



PC AGENDA: 2-25-04

ITEM: __4.b.

Memorandum

TO: PLANNING COMMISSION

FROM: Stephen M. Haase

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: February 19, 2004

COUNCIL DISTRICT: 4

SUPPLEMENTAL

SUBJECT: PDC 03-068 – PLANNED DEVELOPMENT REZONING FROM HI HEAVY INDUSTRIAL TO A (PD) PLANNED DEVELOPMENT TO ALLOW UP TO 107 SINGLE-FAMILY DETACHED RESIDENCES ON A 13.7 GROSS ACRE SITE, LOCATED AT THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF OAKLAND ROAD AND ROCK AVENUE.

BACKGROUND

This item was continued from the February 9, 2004 Planning Commission hearing on General Plan amendments. The Commission voted to continue the item and directed staff to work with the Parks Department and the applicant to address the Commission's expressed concern for the lack of residential amenities in the area, specifically a neighborhood park. The Commission directed staff and the applicant to evaluate whether an on-site park of approximately one acre could be provided with the proposed development, particularly in anticipation of additional industrial-to-residential land conversion in the immediate vicinity.

The Commission also shared some of planning staff's concerns regarding the proposed layout of the residential subdivision. Planning Staff had recommended denial of the proposed rezoning because of the development's inward orientation that would result in a walled enclave with no visual or functional relationship to the surrounding community. Staff had recommended that a frontage road be provided along the western boundary of the site in order to provide additional separation from existing industrial uses as well as improved connectivity with future residential development on surrounding properties. While not supportive of possible additional residential conversion of the surrounding area, staff anticipates that the residential development of this site will likely result in pressure for residential development in the surrounding area. Staff had also recommended that frontage roads, setbacks, and building design be used in-lieu of sound walls on Oakland Road. The applicant is proposing a sound wall along the entire Oakland Road frontage.

This item was heard subsequent to the proposed General Plan amendment (GP03-04-01) to change the General Plan Land Use/Transportation Diagram from Industrial Park to Medium Density Residential (8-16 DU/AC). The Planning Director recommended no change to the Industrial Park designation. The Planning Commission voted 5-2-0 (Commissioners Levy and

Zito opposed) to recommend approval of the General Plan Amendment. The City Council is scheduled to consider both the General Plan amendment and this Planned Development Rezoning on March 16, 2004.

ANALYSIS

Staff's full analysis of the proposed PD Zoning is contained in the staff report prepared for the February 9th Planning Commission hearing. Following on the Commission's recommendation at that hearing to convert the site from industrial uses to housing, staff would like to focus on two primary concerns for designing an acceptable small-lot detached-single-family development at this location. One, as discussed at length by the Commission, is the area's lack of a neighborhood-serving park, and two is the relationship of the subject project to the existing and future neighborhood. These issues are discussed below.

Centrally Located, On-site Park

Staff in the City's Park's Department has determined that the project for up to 107 dwelling units would generate a requirement for approximately 1-acre of parkland in accordance with the Parkland Dedication Ordinance. At the February 9th Planning Commission hearing the applicant indicated that the project proposal would include enhancements to the grounds of the Orchard School site located to the south of the project site, across the future Charcot Avenue, to provide park amenities proximate to the new housing. Park's Department staff clarified that the City's Parkland Dedication Ordinance does not currently allow PDO fees to be used for "park-type" improvements on a school site, or any other property not owned by the City, and noted that such a proposal would require a change to the Ordinance. At the hearing, the Commission noted that this project is the first and possibly largest parcel in the area to be converted to residential, and should therefore provide land for a neighborhood park on site to help address the needs of the new residents, and the lack of existing amenities for the residents of the existing mobile home park. Staff believes that a park could be provided on-site. Additionally, staff feels that if, as several commissioners commented, more of this area will become residential, an on-site park should serve as a building block for other developments. A park location within the future residential development area also addresses concerns of locating park amenities across a future four-lane arterial (Charcot Avenue) from the subject residential development. The Charcot Avenue extension will be elevated as an over-crossing of Interstate 880, and eastbound traffic on the future four lane arterial will likely be traveling downhill at a high rate of speed approaching the project boundary and possible future street crossing to the school site to the south.

In response to the Planning Commission’s concerns and in coordination with the Department of Parks and Recreation Services, planning staff is recommending that the proposed project include a centrally located park, approximately 1-acre in size. As indicated in the graphic below, staff believes the appropriate placement for a park is in a central location that can potentially be expanded, should additional residential development occur in the area. The end result could be a single contiguous park of sufficient size to meet the parkland needs of existing and future residents of the area. Future residential development which may occur after the catalyst of this approval could create the need for an additional 2-3 acres of parkland. Per City policies, it is more desirable to have the park bordered on all sides by neighborhood streets rather than fronting on more heavily traveled streets such as Oakland Road, Rock Avenue or the future Charcot Avenue. To date, the applicant has not provided a revised site plan incorporating an on-site park location. Staff’s recommendation is reflected in the conceptual diagram below, which



illustrates a centrally-located park with a frontage road, as well as future development and the potential expansion of the park.

Neighborhood Connectivity

As stated in the original staff report, staff believes that approval of this project will likely result in further conversion of industrial lands and additional residential development in the area. Therefore, staff believes the proposed project should be designed so that this project relates to the surrounding community and so that future development can be integrated with this project to

form a more viable residential neighborhood. As proposed, the development turns its back on adjoining parcels with no opportunity for future connection to new development.

Planning staff continues to recommend that a frontage road be provided on the western edge of the project that will provide added separation from existing industrial uses (likely to remain in the short term), and allow for better integration of probable future residential development. Staff believes this is preferable to having residential units backing up to the westerly property line as proposed by the applicant. In addition, based on staff's recommended conceptual location for an on-site neighborhood park, a road that borders the park and allows for orderly expansion of area residential development would improve and integrate the neighborhood circulation, encourage future connectivity and could ultimately result in a park with street frontage on all sides. Such a public street alignment would also provide direct access with sidewalks for mobile home park residents to the north of Rock Avenue.

Along Oakland Road, while staff has noted a frontage road design could provide a noise buffer in lieu of a sound wall, if a sound wall is preferred, staff believes a generous landscaped setback of 10 feet should be provided and maintained by the project between the edge of sidewalk in the public right-of-way and the wall. The applicant indicates such a setback is provided for in the proposed PD Zoning site plan and will be further designed at the PD Permit stage.

CONCLUSION

The Planning Commission deferred the subject proposal from the February 9th Planning Commission hearing to allow planning staff time to coordinate with the applicant and the Parks Department to develop an on-site park as a part of the proposed development. Planning staff has determined that the project could accommodate a park approximately 1 acre in size located centrally on the site that would also permit expansion of the park if adjacent properties redevelop as residential. Staff's recommended design includes a frontage road along the park that permits easy public access to the park and will accommodate connectivity for future development.

RECOMMENDATION

Planning staff recommends that the Planning Commission recommend approval of the proposed project subject to the following conditions:

1. The project shall provide approximately one-acre park (actual size to be determined by the Parks Department in accordance with the Parkland Dedication Ordinance), to be centrally located on the subject property with a frontage road, as shown in staff's conceptual diagram seen above.

STEPHEN M. HAASE, DIRECTOR
Planning, Building and Code Enforcement