



DATE: April 8, 2014

CATEGORY: Public Hearing

DEPT.: Community Development

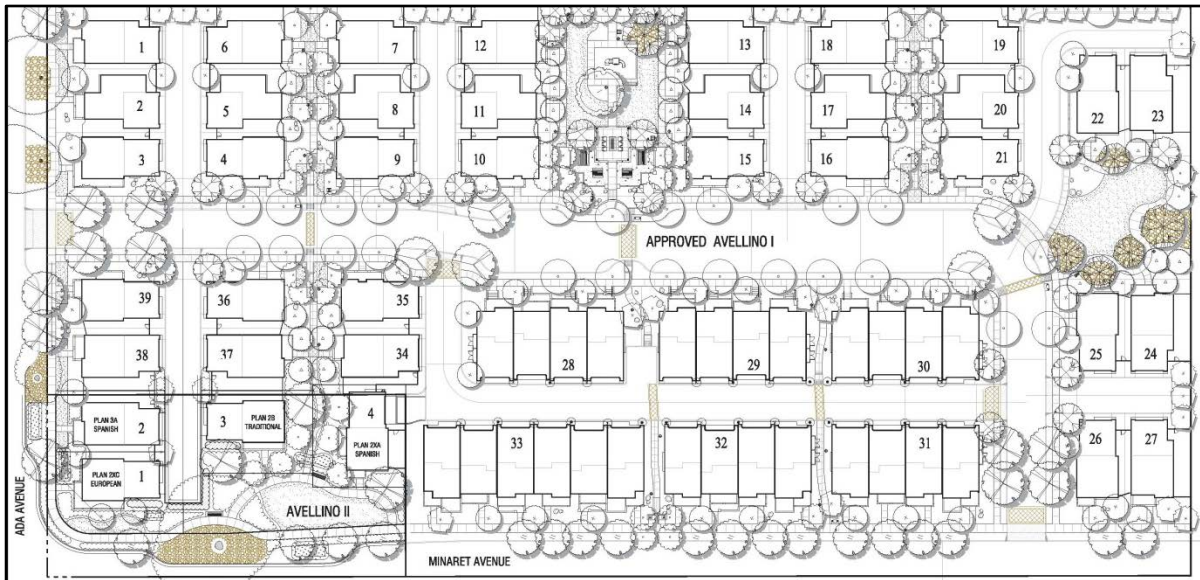
TITLE: **Planned Unit Development, Heritage Tree Removal Permit, and Tentative Map at 129 Ada Avenue**

RECOMMENDATION

1. Adopt an addendum to the previously approved Mitigated Negative Declaration for the 129 Ada Avenue residential project in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (Attachment 1 to the Council report).
2. Adopt a Resolution Conditionally Approving a Planned Unit Development Permit, a Development Review Permit, and a Heritage Tree Removal Permit for a Four-Unit Residential Project at 129 Ada Avenue, to be read in title only, further reading waived (Attachment 2 to the Council report).
3. Adopt a Resolution Conditionally Approving a Tentative Map to Subdivide a 0.5-Acre Lot into Four Residential Lots and Two Common Lots for a Shared Driveway and Landscaping at 129 Ada Avenue, to be read in title only, further reading waived (Attachment 3 to the Council report).

BACKGROUND

On October 9, 2012, the City Council approved a Planned Unit Development Permit and tentative map to construct 59 three-story rowhouses and two common spaces on a 4.51-acre site near the corner of Ada Avenue and Minaret Avenue (Phase I). The project scope at that time did not include the 0.5-acre corner parcel, which consists of a single-family home and a three-car garage. The applicant, TRI Pointe Homes, is now proposing the redevelopment of this corner parcel with four 3-story rowhouses with street and sidewalk improvements along Minaret Avenue and Ada Avenue (Attachment 4 – Project Plans).

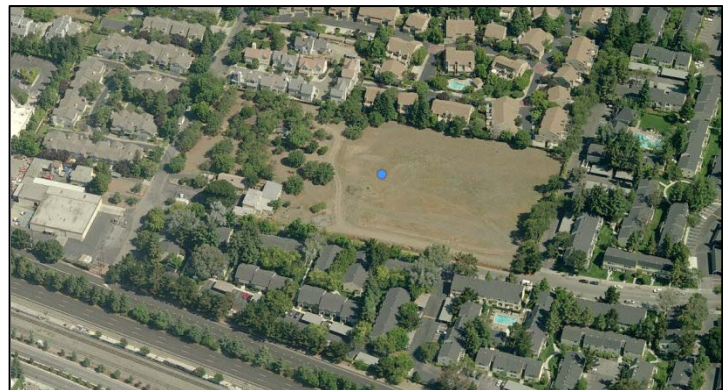


Site plan showing Phase I and the current project proposal (Phase II)

The surrounding neighborhood consists of various residential uses ranging from a two-story apartment complex to the south and to the east to two-story townhouse-style complexes to the north and to the west.

Proximity to Services

The project is within one-half mile (walking distance) from the neighborhood commercial center at Middlefield Road and Whisman Road and public open spaces at Slater Park and Creekside Park. The site is served by Landels Elementary School (2.4 miles), Crittenden Middle School (2.5 miles), and Mountain View High School (3.7 miles).



Aerial of project site and surrounding area

ANALYSIS

Project Overview

The applicant, TRI Pointe Homes, requests a Planned Unit Development Permit and tentative map to construct four 3-story rowhouses and one common open space area and a Heritage Tree Removal Permit to remove five Heritage trees. Two detached

rowhouses will face Ada Avenue and the other two detached rowhouses will face Minaret Avenue. Vehicular access to the proposed units will be through the alleyways constructed in Phase I.

The project site is zoned R3-3 (Multiple-Family Residential) which allows for rowhouse development. The project conforms to the City's Rowhouse Design Guidelines, including density, site coverage, setbacks, height, open space, and parking.

The project complies with General Plan goals and policies related to:

1. Preserving the character of neighborhoods and integrating buildings into the community (Goals LUD-6 and LUD-9):
 - The project proposes 33' to 35' tall, three-story rowhouses—below the 45' height limit—and is near the minimum height possible for a three-story structure with pitched roofs. This height is considered compatible with the neighboring two-story apartments and townhouses in the neighborhood.
 - Detached units with a variety of architectural styles such as Traditional, European Country, and Spanish styles are located on Ada Avenue and Minaret Avenue, matching the neighborhood pattern of the townhouse-style units and apartment units along the street. The architectural designs match the newly constructed rowhouses in Phase I.
 - Pedestrian-scaled design with covered porches, stoops, and units fronting on public streets.



View of the two proposed rowhouses at the corner of Ada Avenue and Minaret Avenue

2. Pedestrian-oriented circulation network (Goals LUD-8, MOB-1, and MOB-3):

- The project will dedicate street right-of-way to complete the improvements on Ada and Minaret Avenues, providing curb, gutter, and planter strips with street trees and sidewalks. This will improve pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular circulation in the neighborhood.
- Based on neighbor concerns about traffic and the recommendation of the City's Traffic Engineer, the applicant installed traffic calming speed humps on Minaret Avenue as part of Phase I, which has been well received by neighbors. No additional speed humps are required along this project frontage.

3. Providing sustainable development (Goal LUD-10):

- Build It Green GreenPoint rating of 116, which is one of the highest ratings for a rowhouse project.
- Inclusion of solar panels for energy generation, making this the first rowhouse project to install panels. Other projects have provided the wiring to allow for panel installation, but they only offered the panels as an option at extra cost to the purchaser. Phase I also included solar panels for both the attached and detached units.
- Compliance with the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Program (GGRP) through a homeowners association "carpooling to school" program.



View of proposed rowhouses and existing Coast live oak along Minaret Avenue

4. Preserving the urban forest and providing sustainable landscaping (Goal POS-12):
 - Preserving one Coast live oak tree within the project and making it a central feature of the common space design.
 - Planting 23 trees to increase the tree canopy for the site to offset the removal of five Heritage trees. Heritage trees will be discussed in more detail later in this report.
 - The project will provide drought-tolerant landscaping that complies with the City's "Water Conservation in Landscaping" regulations.

The remainder of this report will describe (1) Heritage tree removals and replacements; and (2) the project's open space.

Heritage Trees

The 2030 General Plan describes the need to encourage and protect Heritage trees as a biological resource. There are six Heritage trees on the project site, including one Coast live oak. The Coast live oak tree is not only a good candidate for retention but is a main landscape feature for the development. As a result, two detached rowhouses are set back from Minaret Avenue and the new Minaret Avenue curb will curve around the oak to provide every effort for the tree to flourish.

The remaining five Heritage trees are either in poor or in fair condition and are recommended for removal by the applicant's arborist primarily due to decay or dieback in their crowns and trunks. The five Heritage trees that are proposed for removal include one chestnut, one olive, one California bay, and two black walnuts. The City Arborist reviewed the proposed tree removal plan and concurred with the findings for the removal of these trees.

As part of the project, the applicant is planting a total of 23 trees throughout the 0.5-acre project site and is upsizing all of the trees to 36" box sizes. Staff supports the inclusion of larger-sized replacements in the project.

In response to the Council goal to increase tree canopy coverage in new development, staff requested that the applicant prepare an exhibit (see Sheet L-3 of the project plans) showing the existing canopy, tree canopy immediately after project construction, at different intervals such as 5 years and 10 years after project completion, and finally, tree canopy at tree maturity (approximately 15 to 20 years). The existing site canopy is low

and will be reduced immediately after construction. However, by the fifth year of the project, the site will have almost the amount of canopy that exists today (23 percent vs 28 percent).

Open Space

The project site includes 6,226 square feet of common open space which exceeds the Rowhouse Guidelines requirement of 400 square feet (100 square feet per unit). The common space area for these four units is located in between and in front of Lots 3 and 4 and is designed to be a passive area complementing the Coast live oak along Minaret Avenue.



The residents of these four units will also be able to use the 17,000 square feet of usable common open space currently being constructed as part of Phase I. The main open space is approximately 10,000 square feet, approximately half the size of Devonshire Park, and is located in the center of the project containing a pavilion, barbecue pit, and play structure. The second open space called Oak Park is about 7,000 square feet and is intended for more passive recreation and will include five relocated Heritage Coast live oaks.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Subdivision Committee

On February 26, 2014, the City's Subdivision Committee reviewed the proposed tentative map and recommended approval with attached conditions of approval (Attachment 3 – Resolution).

Administrative Zoning Hearing

On February 26, 2014, the Zoning Administrator held a Public Hearing on the proposed Planned Unit Development and Heritage Tree Removal Permit. The Zoning Administrator recommended adoption of the addendum to the previously approved Mitigated Negative Declaration. The Zoning Administrator also recommended conditional approval of the project.

Environmental Review

An addendum to the previously adopted Mitigated Negative Declaration for 135 Ada Avenue was prepared for the proposed project in conformance with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines and the analysis has determined that there will be no significant environmental impacts with implementation of proposed mitigation measures. Therefore, the proposed project would not have a significant impact on the environment and the addendum to the Mitigated Negative Declaration is recommended.

FISCAL IMPACT

The assessed value of the property is \$47,796 and the City receives approximately \$77 in annual property taxes. The construction of the project is expected to generate \$8,320 in annual property taxes to the City, which results in an increase of \$8,243 per year. The project is subject to the City's Below-Market-Rate (BMR) Ordinance and proposes to pay an in-lieu fee of approximately \$156,000.

The project will be required to pay a Park Land Dedication In-Lieu Fee of approximately \$103,500.

CONCLUSION

The proposed Planned Unit Development is consistent with the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance. The proposed development project achieves objectives and requirements of the Rowhouse Standards and Guidelines. The project provides ample common usable open space and on-site amenities for residents, high-quality architectural design and building materials, large setbacks and building height transitions, an adequate parking supply for residents and guests, and completes the street improvements along Ada Avenue and Minaret Avenue. The applicant is retaining a viable Coast live oak within the project and planting larger-sized replacements to provide greater tree canopy when the project is completed.

Additionally, approval of the project would not result in significant environmental impacts with implementation of the proposed mitigation measures.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Modify the proposed conditions of approval to the Planned Unit Development and tentative map and/or any other changes to recommended conditions of approval.
2. Refer the project back to the Zoning Administrator or Development Review Committee for consideration of specific land use or design-related issues.
3. Refer the tentative map back to the Subdivision Committee for consideration of specific subdivision-related issues.
4. Deny the Planned Unit Development Permit and tentative map applications, finding the site is not suitable for the proposed development.

PUBLIC NOTICING

The agenda was posted, a notice was placed in the local newspaper, and all property owners within a 300' radius of the project site and other interested stakeholders were notified of the Public Hearing.

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- Attachments:
1. Addendum to the Previously Approved Mitigated Negative Declaration for the 129 Ada Avenue Residential Project
 2. Resolution
 3. Resolution
 4. Project Plans