



City of Santa Barbara California

PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

REPORT DATE: July 1, 2005
AGENDA DATE: July 7, 2005
PROJECT ADDRESS: 21 E. Anapamu Street (MST2004-00173)

TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Planning Division, (805) 564-5470
Jan Hubbell, AICP, Senior Planner
Trish Allen, Associate Planner

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project consists of construction of a three-story structure to include 12 one-bedroom units ranging in size from 497 to 623 square feet on a parcel owned by the City of Santa Barbara Redevelopment Agency. The rental units would be targeted to very low- and low-income households (8 units at 65% of the Area Median Income (AMI) and 4 units at 50% of the AMI). The proposed affordable housing is a project condition from the approved Granada Garage project adjacent to the site.

II. REQUIRED APPLICATIONS

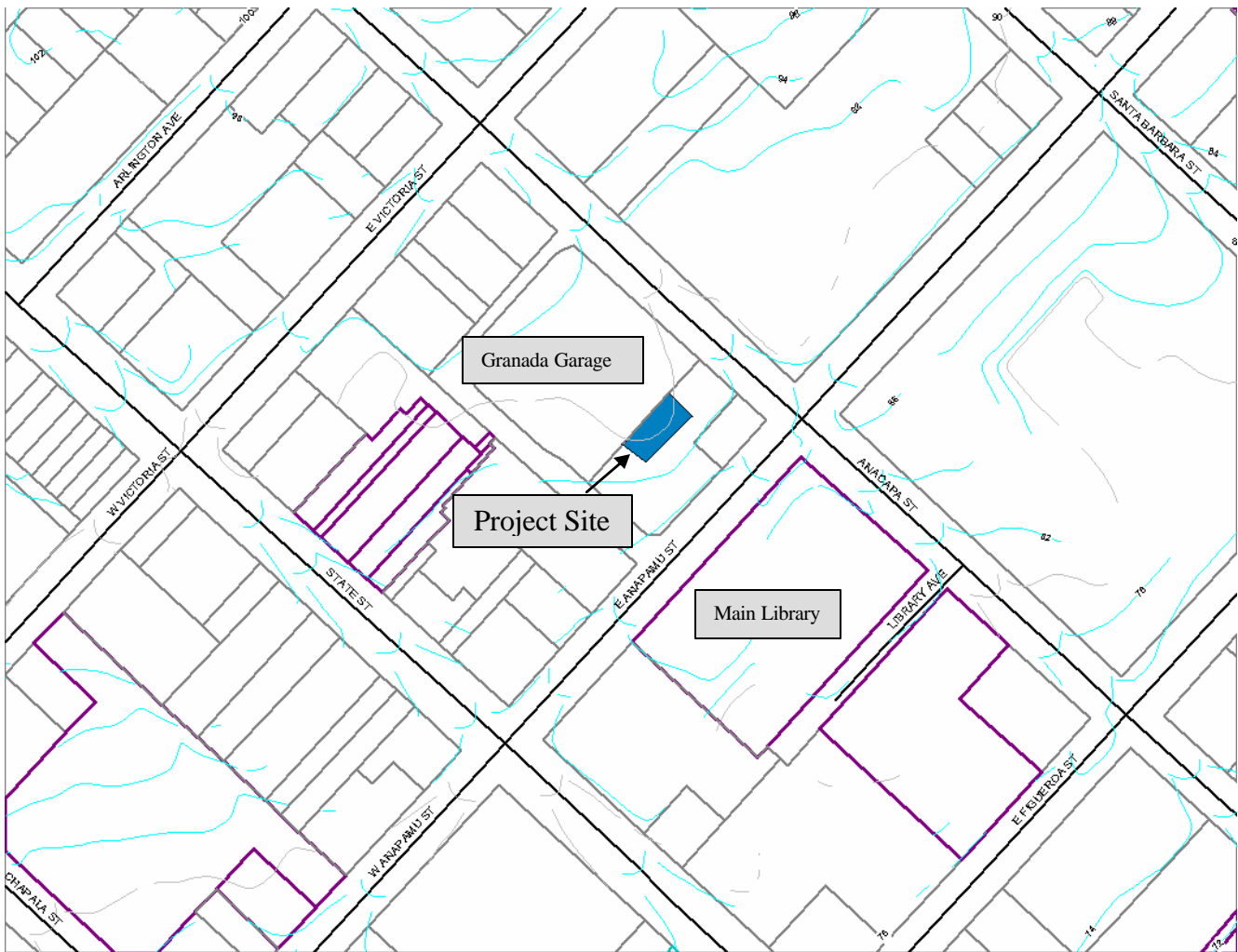
The discretionary applications required for this project are:

1. A Modification of the lot area requirements to allow ten over-density units (bonus density) on a lot in the C-2 Zone (SBMC §28.21.080);
2. A Modification to allow the parcel to have less than the required 60 feet of frontage on a public street (SBMC § 28.21.080.A);
3. Modifications to allow the structure to encroach into the required 10-foot interior yard setbacks (SBMC § 28.21.060.2 and 28.21.060.3);
4. Modifications to provide less than the required 10-foot minimum dimension for private outdoor living space for Units 2, 3, and 4 (SBMC § 28.21.081);
5. Modifications to provide less than the required private outdoor living area for Units 4, 6, and 7 (SBMC § 28.21.081); and,
6. A Modification to provide fewer than the required number of parking spaces (SBMC § 28.90).

III. RECOMMENDATION

With the approval of the requested modifications, the proposed project conforms to the City's Zoning

and Building Ordinances and applicable policies of the General Plan. In addition, the size and massing of the project are consistent with the surrounding neighborhood and would provide housing opportunities for very low- and low-income households. Therefore, Staff recommends that the Planning Commission approve the project, making the findings outlined in Section VII of this report, and subject to the conditions of approval in Exhibit A.



Vicinity Map

APPLICATION DEEMED COMPLETE:
DATE ACTION REQUIRED:

June 17, 2005
August 16, 2005

Proposed residential uses in the C-2 Commercial Zone are subject to the provisions of the R-3/R-4, Multi-Family Residential Zone. The proposed project would meet the requirements of the R-3/R-4 Zone, with the exception of the following modifications: lot area, yard encroachments, private outdoor living space, street frontage, and parking (please refer to Zoning Ordinance table on the previous page).

The lot area required for 12 one-bedroom units is 22,080 square feet. Therefore, a lot area modification is required to approve the project. The project is project is proposed on a parcel consisting of 4,184 square feet of lot area. The modification request to allow additional units on the lot is supportive because the units are affordable to very low- and low-income households. In addition, the proposal to provide affordable housing is a condition of approval for the Granada parking garage project.

The modification requests regarding the provision of private open space only involve five of the proposed twelve units. Staff is supportive of the modification requests related to the private open space requirements for the Units indicated because: 1) each of the units provide a private patio, 2) there are significant public open areas in the project vicinity including, the open area to the south of the project site (not yet planned), the Main Library lawn across Anapamu Street from the project site, the Sunken Gardens adjacent to the County Courthouse (diagonally across the street from the project site), and Alameda Park (2 blocks north of the project site); 3) the limited project site area and necessity to provide a minimum living space area; and 4) the project is affordable to very low- and low-income households.

Regarding the building encroachments into required interior yards, staff can support these modification requests because yard setbacks are intended to buffer adjacent residential uses. The proposed building effectively establishes a property line for the housing; the provision of yard setbacks would have further limited the developable area where land is at a premium. The proposed residential structure is surrounded by public paseos, walkways, and open space that meet the intent of building setbacks.

The proposed project would not have street frontage, defined as abutting the public street. The project is setback from the street, with a large amount of open space between the development and the street. However, the project would include installation of a public sidewalk along the property frontage adjacent to the open space area. Due to the unique nature of the proposed housing development, staff can support the modification to not provide the minimum of 60 feet of street frontage.

The Zoning Ordinance requires that 12 parking spaces be provided for the project. The project requests relief from this requirement. Staff is supportive of the parking modification because a project condition would ensure that the applicant, Peoples' Self-Help Housing, will restrict tenant vehicle ownership. In order to compensate for the lack of vehicle parking available to the residents, Transportation Planning staff included a project condition that 12 bicycle parking spaces within the new Granada bike station be available to the tenants at no charge. The Downtown Parking Division has evaluated this provision and determined that there would be

no impact on the supply of bicycle parking spaces in this regard.

VI. ISSUES

A. DESIGN REVIEW

This project was reviewed by the Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) on three separate occasions (meeting minutes are attached as Exhibit D). On June 9, 2004 the HLC stated overall positive comments regarding the project design, massing, and architectural style. The project would return to the HLC for review of final project details.

B. COMPLIANCE WITH THE GENERAL PLAN

1. Land Use Element

The project site is located in the Downtown neighborhood of the General Plan. This neighborhood is characterized as the Central Core of the City and is more intensely used than other parts of the City. Residential uses range from cottages and apartments to residential hotels and institutions.

The project site has a General Plan Land Use Designation of General Commerce, which allows for residential land uses that comply with the R-3 zone development standards. The proposed project would result in a density of 125 units per acre. The General Plan Land Use Element allows for variations in unit density based on the size of a unit and the occupancy potentials. The General Plan Land Use Element states that, in some cases, densities in terms of dwelling units per acre may be allowed to increase beyond those limits recommended by the General Plan without causing an inappropriate increase in the intensity of activities. This discussion provides the Land Use Element basis for the City's Zoning Ordinance variable density provisions and the City's bonus density program described in the Housing Element.

2. Housing Element

The City Housing Element encourages the use of bonus density units as a means to provide affordable housing for low-income individuals, seniors, homeless people, and other special needs households. Applicable Housing Element goals and policies are contained in Exhibit E. Because the proposed project provides housing opportunities for very low- and low-income households, the project would be considered consistent with the General Plan Housing Element.

C. PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

One of the issue areas discussed between staff and the applicant is the desire to provide adequate pedestrian circulation between the paseo off of Anacapa Street between the new garage and the building located on the corner of Anacapa and Anapamu Streets (1201 Anacapa St.). It is anticipated that the paseo and the walkways will be heavily used.

Transportation staff recommended an 8' foot wide sidewalk in this area in order to accommodate both bicycles and pedestrians; however, there are space constraints due to the existing three-story building at the corner, the new garage structure, and the minimum space needed to create a functional living space for each of the proposed residential units. Staff approached the owner of the building at 1201 Anacapa Street to discuss options to relocate existing mechanical equipment in order to relieve the constrained area for additional pedestrian space. It is possible that the owner and staff can reach an agreement to relocate the equipment, potentially providing an additional five feet of width for the sidewalk. Staff will continue to explore this option; however, the current proposal is to provide a seven foot wide sidewalk in the constrained area and eight feet along the housing frontage.

D. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The Granada Garage (City Parking Lot 6) Final Mitigated Negative Declaration was prepared in March 2001 to assess the environmental impacts of a proposed development involving construction of a new 575-space parking structure to replace an existing 215-space surface parking lot. The project was conditioned to include an affordable housing project. An addendum was prepared to amend the Final Negative Declaration to address site-specific impacts of a revised proposal to replace City offices on the north side of the structure with a two- to three-story structure containing 12 low-income apartment units. Subsequent to the addendum preparation, the site for the housing project was proposed to be relocated from the north side to the south side of the parking structure. An addendum has been prepared (Exhibit F) to reflect the project changes; however, the previously prepared Final Mitigated Negative Declaration and its conclusions are still relevant to the proposed project. No new impacts would occur as a result of the project revisions. All of the previously identified mitigation measures that were applicable to development of Parking Lot 6 would apply to the revised project.

VII. FINDINGS

The Planning Commission finds the following:

A. FINDINGS FOR THE MODIFICATION RELATED TO LOT AREA (SBMC §28.21.080.7)

The modification of the lot area requirement to allow development of 12 one-bedroom units on 4,184 square feet of lot area instead of the required 22,080 square feet is consistent with the purposes and intent of the Zoning Ordinance and is necessary to construct this unique affordable housing project. The General Plan Land Use Element allows for variations in unit density based on the size of a unit and the occupancy potentials. The General Plan Land Use Element states that, in some cases, densities in terms of dwelling units per acre may be allowed to increase beyond those limits recommended by the General Plan without causing an inappropriate increase in the intensity of activities. The General Plan Housing Element states that residential development in commercial zones is consistent with policies established in the City's Land Use and Circulation Elements. The trend to develop higher density development

Downtown is encouraged because of the proximity to jobs, transit, and recreation/cultural activities.

B. FINDINGS FOR THE MODIFICATION RELATED TO THE PRIVATE OUTDOOR SPACE (SBMC §28.21.081)

The modification of the private outdoor space to provide less than the required dimension or the required area or both for five of the proposed units is consistent with the purposes and intent of the Zoning Ordinance. Although the minimum requirements are not completely met by five of the proposed units, each unit includes a private patio. The development is proposed on a small sized lot providing a rental housing opportunity to very low – and low-income households. The City's Housing Element includes strategies to consider the development of zoning standards that would encourage the type of development that this project represents. Also, the area surrounding the project site provides significant public open space areas.

C. FINDINGS FOR THE MODIFICATION RELATED TO THE INTERIOR YARD SETBACKS (SBMC §28.21.060)

The proposed interior yard setback modifications are consistent with the purposes and intent of the Zoning Ordinance and are necessary to construct this affordable housing project. The proposed structure effectively established property boundaries. The intent of yard setbacks in terms of buffering adjacent land uses is met by the adjacent paseo, open space and walkways that surround the proposed development.

D. STREET FRONTAGE MODIFICATIONS (SBMC §28.21.080.A)

The modification is consistent with the purposes and intent of the Zoning Ordinance and necessary to secure an appropriate improvement on the lot. Currently, the property meets the frontage requirements on both Anapamu and Anapamu Streets. The proposed building footprint for the housing project will establish a property boundary line, creating a parcel that is land-locked. The development would include installation of public walkways to connect the paseo and the walkways to the garage as well as meeting both Building and Fire code requirements.

E. FINDINGS FOR THE MODIFICATION RELATED TO PARKING (SBMC §28.90.100(G)(3))

The modification to allow residential development without providing on-site parking would be consistent with the purposes and intent of the Zoning Ordinance and would not cause an increase in the demand for parking space or loading space in the immediate area because: (1) The project is an affordable project administered by Peoples' Self-Help Housing and will have restricted vehicle ownership through lease agreements with tenants; (2) the project is located in the downtown area and is within walking and cycling distance of many services and places of employment; and (3) the provision of bicycle storage in the bike station; and (4) a bus stop and the transit center are within walking distance from the project site.

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Exhibits:

- A. Conditions of Approval
- B. Site Plan
- C. Applicant's letter, dated June 21, 2005
- D. HLC Minutes March 17, May 26, June 9, 2004
- E. Housing Element Policies
- F. Addendum to the Final Mitigated Addendum for the Granada Garage project