, special paving, and landscaping.

A tree survey was completed for the project site by Kielty Arborist Services, and reviewed by the City arborist. The tree survey identified, measured, mapped, and rated the trees for preservation, which took into consideration the trees’ age, health, structural condition, and proximity to the proposed structures and site development. The project site has a total of 20 existing trees, including nine Heritage trees and 11 non-Heritage trees. The applicant is proposing to remove six Heritage trees and 10 non-Heritage trees due to poor health and conflict with the proposed buildings and utilities. As part of the project, the applicant will be planting 21 new trees resulting in 25 trees on-site.

The following table shows the existing and estimated future tree canopy coverage for the site:

**Tree Canopy Coverage**

Existing Canopy	21 Percent
Retained + New After Five Years	16 Percent
Retained + New After 10 Years	33 Percent
Full Maturity	57 Percent

**Green Building Requirements**

The buildings will be designed to meet 104 points on the GreenPoint Rated Checklist, achieving a Gold® Certification level. Sustainable building and site features include, but are not limited to: Smart Stormwater Street Design, stormwater filtration and bioretention, permeable pavers, drought-tolerant landscaping and hydrozoning, recycled materials in building components, water-efficient fixtures and preplumbing for Solar Water Heating, and future photovoltaic installation.

**Tenant Relocation Assistance**

The three households currently renting on the project site would be displaced by the proposed development. This project is not subject to the City’s Community Stabilization and Fair Rent Act (CSFRA) and Tenant Relocation Assistance Ordinance (TRAO) because each of the single-family homes is on a separate parcel of land.

## **Tentative Map**

The project proposes a Tentative Map for condominium purposes for nine residential units and a common lot. Staff finds that the project is consistent with the requirements of the Subdivision Map Act and the General Plan with incorporation of the draft Conditions of Approval (Attachment 5).

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

An Initial Study was prepared for the proposed project in conformance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines, and the analysis has determined that implementation of the mitigation measures and Conditions of Approval for this project would reduce all significant impacts to a less-than-significant level under CEQA; therefore, the proposed project would not have a significant impact on the environment, and a Mitigated Negative Declaration is recommended.

The public review period for the Initial Study and draft Mitigated Negative Declaration was from October 30, 2019 to November 19, 2019 (Attachment 1). No comments were received during the public review period.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

The subject site has a total assessed value of approximately \$5.2 million, and the City's share of property tax is approximately \$7,900 per year. If the site were developed, the City would receive approximately \$14,800 more in property taxes per year.

The project is subject to the City's Below-Market-Rate (BMR) Ordinance, Phase I, as the project was submitted prior to the Phase II effective date. A BMR In-Lieu Fee of 3 percent of the gross sales price of each unit will be paid to the City upon the close of escrow of each unit as the required BMR-in-lieu fee results in a fractional unit. Based on an expected average sale price of approximately \$1.65 million for each unit, this would result in a total payment of \$445,500 to the City.

The estimated Park Land Dedication In-Lieu Fee will be approximately \$313,200 (or \$34,800 per unit) in accordance with Chapter 41 of the City Code, to be paid prior to the issuance of building permits. Because the project has fewer than 50 units, park land dedication cannot be required.



## **CONCLUSION**

The project supports General Plan policies for neighborhood character and street presence, is consistent with the land use and development direction in the General Plan, and is in compliance with the Zoning Ordinance, Rowhouse Guidelines and Subdivision Map Act. The proposal promotes a well-designed development that is compatible and harmonious with surrounding uses and developments; it is also consistent with other existing, under-construction, and proposed projects in the area.

The proposed subdivision, together with the provisions for its design and improvements, is consistent with the General Plan Land Use Designation of Medium-Density Residential; the R3-2 Zoning District, including all the requirements applicable to the property; and with the Subdivision Map Act.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

1. Approve the project with modified conditions.
2. Refer the project back to the EPC or DRC for additional consideration.
3. Deny the project and/or deny the map.
4. Provide other direction.

## **PUBLIC NOTICING**

The City Council's agenda is advertised on Channel 26, and the agenda and this report appear on the City's website. All property owners and tenants within a 750' radius and interested stakeholders were notified of this meeting.

Prepared by:

Diana Pancholi  
Senior Planner

Stephanie Williams  
Planning Manager/Zoning  
Administrator

Approved by:

Aarti Shrivastava  
Assistant City Manager/  
Community Development Director

Approved by:

Max Bosel  
Interim City Manager/Police Chief

DP-SW/6/CAM  
807-01-14-20CR  
200008

- Attachments:
1. Initial Study, Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration, and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program
  2. Resolution Approving the General Plan Land Use Map
  3. Ordinance Amending the Zoning Map
  4. Resolution Conditionally Approving a Planned Unit Development Permit, Development Review Permit, and Heritage Removal Permit
  5. Resolution Approving a Tentative Map and Map
  6. [EPC Public Hearing Staff Report, December 4, 2019](#)
  7. Public Comment Letter
  8. Project Plans