



City of Sunnyvale

Agenda Item-No Attachments (PDF)

File #: 15-0121, Version: 1

REPORT TO PLANNING COMMISSION

SUBJECT

File #: 2014-7770

Location: 845 Maria Lane (APNs: 211-50-025)

Zoning: R-3

Proposed Project: Related applications on a 0.24-acre site:

DESIGN REVIEW: to allow 5 residential townhouse-style condominium units.

VARIANCE: to allow Useable Open Space in the required front yard.

TENTATIVE MAP: for 5 condominiums on one common lot (to be heard at a subsequent Zoning Administrator public hearing).

Applicant / Owner: HRH Architects / 10 Barneson LLC

Environmental Review: Categorical Exemption Class 3

Project Planner: Margaret Netto, Planner (408) 730-7628, mnetto@sunnyvale.ca.gov

REPORT IN BRIEF

General Plan: Medium Density Residential

Existing Site Conditions: Existing single-family home

Surrounding Land Uses

North: Townhomes (attached)

South: Single family homes

East: Townhomes (attached)

West: Townhomes (detached)

Issues: Open Space

Staff Recommendation: Approve with conditions

BACKGROUND

Description of Proposed Project

The project includes full demolition of the existing single-family home. The proposed project includes construction of 5 three-story, townhouse-style condominium units. The project includes the following applications:

- **Design Review Permit**

A Design Review by the Planning Commission is required for any residential project over 3

units. The purpose of the design review process is to improve the design quality of developments, and enhance and protect existing neighborhoods.

- **Tentative Map**

Due to a noticing error, the Tentative Map will be heard at a subsequent public hearing by the Zoning Administrator. The Tentative Map is required for the creation of 5 condominium (air space) units and one common lot. The Tentative Map shows the location of the proposed lot lines, public and private street/driveway and other improvements (see Attachment 6 for Conditions of Approval that will be heard at a subsequent public hearing).

- **Variance**

The variance request is required to locate useable open space in the required front yard.

See Attachment 1 for a map of the vicinity and radius map for notices and Attachment 2 for the Data Table of the project.

Previous Actions on the Site

The existing building was constructed in 1954 as a single-family home.

EXISTING POLICY

General Plan Goals and Policies: Key goals and policies from the Land Use and Transportation Chapter of the General Plan, Council Policy Manual and Citywide Design Guidelines which pertain to the proposed project are provided in Attachment 3.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The project is considered exempt from CEQA, Section 15303 regarding new construction or conversion of small structures (b) A duplex or similar multi-family residential structure totaling no more than six dwellings in an urbanized area.

DISCUSSION

Present Site Conditions

The 0.24-acre site is located on the northeast corner of Maria Lane and Bellomo Avenue. The site is currently developed with a 1,941 square foot, two-story single-family home. Townhomes are located north, east and west of the site and single-family homes to the south. The site is located in the R-3 multi-family zoning district.

Design Review

The project consists of one, three story building, containing 5 units with common open space on the corner and with individual patios in the front facing Maria Lane (southern property line). The driveway ramp to the garages and guest parking is off of Bellomo Avenue. Two additional guest parking spaces are located off of Maria Lane. The proposed units range in size from 2,226 to 2,358 square feet which includes a two-car garage. Each unit contains 3 bedrooms and two and half baths. Individual entrances into the units are provided on the first level through the interior patio area facing Maria Lane and through the garage.

The project architecture is contemporary in style with painted wood and stucco siding and concrete tile roofing. Character-defining details include aluminum clad window trim, box windows, decorative fencing, garage door with wood trim, Juliet balconies with wood trim and wood trellis above the front door. A paved decorative driveway and guest parking area is proposed, which creates a pronounced entry to the site and parking area. The applicant has worked with the staff to modify the front façade by adding a wood trellis above the door to further define the entry way and provide a consistent design.

Development Standards

The project complies with all of the applicable development standards except for the location of useable open space in the required front yard (see discussion below on related variance application). The project data table in Attachment 2 summarizes the project's compliance with applicable development standards.

Useable Open Space

The applicant is requesting a variance to locate useable open space in the required front yard area. At the Planning Commission study session in June, 2014, the architect provided the Commission with several design options which included the garage parking in the front facing Maria Lane with the useable open space in the rear and the current design option with the open space in the front yard and the garage parking in the rear. The Commissioners indicated a preference for the option with locating the useable open space in the front yard. This option lessens the amount of driveway cuts on Maria Lane, provides a friendlier streetscape, creates a functional open space and is consistent with the existing townhomes south on Maria Lane. Variance Findings are in Attachment 3.

The project exceeds the minimum useable open space amount requirement by providing 441 square feet per unit where 400 square feet is required within the front yard setback. In addition the front and the rear area provide for additional useable open space.

Staff finds that the requested variance is reasonable for the reasons outlined in Attachment 3 (Findings) and 5 (Applicants' Justifications). The lot is substandard in width, conforms to similar townhomes in the vicinity and provides adequate useable open space as dictated by code. If the Planning Commission is not able to support the requested useable open space variance the item can be continued to allow the applicant to redesign the project to achieve compliance with open space requirements.

Parking

With two-car garages for each unit, the SMC requires 0.50 unassigned spaces per unit. The project meets the parking requirement by providing 5 two-car garage spaces (two per assigned per unit) and 3 unassigned surface parking spaces for a total of 13 parking spaces.

The SMC requires that multi-family uses of five or more units provide one bicycle parking space for every four units. The project is providing a two-car garage for each unit which would meet the requirement for providing one secured bicycle parking space. Five secured bicycle parking spaces would be provided in compliance with bicycle parking requirements.

Lockable Storage

A minimum of 300 cubic feet of lockable storage is required for each residential unit. Each 400 s.f. garage satisfies this requirement.

Landscaping and Tree Preservation

The project exceeds the minimum landscaped area by providing a total of 3,490 square feet of landscaping (34% of the site), where 2,125 is required (20% of the site). The proposed landscaping within the common open space areas is in compliance with water-efficient landscaping requirements by using low water or no water plantings throughout 80% of the landscaped areas. A separate staff-level permit will be required to review landscaping in the private yards, including review of all fences and walls along the site perimeter and between yards (Attachment 6).

A tree survey was prepared for the project. There are eight existing trees on-site; one of which meets the definition of a “protected tree” in the SMC. The one “protected tree” is a Magnolia which is located on the corner of Maria Lane and Bellomo Avenue (see T-1 on plan). The Magnolia is in fair condition and will be preserved. The seven remaining “unprotected trees” will be removed. The removal of the trees is necessary due to development of the site. The preliminary landscaping plan includes the addition of eight trees on site and three street trees.

Trash and Recycling Facilities

The applicant proposes individual recycling and trash containers for each unit. The garages have, been properly sized to meet adequate storage for the carts. The containers will be placed curbside on Bellomo Avenue during the scheduled pick up day.

FISCAL IMPACT

The project is subject to park in-lieu fees, and transportation impact fees in addition to normal permit fees.

PUBLIC CONTACT

Notice of Public Hearings

- Published in the *Sun* newspaper
- Posted on the site
- 1,307 notices were mailed to property owners and residents within 1,000 ft. of the project site.

Staff Report

- Posted on the City’s Website
- Provided at the Reference Section of the City’s Public Library
- Made available at the City’s One-Stop Permit Center.

Agenda

- Posted on the City’s official notice bulletin board.

- Posted on the City's Website

Outreach Meeting

The applicant conducted a community outreach meeting on February 12, 2015, which was attended by one resident. The resident was interested in reviewing the plans for the development. He had no questions or comments on the project.

Planning Commission Study Session

A Planning Commission study session was held for this project in June 2014. The applicant presented two design options at the study session. Option #1 designed the open space in the front yard with the garage parking in the rear similar to the proposed project. This option also requested a variance to encroach into the front yard setback. Option #2 provided the 5 unit attached townhomes with the parking facing Maria Lane locating the open space in the rear of the lot. The applicant and the Planning Commission preferred design Option #1. The applicant designed the project to locate the useable open space in the required front yard area.

Letter from Neighbors

Staff has not received any letters from the neighbors.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Approve the Variance, Design Review Permit and recommend approval of the Tentative Map with the attached conditions.
2. Approve the Variance, Design Review Permit and recommend approval of the Tentative Map with modified conditions.
3. Deny the Variance, Design Review Permit and Tentative Map.

RECOMMENDATION

...Recommendation

Alternate 1, approve the Variance, Design Review Permit to allow 5 residential townhomes and recommend approval of the Tentative Map to allow five residential condominiums and one common lot based on the findings in Attachment 3 and with recommended conditions of approval in Attachment 4 at a subsequent Zoning Administrator hearing.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Vicinity and Noticing Radius Map
2. Project Data Table
3. Findings for Approval and General Plan Goals and Policies
4. Recommended Conditions of Approval
5. Applicants' Project Justifications
6. Project Plans

