



Planning Commission Report

Meeting Date: April 24, 2014

Subject: **425-429 North Palm Drive**
Project preview of a six-story, 28-unit condominium building proposed under the City's Density Bonus ordinance.

Recommendation: Receive this report and provide comments to staff as appropriate.

REPORT SUMMARY

This report introduces a new 28-unit condominium building proposed to be constructed at 425-429 North Palm Drive and presents an overview of the entitlement being requested. The purpose of this preview is to provide the applicant with an opportunity to introduce the project, and to provide the Commission with an opportunity to ask questions and offer preliminary comments. If a formal application is filed, a noticed public hearing will be held at a future date, at which time the Commission will have an opportunity to provide comments, consider applicable environmental analysis, and take action on the project.

BACKGROUND

Project Site

The subject site measures approximately 150.9' x 150', and is made up of two individual parcels of land; the south lot measures approximately 96' x 150' and the north lot measures approximately 55' x 150'. The total area of the subject site is approximately 22,635 square feet. The site is surrounded by multi-family buildings that vary in height, generally between two and five stories. The existing northern site is developed with a four story multi-family building that is accessed from the North Palm Drive side of the site. The existing southern site is developed with two, two-story multi-family buildings that are accessed from the alley along the rear of the site to the west. The applicant is currently conducting a historic analysis for the existing structures on the southern site.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Under existing Municipal Code development standards, the project site allows for the construction of a five-story, 26-unit apartment or condominium building. The proposed project would ordinarily be required to comply with all applicable Municipal Code development standards; however, the proposed project includes two dwelling units designated for occupancy by very low income households, and is therefore eligible for certain development incentives and/or waivers that can be granted pursuant to a Density Bonus Permit. Specifically, the Density Bonus statute requires that when a residential development sets aside a specified percentage of units for targeted households (“affordable units”) in a new development, local governments shall provide a specified percentage of additional “bonus” units above the maximum that the site is zoned for, as well as additional development incentives. The Density Bonus associated with the very low income units allows for the construction of a total of 34 units (although only 28 units are proposed), reduced parking requirements, one development incentive, and the possibility of code waivers to accommodate the development. Accordingly, the proposed project is designed as a six-story, 28-unit condominium building with two levels of subterranean parking. The sixth story is a partial story that includes rooftop uses such as a pool, clubhouse, gym, bathroom, and architectural features (no residential units are provided on the sixth story). The development incentive requested by the applicant is for additional building height to allow for the proposed rooftop uses, and the applicant also plans to request a code waiver to allow a modification to the City’s zoning requirements pertaining to building modulation.

Project viewed from the intersection of North Palm Drive and Beverly Drive



Project from a bird's-eye perspective



APPLICATION PROCESSING

Entitlement Process

Construction of the 28-unit condominium building requires approval of the following discretionary applications:

- Development Plan Review Permit for new construction.
- Tentative Tract Map for construction of condominium units.
- Density Bonus Permit for density bonus incentives associated with very low income housing.
 - **Density:** The City's zoning standards allow up to 26 units¹. Approval of the density bonus permit, with the inclusion of two very low income units, would allow for a maximum density of 34 units (28 are proposed).
 - **Height (incentive):** The City's zoning standards allow for a building height of 5 stories or 55 feet². The applicant requests a density bonus incentive to allow building height up to

¹ While the City's zoning standards allow for up to 26 units, the General Plan allows for a maximum density of 50 units per acre, which would also allow for 26 units. The Density Bonus standards require density to be calculated pursuant to the General Plan standards, with all numbers rounded up to the nearest whole number. Therefore, the subject property would be allowed 26 units under the General Plan density, prior to the additional density allowed under the Density Bonus.

² The City's General Plan allows for a maximum building height of 60 feet for the subject site, which is greater than the zoning height.

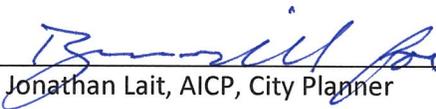
6 stories and 70 feet. As proposed, the sixth story would contain a 600 square foot club house, a 400 square foot gym, a 200 square foot bathroom, and a rooftop deck with pool and jacuzzi.

- Density Bonus Waiver from zoning standards.
 - **Modulation (waiver):** The City's zoning standards require that large scale multiple residential developments³ comply with additional modulation requirements beyond those that would otherwise apply to a non-large scale development. In order to maintain pedestrian engagement and ensure appropriate modulation, the additional modulation standards require that a minimum of 60% and a maximum of 70% of the front façade of the first two stories of the project be built to the front setback line. Due to the curvature of the project's design, the applicant is considering filing a request for a waiver to modify these requirements in order to accommodate the very low income units. However, the Planning Commission may only issue a waiver if the applicant is able to demonstrate that the zoning standards are the sole reason that affordable units cannot be developed in an economically feasible manner, and that no other incentive provided in the Code will cause development of eligible units to become economically feasible.
- In addition to the above entitlements, the project will be environmentally assessed pursuant to the provisions set forth in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Since preliminary analysis of certain environmental aspects has not been completed at this time, the type of CEQA review to be conducted will be determined during project processing.

NEXT STEPS

It is recommended that the Planning Commission receive the staff report and a presentation from the applicant and provide comments as appropriate.

Report Reviewed By:


Jonathan Lait, AICP, City Planner

³ Large scale multiple residential developments are defined as multiple residential buildings with a width of 100' or more. The proposed building will be approximately 127.9' in width.