

RECOMMENDED FINDINGS
1139 Karlstad Drive
2016-8065

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

In order to adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration, the Planning Commission must make the following findings per CEQA Guidelines Section 15074:

1. The Mitigated Negative Declaration was prepared and circulated for public review in accordance with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act.
2. The Planning Commission has read and considered the Mitigated Negative Declaration and finds on the basis of the whole record before it, including the Initial Study and any comments received, that there is no substantial evidence that the proposed Project will have a significant effect on the environment.
3. The Mitigated Negative Declaration reflects the Planning Commission's independent judgment and analysis.
4. The mitigation measures listed in the Mitigated Negative Declaration have been incorporated as conditions of approval of the Project, including a program for reporting and monitoring the measures required to mitigate or avoid significant environmental effects.
5. The Department of Community Development, Planning Division, is the custodian of the records of the proceedings on which this decision is based. The records are located at Sunnyvale City Hall, 456 West Olive Ave., Sunnyvale, CA 94086.

Special Development Permit

In order to approve the Special Development Permit, the Planning Commission must be able to make at least one of the following findings:

1. The proposed use attains the objectives and purposes of the General Plan of the City of Sunnyvale. (*Finding met.*)

Key goals, objectives, and policies from the General Plan and High Density Residential Design Guidelines are listed below:

General Plan

Distinguished City Image

Policy CC-1.3 – Ensure that new development is compatible with the character of special districts and residential neighborhoods.

Adequate Housing

- *Policy HE-1.1 – Encourage diversity in the type, size, price and tenure of residential development in Sunnyvale, including single-family homes, townhomes, apartments, mixed-use housing, transit-oriented development, and live-work housing.*
- *Policy HE-1.2 – Facilitate the development of affordable housing through regulatory incentives and concessions, and/or financial assistance.*

Adequate Housing Sites

- *Policy HE-4.2 – Continue to direct new residential development into specific plan areas, near transit, and close to employment and activity centers.*
- *Policy HE-4.3 – Require new development to build to at least 75 percent of the maximum zoning density, unless an exception is granted by the City Council.*

Sustainable Neighborhoods

- *Policy HE-6.1 – Continue efforts to balance the need for additional housing with other community values, including preserving the character of established neighborhoods, high quality design, and promoting a sense of identity in each neighborhood.*
- *Policy HE-6.2 – Promote neighborhood vitality by providing adequate community facilities, infrastructure, landscaping and open space, parking, and public health and safety within new and existing neighborhoods.*
- *Policy HE-6.6 – Encourage use of sustainable and green building design in new and existing housing.*

Regional Participation

- *Policy 2, Action 1- Promote transit-oriented and mixed-use development near transit centers such as Lawrence Station, Downtown, El Camino Real, and in neighborhood villages.*

- *Policy 3 – Contribute to a healthy jobs-to-housing ratio in the region by considering jobs, housing, transportation, and quality of life as inseparable when making planning decisions that affect any of these components.*

Green Development

Policy 12, Action 3 – Establish incentives that encourage green building practices, including conservation, beyond mandated requirements.

Urban Forestry

Policy 14, Action 3 – Evaluate increasing the level of required tree planting and canopy coverage for new developments and site renovation projects while preserving solar access for photovoltaic systems.

A Well-Designed and Well-Operated Transportation Network

Policy 30 – Maintain a funding mechanism where new and existing land uses equitably participate in transportation system improvements.

Complete Streets that Balance all Transportation Modes

- *Policy 40, Action 3 – Minimize driveway curb cuts, and require coordinated access.*
- *Policy 40, Action 1 – Provide clear, safe, and convenient links between all modes of travel, including access to transit stations/stops and connections between work, home, commercial uses, and public/quasi-public uses.*
- *Policy 40, Action 2 – Action 2: Encourage the incorporation of features that enhance street public spaces, such as street trees, public socialization spaces, and sidewalks separated from the curb.*

Creation, Preservation, and Enhancement of Village Centers and Neighborhood Facilities that are Compatible with Residential Neighborhoods

- *Policy 54, Action 4 – Require amenities in new development and village centers that serve the needs of residents.*
- *Policy 55- Require new development, renovation, and redevelopment to be compatible and well integrated within existing residential neighborhoods.*

Protected, Maintained, and Enhanced Residential Neighborhoods

- *Policy 56- Improve and preserve the character and cohesiveness of existing residential neighborhoods.*

Diverse Housing Opportunities

- *Policy 61 – Determine the appropriate residential density for a site by evaluating the site planning opportunities and proximity of services (such as transportation, open space, jobs, and supporting commercial and public uses).*

- *Policy 64 - Consider the impacts of all land use decisions on housing affordability and on the housing needs of special needs groups within Sunnyvale.*

Healthy City

- *Policy 69, Action 2 – Enhance connectivity by removing barriers and improving travel times between streets, trails, transit stops, and other pedestrian thoroughfares.*
- *Policy 69, Action 4 – Promote separation of streets and sidewalks with planter strips and widened sidewalks, especially on streets with no parking lane.*

Open Space, Parks, and Wetlands

Policy 70, Action 1 – Define a minimum open space standard for residential uses, mixed-use developments, business developments, and Village Centers.

Future Plans

Policy 99, Action 1 – Maintain sense of place plans that provide more focused policies and development standards to guide future land use and transportation decisions.

High Density Residential Design Guidelines

Site Development

- *1 – Buildings should be located to reinforce the street edge by maximizing building frontage along the street, and should be sensitive to the setback of adjacent development.*
- *3 – Primary facades and building entries should face the street, open space areas, or other pedestrian-oriented circulation areas.*
- *5 – Design entries so that they are clearly identifiable from the street.*

Parking

- *2 – Partially below grade parking may be considered if geotechnical constraints are severe, but should be limited to a maximum height of 5 feet above grade level unless the garage walls facing the street and pedestrian areas are screened by residential units or commercial development.*
- *4 – If surface parking is used, lots should be broken into smaller segments separated by substantial landscaped islands.*

Open Space and Landscaping

1 – Useable, easily accessible and centrally located common open space is expected in all multifamily residential developments.

Building Form and Massing

- *2 – Individual stoop entries are strongly encouraged for ground floor units at the project's perimeter – especially along any public street front or public walkway.*
- *4 – Include features that add depth, shadow and architectural interest, such as balconies, recesses, cornices, bay windows, and step-backs at upper floors, consistent with the building's style and scaled for pedestrians.*
- *6 – For larger projects, break up the building mass to appear to be an assemblage of smaller buildings. This can be accomplished by deep insets in building planes, variations in height, and color or material changes.*
- *8 – The taller portion of a building (i.e., a tower) should not occupy more than 25 percent of the length of the lot dimension.*
- *12 – Provide buildings with a well-defined base, a middle, and a top to reduce apparent building height and bulk. Significant projecting roof overhangs are strongly encouraged.*
- *15 – Step back portions of upper floors to reduce the visual bulk of structures.*
- *16 – Projects constructed on top of parking podiums should take special care to provide design elements to minimize the hard edge of the parking podium...*
- *17 – Provide a varied building silhouette when viewed against the sky...*

Architectural Details

- *1 – Provide distinctive, residential scale building entries (see example to the left).*
- *2. Provide variations in window design and wall treatments (colors, materials) to reduce uniformity.*
- *3. Introduce non-reflective glass for greater transparency (e.g. staircases and picture windows).*
- *5 - For balconies and decks facing public streets or pedestrian ways that are large enough to accommodate boxes, bicycles and similar stored materials, provide solid walls on the lower portions of surrounding railings. Fully open railings are acceptable for smaller decks and balconies that are less likely to be used for storage.*
- *6 - Recess doors and windows from the building facade. Avoid windows that are flush or very near the face of the adjacent walls.*
- *9 - Use materials similar to homes and apartments in the neighborhood. Although it is common for developers to desire the use of stucco for multifamily projects, some significant use of wood or textured siding, stone or brick should be the goal in neighborhoods with a predominant use of these materials on building exteriors. This might be accomplished, for example, with the use of wood as a siding material on projecting bay elements or on the upper floor of multistory structures.*

- *15. Structures should include substantial architectural details to add visual variety and human scale.*

The proposed project meets the goals and objectives of the General Plan by providing 250 rental apartment units on an urban infill site in the Tasman Crossing Industrial to Residential (ITR) transition area – contributing towards the City’s jobs-housing balance. The project would also add to the City’s affordable housing stock by reserving 20 units for very-low income households. The project site is within walking distance to bus and light rail transit and a village center as identified in the General Plan. The major employment center of Moffett Park is also located within close proximity. The project further contributes to sustainable development goals by incorporating additional green building features within the building design.

The project would enhance the existing condition of the site and be consistent with the character of neighboring properties that have also converted from industrial to multi-family residential in recent years. The project would complete the sidewalk network on the block and provide street trees, bicycle parking, and street lighting consistent with the Tasman/Fair Oaks Area Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation Plan. Sense of place fees would also be provided for bicycle and pedestrian improvements in the neighborhood. The project provides adequate parking onsite and preserves street curb space to minimize impacts to existing on-street parking. Trees will be installed to screen views into adjacent homes, and some visually noteworthy periphery trees will remain. There is also a substantial amount of new tree planting in larger box sizes. There are adequate environmental mitigation measures in place to reduce construction-related noise and air quality impacts to the neighborhood. There is also a requirement to properly address any contaminated soils and groundwater should they be discovered.

The project is consistent with the High Density Residential Design Guidelines. The building has a well-defined base, middle, and top through strategic placement of high quality building materials, a large building recess in the middle of the project, inset doors and windows, and varying wall planes and rooflines. The building is oriented towards the street and includes stoops to ground floor units. The podium parking structure is screened by building elements and landscaping. Surface parking is located on the sides of the building and the view is broken up by substantial landscaping islands. The building is one floor taller than surrounding multi-family residential development, but includes an increased fourth floor setback that gives the appearance of a three-story building from street level. There are interior courtyard spaces and a large open space to the rear that provides active and passive recreational opportunities for residents,

including a tot lot. There is also an indoor fitness center, clubhouse, and communal dining areas.

2. The proposed use ensures that the general appearance of proposed structures, or the uses to be made of the property to which the application refers, will not impair either the orderly development of, or the existing uses being made of, adjacent properties. (*Finding met.*)

The project site is located within an adopted Industrial-to-Residential transition area, where many properties have transitioned to residential uses. The proposed project will improve the character of the site, surrounding neighborhood, and community by providing rental housing options (including 20 affordable housing units) within close proximity of transit, shopping, and a major employment area; and enhancing the existing site and streetscape conditions. The development has been designed to complement the adjacent neighborhood through high quality architecture and building materials with an appropriate site design, landscaping, and lighting. The requested deviation and concessions are reasonable and not anticipated to negatively affect adjacent properties. Potential environmental impacts can be mitigated to less than significant levels with the measures included in the conditions of approval.