



# City of Santa Barbara California

## STAFF HEARING OFFICER STAFF REPORT

**REPORT DATE:** October 18, 2006  
**AGENDA DATE:** October 25, 2006  
**PROJECT ADDRESS:** 1528 State Street (MST2005-00389)

**TO:** Staff Hearing Officer  
**FROM:** Planning Division, (805) 564-5470  
Jan Hubbell, AICP, Senior Planner  
Irma Unzueta, Project Planner

### **I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The project would demolish a 1,290 square foot commercial building and surface parking lot. New construction on the site includes 4,100 square feet of commercial floor area and three residential condominium units. The commercial space is intended to remain as one condominium space. The residential units consist of two, two-bedroom townhouses and one, four-bedroom townhouse. Parking for both uses would be consolidated into a single 12 space underground parking structure, which includes four parking spaces for the residential units and eight parking spaces for the commercial space. The underground parking garage would be accessed from the existing State Street curb cut. Approximately, 7,180 cubic yards of cut and 680 cubic yards of fill are proposed (Exhibit B and C).

### **II. REQUIRED APPLICATIONS**

The discretionary applications required for this project are:

1. A Tentative Subdivision Map to create a one-lot subdivision for a mixed-use project containing three residential condominiums and one commercial condominium (SBMC § 27.07 and 27.13); and
2. A Development Plan Approval to allow 2,810 net new square feet of non-residential use (SBMC § 28.87.300).

### **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. Therefore, Staff recommends that the Staff Hearing Officer 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 FOR 1528 STATE STREET**

**APPLICATION DEEMED COMPLETE:** October 2, 2006  
**DATE ACTION REQUIRED PER MAP ACT:** December 20, 2006

**IV. SITE INFORMATION AND PROJECT STATISTICS**

**A. SITE INFORMATION**

Applicant: Brian Cearnal	Property Owner: Dr. Afra Guity
Parcel Number: 027-232-012	Lot Area: 7,705 square feet
General Plan: Commerce and Offices	Zoning: C-2, Commercial
Existing Use: Commercial	Topography: 6%
Adjacent Uses: North – Commercial                      East – Commercial South – Commercial                      West - Commercial	

**B. PROJECT STATISTICS**

Units	# of Bedrooms	Unit Size (net)	Private Outdoor Living Space
Commercial Unit	N/A	4,100 sq. ft.	N/A
Residential Unit 1	2	2,040 sq. ft.	250 sq. ft.
Residential Unit 2	2	2,284 sq. ft.	360 sq. ft.
Residential Unit 3	4	3,163 sq. ft.	575 sq. ft.

**V. ZONING ORDINANCE CONSISTENCY**

Standard	Requirement/ Allowance	Existing	Proposed
Building Height	4 stories not to exceed 60'	15' max.	49' max.
Parking	11 parking spaces	18 parking spaces	12 parking spaces
Lot Area Required for Each Unit (Variable Density)	2 bdrms = 2,320 sq. ft. 3+bdrms = 2800 sq. ft. 7,440 sq. ft. req'd	N/A	7,705 sq. ft.
10% Open Space	771 sq. ft.	N/A	1,430 sq. ft.
Private Outdoor Living Space	2 bdrms = 84 sq. ft. 3 bdrms = 96 sq. ft.	N/A	Unit 1 = 250 sq. ft. Unit 2 = 360 sq. ft. Unit 3 = 575 sq. ft.
Lot Coverage			
-Building	N/A	1,290 sq. ft. 16.7%	5,005 sq. ft. 65.0%
-Paving/Driveway	N/A	4,405 sq. ft. 57.2%	2,150 sq. ft. 27.9%
-Landscaping	N/A	2,010 sq. ft. 26.1%	5,502 sq. ft. 7.1%

## **VI. ISSUES**

### **A. DESIGN REVIEW**

This project was reviewed by the Historic Landmarks Commission on September 28, 2005 (Exhibit D). The HLC had positive comments regarding the project and stated the proposal was ingenious in design and land use. The HLC commended the underground parking garage and the use of a single driveway. The Commission recommended narrowing and setting back the driveway and requested further development of private outdoor living spaces, both of which have been addressed by the current project.

### **B. COMPLIANCE WITH THE GENERAL PLAN**

#### **Land Use Element**

The project site has a General Plan designation of Commerce and Office and is located in the Upper East Neighborhood of the City. This neighborhood is characterized as a district of large prestigious homes, except for the State Street frontage below Mission Street. The General Plan indicates that along the southern border of the Upper East neighborhood, below Valerio Street, apartment structures, professional offices, churches, and schools exist due to a mixture of zones which allow such uses. The proposed project is consistent with the uses surrounding the project site which are commercial in nature and are developed with single and multi-level buildings. The building to the immediate west of the project site is a three-story commercial building and to the east is a one-story commercial building.

#### **Housing Element**

Santa Barbara has very little vacant or available land for new residential development. Therefore, City housing policies support build out of infill housing units in the City's urban areas. The City's Housing Element encourages construction of a wide range of housing types to meet the needs of various household types. The project would be consistent with the Housing Element as it will contribute three additional residential units to the City's existing housing stock.

### **C. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

Staff and the Environmental Analyst have determined that the project is exempt from further environmental review pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines Section 15303, (new construction), which allows the construction of up to four commercial buildings not exceeding 10,000 square feet of floor area and not involving the use of significant amounts of hazardous substances, where all public services are available and the surrounding area is not environmentally sensitive.

#### *Noise Analysis*

The acoustical analysis prepared for this project concluded that exterior noise levels at the west end of the project would be approximately 66-67 dB (Exhibit E). Shielding by the adjacent existing structures and the project building would expose two of the three outdoor living spaces to noise levels below 60dB. The outdoor living spaces for the westernmost Unit 1 can be kept

below 60 dB by shielding the second floor patio with a 5.3 foot high patio wall and the third floor deck with a 3.5 foot high patio wall. By incorporating these design features into the project design, the report concludes that the project would comply with the 60 dB noise standard. The project has been revised to include the above mentioned measures; therefore, noise impacts to the outdoor living spaces for Unit 1 will not occur.

#### *Archaeological Resources*

In 1997, a Phase I Cultural Resources Study for 1528 State Street was prepared and submitted to the City for review and acceptance. The Historic Landmarks Commission reviewed and accepted the Study in early 1998. The Study was prepared as part of the development application review for a proposed building to be added at the rear of the subject property; however, the project was never constructed. The Phase 1 prepared in 1997 complied with the Master Environmental Assessment Guidelines for Archaeological Resources and Historic Structures Sites. No prehistoric or historic archaeological material was observed during the field survey of the property. In addition, an extensive document/literature search did not reveal any indication of previously recorded prehistoric or historic resources on the property. No mitigation measures were required.

The City's Cultural Resource Advisor, Dr. Michael Glassow, concurred with Staff's opinion that the previously prepared Phase 1 Study is sufficient to use for the current development proposal. Standard conditions of approval regarding unanticipated discovery of archaeological resources have been included in the event resources are encountered during grading and excavation activities associated with the project.

#### *Traffic Assessment*

Access for the proposed project would be provided via a single lane driveway, which connects to a 13 foot wide ramp and extends into the underground parking garage. Because the proposed ramp width would only accommodate one vehicle, Staff raised questions during the PRT and DART review regarding the possibility of inbound and outbound vehicles arriving simultaneously.

A traffic assessment was prepared by Associated Transportation Engineers (ATE) to evaluate potential site access issues (Exhibit F). The assessment responds to Staff's concerns that the single lane driveway would create site access conflicts when inbound and outbound movements happen at the same time. The traffic assessment analyzed the hourly arrival and departure volumes for the driveway using both a retail and office use scenario. According to the assessment, the retail scenario would generate 206 average daily trips and 7 a.m. and 21 p.m. peak hour trips. The office scenario would generate 108 average daily trips and 13 a.m. and 15 p.m. peak hour trips at the project driveway.

The study also assessed the probability of inbound and outbound trips occurring simultaneously for both scenarios. It was found that the probabilities of simultaneous trips are fairly low and much lower for the office scenario due to the frequency and directional nature of the trips that would be generated by the office use compared to the retail use. Also, the project is proposing a traffic control system to assist in a simultaneous arrival/departure event. The system would be a flashing signal indicating to inbound vehicles that the ramp is occupied by an outbound

vehicle. It is expected that, because the parking garage would be used primarily by residents and employees associated with the building, they would be familiar with the traffic control system and the operation of the ramp. The ATE traffic assessment also states that the possible frequency of movements occurring simultaneously could be reduced by restricting the building space to office use and requiring the driveway to be signed to allow right-in and right-out only. Conditions of approval have been incorporated to require these measures.

## **VII. FINDINGS**

The Staff Hearing Officer finds the following:

### **A. THE 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 vision for this neighborhood of the General Plan. The design of the project will not cause substantial environmental damage, and associated improvements will not cause serious public health problems.

### **B. THE NEW CONDOMINIUM DEVELOPMENT (SBMC §27.13.080)**

1. There is compliance with all provisions of the City's Condominium Ordinance.  
*The project complies with the physical standards for condominiums related to parking, private storage space, utility metering, laundry facilities, density, and outdoor living space requirements.*
2. The proposed development is consistent with the General Plan of the City of Santa Barbara.  
*The project can be found consistent with policies of the City's General Plan including the Housing Element and Land Use Element. The project will provide infill mixed-use development 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 commercial and residential development is a permitted use. 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. The design has been reviewed by the City's HLC, which found the architecture and site design appropriate.*

**C. FOR THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN (SBMC §28.87.300)**

1. The proposed development complies with all provisions of the Zoning Ordinance.

*The proposed development complies with all provisions of the Zoning Ordinance and the proposed use conforms to the C-2, Commercial Zone designation.*

2. The proposed development is consistent with the principles of sound community planning.

*The project site is located in the Land Use Element's Upper East Neighborhood and has a General Plan Designation of Commerce and Office and a Zoning Designation of C-2, Commercial. The Upper East Neighborhood is characterized as a district of large prestigious homes, except for the State Street frontage below Mission Street. The General Plan indicates that along the southern border of the Upper East neighborhood, below Valerio Street, apartment structures, professional offices, churches, and schools exist due to a mixture of zones which allow such uses. The project is a mixed-use proposal and represents an exemplary infill development on the subject site. Parcels immediately adjacent to the site are developed with commercial uses, including offices, retail and mixed-use.*

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.

*The HLC conceptually reviewed the project and found the design and land use to be appropriate. The project is compatible with the surrounding area's aesthetics and character and is consistent with other two and three story commercial and mixed-use buildings in the immediate area.*

4. The proposed development would not have a significant unmitigated adverse impact upon City and South Coast affordable housing stock.

*The proposed project would contribute 3 units to the City and South Coast housing stock and thus, would result in a positive impact to the region's housing stock.*

5. The proposed development will not have a significant unmitigated adverse impact on the City's water resources.

*The proposed project is estimated to demand 1.12 AFY, which would not significantly impact the City's water supply. There is adequate water to meet the needs of the proposed development. The proposed project receives water service from the City of Santa Barbara and is within the anticipated growth rate for the City. Therefore, the City's long-term water supply and existing water treatment and distribution facilities would adequately serve the proposed project.*

6. The proposed development will not have a significant unmitigated adverse impact on the City's traffic.

*Transportation Staff has reviewed the project and determined that the project would not result in significant project or cumulative impacts to any impacted intersection.*

Exhibits:

- A. Conditions of Approval
- B. Site Plan
- C. Applicant's letter, dated October 12, 2006
- D. HLC Minutes, dated September 28, 2006
- E. Noise Control Analysis, dated July 25, 2006
- F. Traffic Assessment prepared by Associated Transportation Engineers, dated 5/16/06