



DATE: March 22, 2016

CATEGORY: New Business

DEPT.: Community Development

TITLE: **Parking Requirements for an Affordable Housing Proposal at 1701-1707 West El Camino Real (Palo Alto Housing)**

RECOMMENDATION

Approve an initial parking ratio of 0.45 spaces per unit to be used to refine the design for the Palo Alto Housing affordable housing development located at 1701-1707 West El Camino Real.

BACKGROUND

On October 20, 2015, the City Council granted Palo Alto Housing (PAH) a reservation of funding in the amount of \$8 million for an affordable studio development at 1701-1707 West El Camino Real in the Medium-Intensity Corridor subarea of the El Camino Real Precise Plan. PAH's proposed development consists of 65 studio units, a community room, fitness center, and laundry rooms. In the proposal, 30 studio units are reserved for the veteran population at 30 percent area median income (AMI) or less with the remaining 35 units available to anyone with incomes at or below 60 percent AMI. PAH is proposing a reduced parking ratio based on their previous experience with similar affordable studio developments and the results of a parking study for this project.

Both the El Camino Real Precise Plan and the Zoning Ordinance allows parking standards to be reduced if supported by a parking study. The PAH project is designed at a parking ratio of 0.50 spaces per unit as opposed to the 1 space per unit parking standard required by the El Camino Real Precise Plan. In mid-January, the City's consultant, CDM Smith, conducted a parking demand analysis by surveying three affordable rental properties in Santa Clara County, which are similar to the proposed development in size and access to transit. The findings of this survey support a reduced parking ratio for the project.

The parking ratio for the project would be formally approved by Council as part of the Development Review Permit which is expected to be considered by the Council in June

2016. Staff is requesting Council's direction on the parking requirement since the parking will influence the number of units that can be built on the site and, thus, will have a direct impact on the final project design and cost.

ANALYSIS

Parking Study

A parking study was prepared by CDM Smith (Attachment 1). For the parking study, CDM Smith surveyed three existing affordable housing properties that share similarities to the proposed project. The surveyed properties were Casa Feliz Studios, El Paseo Studios, and Curtner Studios, all located in the City of San Jose. Like the proposed development, the three surveyed apartment complexes all serve 60 percent AMI or less and have bus lines with stops within one-half mile of the development. All of the comparison properties have secured below-grade parking garages similar to the proposed PAH development.

To identify parking demand, parking counts were taken on-site and on streets in close proximity to the site. In addition to the parking counts, the on-site property manager for each site completed a survey on key property details, such as tenant income levels, occupancies, unit types, parking issues, and number of residents. The maximum parking demand is estimated to occur overnight when a vast majority of the tenants have returned from work, shopping, and other trips. For the purposes of this parking study, parking counts were taken between 12:00 midnight and 2:00 a.m. on Saturday, January 23, and midweek during the same time frame on Tuesday, January 26.

Parking Study Findings

The parking study found that all the properties surveyed have overall parking demand ratios significantly below the residential parking standards in the El Camino Real Precise Plan. The parking demand ratio in the parking study is defined as the number of occupied on-site parking spaces and a percentage of nearby on-street spaces divided by the number of occupied units. To be conservative, the parking demand ratio calculation assumes some, but not all, nearby on-street parking is attributed to the apartment complexes surveyed. Parking demand ratios for the three surveyed properties range from 0.43 spaces per unit at Curtner Studios to 0.53 spaces per unit at El Paseo Studios. The average parking demand for all three properties was 0.45 spaces per unit and on-site space vacancy ranged from 18 percent to 28 percent. A summary of the parking demand at the comparison sites and the PAH project is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 – Comparison of Parking Study Results and Proposed Project Parking

	Casa Feliz Studios	El Paseo Studios	Curtner Studios	1701-1707 West El Camino Real
Units	60	98	179	65
Parking Supply (# of spaces)	22	47	82	33
Parking Supply Ratio (spaces/unit)	0.37	0.48	0.46	0.50
Parking Demand (spaces/unit)¹	0.43	0.53	0.43	0.45²

Notes:

1. Maximum occupied parking spaces on-site and adjacent streets divided by the number of occupied units.
2. Projected calculation: the proposed project demand was adjusted from an average of 0.46 spaces/unit to 0.45 spaces/unit to account for the impact of transit on parking demand.

Alternative Transportation Options

To encourage alternative forms of travel and reduce the parking demand, PAH will continue to consider options such as utilizing the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) paratransit shuttles or a privately operated shuttle for qualifying veterans and a transit pass program for all residents. Under the Zoning Ordinance, PAH is required to provide on-site secured bicycle storage for each unit and a bicycle rack to accommodate seven guest bicycles. Furthermore, as part of the required management plan for the development, the property manager will provide a parking management plan. The parking management plan will detail how on-site parking will be allocated to the tenants and guests, and managed in the event that parking demand reaches capacity.

Recommendations

The average parking ratio of the three comparison sites is 0.45 spaces per unit. The parking study results are comparable to parking counts taken at San Antonio Place efficiency studios. In April 2012, the San Antonio Place efficiency studios were surveyed as part of the parking study for Studio 819 Apartments and the survey showed that the number of cars parked on-site and on the surrounding streets resulted in a parking ratio of 0.43 spaces per unit. The results of the CDM Smith parking study and the recent survey of San Antonio Place indicate that a parking ratio of 0.45 would be appropriate for the PAH project. The current project is designed at a 0.50 parking ratio and PAH is contemplating using this extra parking to accommodate a shuttle van or similar alternate transportation.

FISCAL IMPACT

There will not be a fiscal impact to the General Fund. The City Council has reserved \$8 million of affordable housing funds for the PAH proposal as part of a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) released in February 2014. The City Council has also authorized \$1,021,610 in predevelopment funds to cover such items as project design and required studies, such as this parking study. The remainder of the reserved funding only becomes available if the project is approved by Council at the conclusion of the development review process.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Adopt a 0.50 parking ratio.
2. Adopt a higher parking ratio.
3. Provide other direction to staff.

PUBLIC NOTICING

The meeting agenda was posted and advertised on Channel 26. A meeting notice was mailed to all property owners within a one-quarter-mile radius of the site. The meeting agenda and Council report are posted on the City's website at www.mountainview.gov.

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Attachments: 1. Parking Study
2. Proposed Site Plan