



Resolution 6-2025

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Item #: 2b

Resolution making findings and recommending that City Council approve a Planned Development, Zoning Map Amendment, Tentative Parcel Map, Design Review, and Transportation Demand Management Program to construct 70 single-family townhouse units located at 500 Railroad Avenue in the T4 Lindenville (T4L) Zoning District.

WHEREAS, Newlife Investments, LLC (“Applicant”) has proposed to construct 70 single-family townhouse units with associated open space and public improvements at 500 Railroad Avenue; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Project site is located within the T4 Lindenville (T4L) Zoning District; and

WHEREAS, the Applicant seeks entitlement approval of a Planning Project (P23-0061), including Planned Development (PUD24-0001), Tentative Parcel Map (PM25-0001), Design Review (DR24-0026) and Transportation Demand Management Program (TDM23-0007); and

WHEREAS, the Design Review Board for the City of South San Francisco considered the Project, and recommended approval to the Planning Commission and City Council on September 25, 2024; and

WHEREAS, approval of the applicant’s proposal is considered a “Project” for purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act, Pub. Resources Code §21000, et seq. (“CEQA”); and

WHEREAS, in 2022 City Council certified an Environmental Impact Report (“EIR”) for the 2040 General Plan Update, Zoning Code Amendments and Climate Action Plan (“2040 General Plan Program EIR”) (State Clearinghouse # 2021020064) in accordance with the provisions of CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines, which analyzed the potential environmental impacts of the citywide development anticipated in the 2040 General Plan; and

WHEREAS, City Council also adopted a Statement of Overriding Considerations (“SOC”) in October 2022 in accordance with the provisions of CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines, which carefully considered each significant and unavoidable impact identified in the 2040 General Plan Program EIR and found that the significant environmental impacts are acceptable in light of the Project’s social, economic and environmental benefits; and

WHEREAS, in October 2023 City Council adopted the Lindenville Specific Plan Addendum to the 2040 General Plan Program EIR, which made minor changes to the General Plan development assumptions for the Lindenville Specific Plan area; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15183, a Compliance Checklist was prepared for the Project to provide substantial evidence that the proposed Project is within the scope of the previous environmental analysis including the 2040 General Plan Program EIR and Mitigation Monitoring Program and that subsequent CEQA analysis is not required for the Project; and

WHEREAS, on May 15, 2025 the Planning Commission for the City of South San Francisco held a lawfully noticed public hearing to solicit public comment and consider the Compliance Checklist and the proposed entitlements and environmental effects of the Project and take public testimony; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission for the City of South San Francisco reviewed and carefully considered the information in the Compliance Checklist, and by separate resolution determined that the Compliance Checklist is an objective and accurate document that reflects the independent judgement and analysis of the City in relation to the Project's environmental impacts and find that the Compliance Checklist satisfies the requirements of CEQA. The Project is consistent with the certified 2040 General Plan Program EIR and no subsequent EIR is required pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that based on the entirety of the record before it, which includes without limitation, the California Environmental Quality Act, Public Resources Code §21000, et seq. ("CEQA") and the CEQA Guidelines, 14 California Code of Regulations §15000, et seq.; the South San Francisco General Plan; the South San Francisco Municipal Code; the 2040 General Plan EIR and Statement of Overriding Considerations; the Project Plans, as prepared by SIM Architects, dated September 10, 2024; the Compliance Checklist, prepared by David J. Powers & Associates, dated April 2025, including all appendices thereto; Design Review Board recommendations dated September 25, 2024; all reports, minutes, and public testimony submitted as part of the Planning Commission's duly noticed May 15, 2025 meeting; and any other evidence (within the meaning of Public Resources Code Sections 21080(e) and 21082.2), the Planning Commission of the City of South San Francisco hereby finds as follows:

SECTION 1 **FINDINGS**

A. General

1. The foregoing recitals are true and correct and made a part of this Resolution.
2. The Exhibits attached to this Resolution, including Conditions of Project Approval (Exhibit 1), Project Plans (Exhibit 2), and Open Space Urban Design Plans (Exhibit 3) are each incorporated by reference and made a part of this Resolution, as if set forth fully herein.
3. The documents and other material constituting the record for these proceedings are located at the Planning Division for the City of South San Francisco, 315 Maple Avenue, South San Francisco, CA 94080, and in the custody of the Chief Planner.
4. The proposed Project is consistent and compatible with all elements in the City of South San Francisco General Plan, as it is consistent with the T4 Lindenville (T4L) land use designation with approval of a Planned Development Zoning District to allow a reduced minimum density because the project parcel shape restricts the site from meeting the T4L minimum residential density, and will help the City implement several broad General Plan goals, including but not limited to: creating a residential neighborhood in the northern part of Lindenville and providing more housing units under the Lindenville Specific Plan standards.
5. The proposed Project is consistent with the standards and requirements of the City's Zoning Ordinance, with the adoption of Planned Development Zoning District that allows for the development of the subject site would result in the construction of 70-townhouse units in the Lindenville Sub-Area.

6. The site is physically suitable for the type of development and density proposed, as an existing underutilized site will be developed as 70-townhouse units that meet the City's land use and zoning standards with approval of a Planned Development Zoning District.

B. Planned Development and Zoning Map Amendment

1. As described in more detail in Exhibit 1, approval of the proposed Project will include adoption of an amendment to the South San Francisco Zoning Map, maintained by the Planning Division. The Zoning Map will be amended to revise the zoning district designation from T4 Lindenville (T4L) to a Planned Development (PD) for Assessor's Parcel Numbers 014-061-070 and 014-072-050.
2. The proposed Zoning Map Amendment meets the purposes of Section 20.530 of the Municipal Code and is consistent with the General Plan because the General Plan land use designation of T4 Lindenville (T4L) allows for multifamily residential development. Due to the unusual shape and the site constraints, the applicant proposes a Planned Development with the following exceptions to the T4 Lindenville (T4L) zoning district development standards and site and building design standards.

Lot Development Standards:

- Reduction of minimum density (min. 80 du/ac): proposed minimum density 35.8 du/ac
- Increase of maximum street side build-to area (max. 10 ft.): proposed 54 feet
- Reduction of minimum rear setback (min. 15 ft.): proposed five feet
- Increase of maximum building size and massing (max. width 35 ft.): proposed building widths range from 168 feet to 325 feet
- Increase of maximum building separation (max. 10 ft.): proposed building separations from 20.5 feet
- Increase of maximum fence height (max. 6 ft.): proposed 8 feet

Objective Design Standards:

- Reduction of minimum building modulation/articulation
 - Building Façade between 75 ft and 300 ft (min. 4 ft. recess in depth and min. 8 ft building height difference): proposed 0-foot recess in depth and 2 feet building height difference
 - Building Façade greater than 300 ft (min. 40 ft recess in depth and min. 8 ft building height difference): proposed 0-foot recess in depth and 1 foot building height difference
- No units meeting all Universal Design requirements:
 - At least one entrance without steps and a flat threshold: proposed zero compliant unit
 - Living space all on one floor, or stair landings big enough to accept lifts: proposed all habitable spaces on multiple floors
 - 60-by-60-inch turning space at doors and dead ends: project includes some spaces at doors and dead ends without the 60-inch turning space

The change in zoning designation does not conflict with any specific plans, and will remain consistent with the surrounding land uses, which include high-density residential to the north and will serve as a transitional use for the light-industrial uses to the south, east and west. The proposed amendment will not conflict with or impede achievement of any of the goals, policies, or land use designations

established in the General Plan.

3. The Project property is suitable for the uses proposed in the Planned Development district in terms of access, size of parcel, relationship to similar or related uses, and other considerations deemed relevant by the Planning Commission and City Council. The Project proposes 70 single-family townhouse units and open space areas in the T4 Lindenville (T4L) land use designation, which is intended for this type of use, and would be developing a vacant underutilized parcel with site access provided off of Railroad Avenue. The General Plan has analyzed this type of use and concluded that such uses are suitable to the Lindenville Sub-Area. The Zoning Map Amendment is consistent with General Plan policies, specifically those related to multifamily residential uses.
4. The proposed Zoning Map Amendment is not detrimental to the use of land in any adjacent zone because the Planned Development District will provide multifamily residential development which is allowed in the T4 Lindenville (T4L) zoning district. The Project will provide a transition between the existing residential neighborhoods north of the site to multifamily residential and light industrial neighborhoods to the south, east and west.

C. Design Review

1. The Project, including Design Review, is consistent with Title 20 of the South San Francisco Municipal Code because the Project has been designed as 70-townhouse units which will create multi-residential units to provide additional housing for the growing residential demand in the Lindenville area.
2. The Project, including Design Review, is consistent with the General Plan because the proposed 70-townhouse units are consistent with the policies and design direction provided in the South San Francisco General Plan for the T4 Lindenville (T4L) land use designation within close proximity to the Caltrain Station.
3. The Project, including Design Review, is consistent with the applicable design guidelines adopted by the City Council in that the proposed Project is consistent with the T4L Zoning District development standards, and the Citywide development standards, as evaluated in the Zoning Ordinance Compliance analysis for the Project, subject to approval of the Planned Development District.
4. The Project is consistent with the applicable design review criteria because the Project has been evaluated by the Design Review Board on September 25, 2024 and found to be consistent with the criteria set forth in South San Francisco Municipal Code Section 20.480.006 (Design Review Criteria).

D. Tentative Parcel Map

1. The proposed tentative subdivision map, including the proposed designs and improvements, are consistent with the City's General Plan as set forth in Finding B.2 above, and because the tentative subdivision map would facilitate the development of a multifamily residential development that would not conflict with the Medium Density Mixed Use Land Use designation.
2. The proposed tentative subdivision map is consistent with the standards and requirements of the City's Zoning Ordinance and with the provisions of the Planned Development Zoning District.

3. The tentative subdivision map complies and meets all of the requirements of Title 19 of the South San Francisco Municipal Code (“Subdivisions”), and with the requirements of the State Subdivision Map Act.
4. The Project site is suitable for the type of development proposed, as the multifamily residential development will be located in a new Planned Development, subject to the adoption of the Planned Development, and appropriate for the location and meets the City’s land use and zoning standards.
5. The Project, including the proposed designs and improvements, are not likely to cause substantial environmental damage, or serious public health problems, since such impacts have been thoroughly evaluated as part of the CEQA process and determined not to exceed any stated thresholds of significance.
6. The design and improvements of the tentative subdivision map are not in conflict with any existing public easements.
7. The property is located in a developed, urban setting, and is not subject to a Williamson Act contract, on open space easement, a conservation easement, or an agricultural conservation easement. The surrounding land uses and resulting parcels would not support agricultural uses; the resulting parcels would result in residential development not incidental to commercial agricultural use of the land.

F. Transportation Demand Management

1. The submitted Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan is satisfying 21 points out of 20 required points. The TDM plan includes a range of measures that are appropriate to the site, including transit pass subsidies, locating the project within a half mile of the Caltrain Station, a long-term bicycle parking space within each unit’s garage, and constructing a new sidewalk to improve pedestrian connections.
2. The minimum 20 points are required for residential use (Tier 1) and the project TDM Plan proposes 21 points out of 20 required points

SECTION 2 DETERMINATION

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Planning Commission of the City of South San Francisco hereby makes the findings contained in this Resolution and recommends that City Council approve the entitlements request for 500 Railroad Avenue subject to the attached Conditions of Approval.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution shall become effective immediately upon its passage and adoption.

* * * * *

I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was adopted by the Planning Commission of the City of South San Francisco at a regular meeting held on the 15th day of May 2025 by the following:

vote:

AYES:

Vice-Chair Pamukcu, Baker, Faria, Shihadeh, Evans,

NOES:

ABSTENTIONS:

ABSENT:

Chair Funes-Ozturk, Tzang



Attest: _____

Adena Friedman
Secretary to the Planning Commission