



Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND
CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Councilmember Sam Liccardo

SUBJECT: PDC08-037/PD08-062

DATE: February 9, 2009

APPROVED:

2-9-09

RECOMMENDATION

Approve the proposed rezoning from A(PD) Planned Development Zoning District to the A(PD) Planned Development Zoning District, and the associated Planned Development permit, to allow a hotel with 22 additional rooms for a total of up to 322 rooms, and a 40% reduction in the required on-site parking on a 3.2 gross acre site with the following conditions of approval:

- 1) Conformance of streetscape design with the Rincon South Specific Plan as it exists or is amended at the time of the commencement of construction;
- 2) Applicant or its lessee provide Eco Passes at no cost to hotel employees; and
- 3) Applicant or its lessee provides shuttle service for hotel guests to and from business destinations within five miles.

BACKGROUND

This proposed hotel development comes well after Council approved the Rincon South Specific Plan in 1998, but prior to the time in which the urban design guidelines of the North San José Development Policy will have reached final approval before council. As a result, conflicts in design about the streetscape and building orientation between the two leave the developer in limbo. I support staff's direction to ensure that the proposed development conforms to the guidelines' spirit of a strong street presence and pedestrian system, and one that aesthetically fits with the surrounding area, but do not support imposing guidelines that do not yet have formal approval. I recommend conforming to the streetscape and frontage requirements of the Council- approved and community- approved Rincon South Specific Plan, until Council has explicitly amended those guidelines through its public process. Should those amendments transpire prior to the commencement of construction, then the developer and staff should proceed accordingly.

Located in an urban area in close proximity to the airport and a light rail station, the site will provide a total of 195 parking spaces for use by hotel guests and employees, 40% less than otherwise required under the Zoning Code. Although the applicant has provided a parking study to show that the proposed parking suffices to meet the needs of the guests and employees, the hefty reduction of parking raises understandable concerns. In past proceedings, the Applicant has verbally agreed to "provide monetary incentives to employees" to ride transit (p. 6 of 6/23/08 staff memo), and to provide free shuttle service for hotel guests (p 2 of 1/29/09 staff memo). Providing VTA Eco Passes

COUNCIL AGENDA:

ITEM:

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to employees and free shuttle service for hotel guests will help alleviate the parking concerns of the developing neighborhoods nearby, while promoting transit ridership.

This discussion brings us back to a need to develop a uniform parking reduction policy in high-density, urban infill areas of our city. In a memorandum that heard by the Rules Committee on October 8, 2009, "Exploring Transportation Innovations To Mitigate Impacts From High-Density, Transit-Oriented Development," Mayor Reed, Vice Mayor Chirco, and I urged staff to move forward on a policy to provide high-density developers with incentives --such as parking ratio reductions--for funding incentives for transit ridership (EcoPasses) and car-sharing programs. That item has not yet been scheduled for committee hearing, but I look forward to beginning that very important policy conversation soon.