



County of Santa Cruz

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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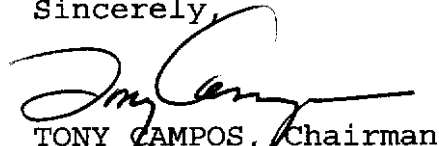
February 16, 2005

Housing Advisory Commission
701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Dear Members of the Commission:

As you may be aware, on February 15, 2005, the Board took action to accept and file your Annual Report highlighting the Commission's activities in calendar year 2004. I want to express the Board's gratitude for your service on the Commission and your willingness to review matters of concern to County government. We sincerely appreciate your contributions.

Sincerely,



TONY CAMPOS, Chairman
Board of Supervisors

TC :pmp

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COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

Approved 5-0

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

701 OCEAN STREET, 4TH FLOOR, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060
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TOM BURNS, PLANNING DIRECTOR

January 31, 2005

AGENDA DATE: February 15, 2005

Board of Supervisors
County of Santa Cruz
701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

SUBJECT: Public hearing to consider Application 04-0039 to convert the Golden Torch RV Park to a permanent occupancy affordable housing project.

Members of the Board:

Mid-Peninsula Housing Coalition has proposed to convert the existing trailer park to permanent occupancy affordable housing on a site located at 6100 Freedom Boulevard. The proposed project requires a Residential Development Permit and Lot Line Adjustment.

On January 12, 2005, the Planning Commission considered this application at a noticed public hearing. The Planning Commission unanimously recommended approval of the application and certification of the Mitigated Negative Declaration to your Board. The staff report and minutes regarding this item are attached herein (Attachments 4 and 5).

DISCUSSION

History

The Golden Torch Trailer Court was originally established as a recreational camping facility. The original Use Permit #2209-U approved in 1964 permitted a 98 space development. Over the years, the park proceeded to function as a year-round, permanent occupancy recreational vehicle park. Numerous serious health and safety concerns arose and County code violations developed at this park over the last 40 years. This park was nearing closure by court order when Mid-Peninsula Housing Coalition purchased the property in 2000.

Project Setting

The subject property consists of parcels 041-271-28 and 041-271-69, approximately 5.49 and 2.64-acres respectively, located on the north side of Freedom Boulevard, approximately 800 feet east of McDonald Road, in the Aptos Hills planning area. The primary parcel (041-271-28) has been developed with up to 98 older trailer homes served by internal roads running north-south across the site. References to the subject parcel in this report address this larger parcel.

Lot Line Adjustment

The smaller, 2.64-acre residential parcel (041-271-69) to the north (Stark parcel) is only involved in the lot line adjustment portion of the application and will not result in a change of use or new development in conjunction with this application. A thin strip of the Stark parcel, an area directly west of the current trailer park boundary, is being added to the subject parcel in exchange for a triangular portion in the northwest corner of parcel 041-271-28.

Project Discussion and Analysis

This application seeks the conversion of the Golden Torch Recreational Vehicle Park to permanent occupancy housing with affordable, two-story manufactured rental housing units targeted for 67 very low income families plus a resident manager's unit, resulting in a reduction of 30 units from the 98 units allowed under Use Permit 2209-U. This project was designed to provide an alternative to trailer park closure and eviction of the tenants, with very limited affordable housing alternatives available. Numerous County code violations and health and safety concerns that have occurred at this park over the years will be corrected by the proposed development. The project will address overtaxed available services on the site, and meet or exceed current standards.

The temporary trailers will be replaced with new manufactured homes built on permanent foundations that conform to HUD standards. The 19 buildings include a unit mix of one to four-bedroom units, with a manager's unit built above the community center. Project features to serve the residents include a community center with meeting and multi-purpose rooms for gatherings and celebrations, computer training facilities, laundry facilities, two children's playgrounds, a basketball court, onsite parking, and an onsite enhanced wastewater treatment facility. The project will be developed by Mid-Peninsula Housing Coalition and operated and managed by Mid-Peninsula Housing Management Corporation.

Zoning & General Plan Consistency

The site has a General Plan designation of Rural Residential and is zoned Residential Agriculture. The proposed development is consistent with the General Plan Housing policies in that it will provide 68 units of affordable rental housing for very low and lower-income residents. The project will replace existing deteriorating living quarters with safe and sanitary housing for the occupants. The development also provides equal access to housing opportunities, additional housing for those with special needs, and 3 and 4 bedroom units suitable for large households, policies encouraged in the housing element. The project is designed and conditioned to comply with County ordinances including 13.10.685 (the travel trailer park conversion ordinance) and 17.10 (the affordable housing ordinance).

A maximum building height of 28 feet above final finished grade is proposed. This flexibility in the height allowance will allow the project to provide more affordable units by allowing two-story manufactured housing. An eight-foot wood perimeter fence, comprised of a six-foot solid fence with a two-foot lattice on top, is proposed along the side and rear property lines of the project to insure neighborhood security and privacy.

Conversion Ordinance Compliance

The conversion of the trailer park to permanent occupancy is enabled by County Ordinance, Code Section 13.10.685, the ordinance relating to the Conversion of Transient Occupancy Recreational Vehicle and Travel Trailer Parks to Permanent Residency. This Ordinance was first approved by the Board in **1999**, and later amended to apply only to the Marmos and the Golden Torch RV/trailer parks (see Ord. 4731, Attachment 4, Exhibit G). The proposed project is consistent with this ordinance in that it provides for the orderly conversion of existing sub-standard housing to permanent occupancy for the purpose of maintaining and establishing safe permanent housing for lower income households. All Development Standards of 13.10.685 are satisfied or exceeded by the project as proposed and conditioned, including private and community open space standards and off-street parking.

Parking

The conversion ordinance requires one off-street parking space near each permanent unit and guest parking of an additional 20 percent (for a total of 1.2 spaces per unit) for a total of 82 spaces required. The proposed plan exceeds the ordinance requirement with 123 spaces for the residents (an average of 1.8 spaces per unit) and 14 guest spaces for a total of 137 spaces, or two parking spaces per unit including guest parking. The Parking Management Plan directs how the park will comply with the parking standards and details the procedures for insuring long-term compliance (see Attachment 4, Exhibit D). This parking management plan is similar to others that have been approved by the County in the past and successfully implemented for other affordable housing projects. In spite of this analysis, at the Planning Commission concerns were raised with regard to the amount of parking provided on site. In the event that the Board wishes to further pursue that issue, we have advised the applicant to be prepared to review options for expanding parking and the related project implications.

Design Review/Visual Analysis

The proposed project complies with the requirements of the Design Review Ordinance and the visual resource policies of the General Plan, in that the proposed project will incorporate site, architectural and landscape design features such as planting of native plant species to provide screening and depth, a solid perimeter good neighbor fence, and the use of earth tones in the architectural color scheme to reduce the visual impact of the proposed development on the surrounding land uses and landscape.

Though there will be a change to the property appearance from Freedom Boulevard due to ~~tree~~ removal (primarily eucalyptus trees with poor structure) and grading of the unstable and erosive slopes, the proposed contour grading and planting of over 135 large specimen trees (including redwood, sycamore, and oak trees) with the preservation of some of the mature pine and oak trees along the front will **soften** the visual impacts and provide sufficient screening.

Groundwater Recharge, Drainage, Septic System, Grading and Erosion Control

The subject site is located in the Aptos water basin in a groundwater recharge area. The proposed project will improve existing recharge rates and existing ground water quality issues

will be improved in that erosion, siltation, and urban pollutant contamination will be minimized through required filtering of drainage, the use of Best Management Practices, and septic pre-treatment to protect groundwater.

All sewage and gray water will be disposed of in a disposal system approved by County Environmental Health Services pursuant to Chapter 7.38 of the County Code. The existing septic system will be substantially upgraded from the poor previous conditions onsite to meet County Environmental Health Service standards for permanent occupancy. The treatment system includes a sanitary sewer collection system, a wastewater treatment facility that will treat wastewater to advanced treatment levels, and an onsite disposal system. The proposed wastewater and Geoflow systems allow for reuse of treated water for landscape irrigation and groundwater recharge.

Preliminary improvement plans for site grading, erosion control, and drainage were approved in concept by Environmental Planning and Public Works. These plans address proposed grading with over excavation and compaction, retaining walls, and grading adjacent to Freedom Boulevard. The amount of drainage impervious surface coverage for the site will be reduced with the proposed project and runoff from the property will be controlled, in contrast to the current situation. Runoff will be conveyed through new storm drains and filtered prior to connection to the public system in Freedom Boulevard.

School Fees

At the time of the Planning Commission hearing it was unclear whether this project would be subject to the payment of school impact fees because it is a replacement project with less units and, as such, would have less school related impacts than the existing project. Although state law is not entirely clear on this issue, we believe that the most appropriate calculation method is that school fees should only be imposed by the District for square footage increases of the proposed project (as compared to the current improvements). Therefore, a condition regarding school fees has been added (see Attachment 2, Condition II. Q.).

CONCLUSION

All required findings can be made to approve this application. The project is consistent with the Zoning Ordinance and General Plan, including policies and objectives and implementing ordinances related to Affordable Housing, Resources and Constraints, Building Design, as well as, the governing ordinance for the Conversion of Transient Occupancy Recreational Vehicle and Travel Trailer Parks to Permanent Residency. The project, as conditioned, will not have a significant effect on the environment and in fact provides for water quality, drainage, erosion and other environmental improvements, as well as, providing 68 permanent rental homes for very low and low-income households.

RECOMMENDATION

It is therefore RECOMMENDED that your Board, based on the attached Findings (Attachment 1) and subject to the attached Conditions (Attachment 2), take the following actions:

1. Conduct a public hearing on this proposal;
2. Certify the Mitigated Negative Declaration as complying with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (Attachment 4, Exhibit D); and,
3. Approve Application 04-0039 for a Residential Development Permit, Lot Line Adjustment and Preliminary Grading Approval.

Sincerely,

Tom Burns
Planning Director

RECOMMENDED:

SUSAN A. MAURIELLO
County Administrative Officer

TB:CG:mka\G:\Board Letters\Pending\February 15

Attachments:

1. Findings
2. Conditions
3. CEQA Environmental Determination
4. Planning Commission Staff Report, 1/12/05 agenda date
5. Planning Commission Minutes, 1/12/05 public hearing
6. Project Plans including architectural plans, engineered improvement plans, and landscape plans, dated 9/15/04 (on file with the Clerk of the Board)
7. Location Map
8. Letter Received 1/30/05

cc: Mid-Peninsula Housing Corporation, 77 Aspen Way, Suite 103, Watsonville, CA 95076