



# City of Santa Barbara California

## PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

**REPORT DATE:** December 29, 2005  
**AGENDA DATE:** January 5, 2006  
**PROJECT ADDRESS:** 523-531 Chapala Street (MST2004-00854)  
**TO:** Planning Commission  
**FROM:** Planning Division, (805) 564-5470  
Jan Hubbell, AICP, Senior Planner  
Kathleen Kennedy, Assistant Planner

### I. SUBJECT

The proposed project has been revised in response to comments received at the previous Planning Commission hearing held on November 10, 2005.

### II. REVISED PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project site is 17,250 square feet, comprised of two parcels, located on Chapala Street between Haley and Cota Streets, in downtown Santa Barbara. The project involves demolition of two existing office buildings on the site and construction of a three-story mixed-use building, containing 2,552 square feet of commercial space and seven residential condominiums, ranging from 1,980 to 3,157 square feet. A 19-space parking garage at the ground level is also proposed.

The discretionary applications required for this project are:

1. A Development Plan to allow the construction of 2,552 square feet of nonresidential development (SBMC §28.87.300); and
2. A Tentative Subdivision Map (TSM) for a one lot subdivision to create seven residential condominiums and two commercial condominiums (SBMC Chapters 27.07 and 27.13).

The revisions to the project since the November 10, 2005 hearing include the following:

- The overall height of the entire building has been lowered approximately 2.5 feet. The third floor plate heights would be reduced.
- A total of 19 parking spaces are proposed. Each residential unit would have a two car garage.
- Lighting would be provided along the rear elevation at the public alley.

The applicant has discussed the basis for the changes in his letter (Exhibit C). Staff concurs with the applicant and the Historic Landmarks Commission regarding the courtyard design approach, which results in more usable and private outdoor living area for the future residents. Staff believes the

applicant has responded appropriately to the concerns expressed by the Planning Commission.

### **III. RECOMMENDATION**

The proposed project conforms to the City's Zoning and Building Ordinances and policies of the General Plan. In addition, the size and massing of the project are consistent with the surrounding neighborhood. Given that the City is generally built out, and the opportunity for increased residential development is minimal, this is a good opportunity to provide additional housing units in the City's West Downtown area. Therefore, Staff recommends that the Planning Commission approve the project, making the findings outlined below and subject to the conditions of approval in Exhibit A.

### **IV. FINDINGS**

#### **A. DEVELOPMENT PLAN APPROVAL (SBMC §28.87.300)**

1. The proposed development complies with all provisions of the Zoning Ordinance, can be found consistent with the purpose and intent of the Ordinance and the proposed project is an appropriate use for the neighborhood; and
2. The proposed development is consistent with the principles of sound community planning. The proposed mixed-use project would allow for additional residential units and commercial spaces in the West Downtown area, and is consistent with the existing mix of uses in the surrounding neighborhood; and
3. The proposed development will not have a significant adverse impact upon the neighborhood's aesthetics/character in that the size, bulk or scale of the development will be compatible with the neighborhood; and
4. The proposed development will not have a significant unmitigated adverse impact upon City and South Coast affordable housing stock since the proposal involves the addition of seven residential units in the City's housing stock; and
5. The proposed development will not have a significant unmitigated adverse impact on the City's water resources because the City currently has a sufficient dependable water supply to serve this project; and
6. The proposed development will not have a significant unmitigated adverse impact on the City's traffic because the proposed use will meet its parking demand for the site and vehicle trips associated with the use will not significantly impact the City's street network.

#### **B. TENTATIVE MAP (SBMC §27.07.100)**

The Tentative Subdivision Map is consistent with the General Plan and the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Santa Barbara. The site is physically suitable for the proposed development, the project is consistent with the variable density provisions of the Municipal Code and the General Plan, and the proposed use is consistent with the Land Use Element and zoning designation for the site, and the vision for this neighborhood in the General Plan. The design of the project will not cause substantial environmental damage, and associated improvements will not cause

serious public health problems or conflict with easements, acquired by the public at large, for access through or use of property within the proposed development.

**C. NEW CONDOMINIUM DEVELOPMENT (SBMC §27.13.080)**

1. *The project complies with all provisions of the City's Condominium Ordinance.*

The project complies with the density requirements and each unit includes adequate covered parking with storage, laundry facilities, separate utility metering, adequate unit size and required private outdoor living space.

2. *The proposed development is consistent with the General Plan of the City of Santa Barbara.*

The project is consistent with policies of the City's General Plan including the Land Use Element, Housing Element, Conservation Element, Noise Element and Circulation Element. The proposed development is consistent with the principles of sound community planning and will not have an adverse impact upon the neighborhood's aesthetics, parks, streets, traffic, parking and other community facilities and resources. The project will provide infill residential development in the downtown that is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.

3. *The proposed development is consistent with the principles of sound community planning and will not have an adverse impact upon the neighborhood's aesthetics, parks, streets, traffic, parking and other community facilities and resources.*

The project is an infill mixed-use project proposed in an area where residential and commercial uses are permitted. The project is adequately served by public streets, will provide adequate parking to meet the demands of the project and will not result in traffic impacts. Adequate park facilities exist nearby, and the project would not adversely impact other community resources, such as water, sewer, police, fire, and schools. The design has been reviewed by the City's design review board, which found the architecture and site design appropriate.

Exhibits:

- A. Conditions of Approval
- B. Site Plan
- C. Applicant's letter dated November 29, 2005
- D. Staff report from November 10, 2005 hearing