

CITY OF SAN JOSÉ, CALIFORNIA
Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement
200 East Santa Clara Street
San José, California 95113-1905

Hearing Date/Agenda Number
H.L.C. 10/05/05 Item 5.b.

File Number
H05-037

Application Type
Site Development Permit

Council District SNI
3 NA

Planning Area
Central

Assessor's Parcel Number(s)
264-29-115

STAFF REPORT

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Completed by:

Location: Northeast corner of Market and San Salvador Streets

Gross Acreage: 1.1

Net Acreage: 1.02

Net Density: 203 DU/AC

Existing Zoning: DC Downtown Primary
Commercial

Existing Uses: Surface Parking Lot

Proposed Zoning: N/A

Proposed Use: Mixed-use residential tower

GENERAL PLAN

Completed by:

Existing Land Use/Transportation Diagram Designations
Core Area

Project Conformance:
 Yes No
 See Analysis and Recommendations

SURROUNDING LAND USES AND ZONING

Completed by: TB

North: Commercial

DC Downtown Primary Commercial

East: Commercial

DC Downtown Primary Commercial

South: Commercial

DC Downtown Primary Commercial

West: Commercial

DC Downtown Primary Commercial

ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS

Completed by:

Reuse of Downtown Strategy 2000 EIR for Site Development Permit; In Process
 Negative Declaration circulated on
 Negative Declaration adopted on

Exempt for proposed Site Development Permit
 Environmental Review Incomplete

FILE HISTORY

Completed by:

Annexation Title: Original City

Date: 3/27/1850

PLANNING DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION

Recommend Approval
 Recommend Approval with Conditions
 Recommend to the Director of Planning

Date _____

Approved by: _____

CURRENT OWNER

Redevelopment Agency of the
City of San Jose

DEVELOPER / ARCHITECT

Mesa SoFA Partners, LLC
Mr. Richard Shields
445 W. Erie, Suite 210
Chicago, IL 60610

PUBLIC AGENCY COMMENTS RECEIVED

Completed by:

Other Departments and Agencies

None

GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

None

ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

BACKGROUND

The subject site consists of 1.02 gross acres at the northeast corner of Market Street and San Salvador Street and is currently a paved vacant lot. The property has a DC Downtown Primary Commercial Zoning designation. The General Plan designation for the property is Core Area. The applicants, the Redevelopment Agency of the City of San Jose and Mesa SoFA Partners LLC, have filed a Site Development Permit, (File No. H05-037) proposing development of a mixed-use residential project of up to approximately 207 units at 360 South Market Street.

Per section 20.70.110 (c) of the City of San Jose Zoning Ordinance, new structures exceeding 150 feet in height and an FAR of 6:1 which are constructed within one hundred feet of a City Landmark or Contributing Structure in a designated landmark district shall be reviewed by the Historic Landmarks Commission prior to consideration or approval of a development permit for new construction.

HISTORIC RESOURCES DESCRIPTION

The project site is located adjacent to the Boschken Building (Structure of Merit) to the north, and the W. Prussia Building (City Landmark No. HL01-130) to the south. Please refer to the attached Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) form for a description of the City Landmark. The project site is located within 100 feet (approximately 56 feet) of California Theatre (City Landmark No. HS85-29) to the north. Please refer to the attached National Register of Historic Places Nomination form for a description of the City Landmark.

Other City Landmarks located within the block include: the St. Claire Hotel (City Landmark No. HL81-18), located at the southeast corner of Market and San Carlos Streets; the St. Claire Building (City Landmark No. HL01-126), located at the southwest corner of South First and San Carlos Streets; and the Dohrmann Building (City Landmark No. HL83-24), located on South First Street, directly south of the St. Claire Building.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Environmental review for the subject project is in process at this time. Staff anticipates that the proposed site development permit will obtain environmental clearance through the use of the Downtown Strategy 2000 EIR.

GENERAL PLAN CONFORMANCE

The site has a General Plan Land Use/Transportation Diagram designation of Core Area. The Core Area designation encourages office, retail, service, residential, and entertainment uses in the Downtown Core Area. The General Plan text states, “higher density residential uses at 25+ dwelling units per acre or mixed use development of commercial and residential uses are appropriate” in areas with a Core Area designation. The subject project conforms in that it proposes high density residential uses (greater than 25 du/ac) with ground floor commercial space below.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project proposes to construct a 267-foot high twenty-two story residential tower along Market Street, a four-story base, and a fifth floor podium open space area above 266 parking. The project has an FAR of 11:1, and includes approximately 10,000 square feet of ground floor retail space along the First and Market Street elevations.

ANALYSIS

The South First Street façade establishes a datum at the Fifth Floor which relates to the top of the California Theatre cornice line. Floors five through seven are set back seven feet from the fourth level to reduce the building mass perceived by pedestrians along the ground floor. Another datum is continued at the first floor awning and entrance heights of the building relating to the entrances of the surrounding historic fabric between San Salvador and San Carlos and particularly the Boschken Building (Structure of Merit) to the north. The 95-foot height of the seven-story element on First Street complements the maximum historic 91-foot height of the block established by the Saint Claire Hotel. Additionally, the proposed limestone material on the façade of the building is intended to be compatible with existing materials on historic structures along South First Street. The 22-story tower element is setback approximately 150 feet from the St. Claire Hotel (City Landmark No. HL81-18) property line to the north, and approximately 190 feet from the California Theatre South First Street (City Landmark No. HS85-29) façade and 150 feet from the W. Prussia Building (City Landmark No. HL01-130) South First Street façade to the east.

On March 16, 2005, the Historic Landmarks Commission Design Review Subcommittee (DRC) reviewed the conceptual design of Mesa’s proposed mixed-use high-rise residential project for compatibility with adjacent City Landmarks (see attached synopsis). The Subcommittee suggested that the following design comments be analyzed and reviewed for this referral to the Commission: 1) a scale model and shade/shadow study to address concerns regarding the impact of the tower along Market Street; 2) a more developed southern elevation of the project on San Salvador Street; and 3) a First Street elevation that studies the impact of the building on the pedestrian level of the street, as well as its compatibility with the California Theatre cornice line.

The applicant has responded to the DRC’s comments with revised elevations that address the concerns regarding First Street massing, cornice lines, San Salvador Street elevation, and shadow impacts. Attached to this staff report are elevations, detailed partial elevations for the podium levels along First and Market Streets, a refined San Salvador Street (southern) elevation, shade and shadow studies, isometrics, and a typical floor plan for the project. The proposed bay windows serve to break up the

scale of the South First Street elevation, while not obscuring the California Theatre signage to the north. In addition, a generous window system results in a more pedestrian-friendly transparent corridor along the ground floor.

At the October 3, 2005 Historic Landmarks Commission meeting, Mesa will present additional perspectives of the First Street and San Salvador Street elevations, as well as a massing model, per the request of the Design Review Subcommittee. Planning Staff requests the Commission's comments and recommendation regarding the compatibility of the proposed building with the City Landmark structures and sites before the Director of Planning, Building, and Code Enforcement takes action on the proposed project. The proposed project's site and architectural design should be considered in terms of the relationship to the historic building and the neighborhood, and may be contemporary or may reference design motifs from the historic buildings and neighborhood. In either case, the new design should be differentiated from the historic building and be compatible in terms of materials and colors, features, size, scale and proportion in order to protect the integrity of the historic buildings.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

This proposal was brought to the Historic Landmarks Commission Design Review Committee on March 16, 2005 and was presented to the community on June 15, 2005. Hearing notices for the Architectural Review Committee (ARC) meeting on October 4, 2005 were mailed out to owners and tenants within 500 feet of the property. Planning Staff has been available to discuss the proposal with members of the public. Additionally, prior to the HLC public hearing, an electronic version of the staff report was made available online, accessible from the Historic Landmarks Commission agenda, on the Planning Divisions' website.

RECOMMENDATION

Planning staff recommends that the Historic Landmarks Commission make recommendations to the Director of Planning, Building and Code enforcement regarding the compatibility of the proposed building's site and architectural design with the W. Prussia Building (City Landmark No. HL01-130) and the California Theatre (City Landmark No. HS85-29).

Attachments