



Legislation Details (With Text)

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Title:	Report regarding consideration of a Design Review Permit for the construction of a new four-unit live-work building on a vacant parcel at El Camino Real and Hickey Boulevard (APN #010-171-210) in the Community Commercial (CC) Zoning District in accordance with Title 20 of the South San Francisco Municipal Code (SSFMC) and determination that the project is categorically exempt from CEQA. (Christopher Espiritu, Senior Planner)		
Sponsors:			
Indexes:			
Code sections:			
Attachments:	1. Attachment A_Draft Findings and Conditions of Approval, 2. Attachment B_Project Plans_09172021, 3. Attachment C_DRB Comment Letter_7-20-21_Signed, 4. Attachment D_DRB Response Letter_09172021		

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
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Report regarding consideration of a Design Review Permit for the construction of a new four-unit live-work building on a vacant parcel at El Camino Real and Hickey Boulevard (APN #010-171-210) in the Community Commercial (CC) Zoning District in accordance with Title 20 of the South San Francisco Municipal Code (SSFMC) and determination that the project is categorically exempt from CEQA. (*Christopher Espiritu, Senior Planner*)

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission make findings and approve the Design Review Permit (DR20-0015) requests and determine that the Project is categorically exempt under the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Class 32, Section 15332, In-fill Development Projects.

BACKGROUND/ DISCUSSION

The applicant has proposed the construction of a new three-story building consisting of four live-work units and seven vehicle parking spaces and bicycle parking on-site. The applicant is requesting review and approval of a Design Review Permit for the new mixed-use construction on a currently vacant parcel.

Site Overview

The project site is currently a 10,703 square-foot (sq. ft.) vacant parcel, and there is no address associated with the site. The parcel is located at the northwest corner of El Camino Real and Hickey Boulevard and is within the Community Commercial (CC) Zoning District. The site is unique given its single frontage along El Camino Real to the east and is surrounded by other existing uses such as a gas station/car wash to the south, a motel to the west, and undeveloped areas to the north. The project site access is through a shared driveway on southbound El Camino Real that is used by the motel and gas station/car wash patrons.

Proposed Project

The proposed project would include the construction of a new three-story building with four live-work units. The proposed building would be approximately 34 feet tall and includes seven vehicle parking spaces, as well as four Class II bicycle parking spaces (racks). Open space would be provided in a mix of balconies on the 2nd and 3rd floors for each unit, and a dedicated open space area on the ground floor. Ingress to the project site is through a new one-way driveway along southbound El Camino Real. Egress from the property is located on Hickey Boulevard through a shared easement and would require users to route through the adjacent gas station and motel properties. The project would also construct new sidewalks along the project's frontage on El Camino Real.

ZONING CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS

Proposed Use

The project site is located within the Community Commercial (CC) Zoning District. Per the South San Francisco Municipal Code (SSFMC) Section 20.090.002 (Land Use Regulations), the zoning district allows for a variety of commercial and employment uses, either by-right or with the approval of a Use Permit. Residential uses are not typically permitted within the zoning district. The proposed use is specifically included in the 'Live-Work Units' use classification, which is permitted by-right in the CC Zoning District. As shown in Table 1, the proposed project would develop the vacant parcel to create new hybrid commercial and residential uses that is accessible to other nearby commercial uses on El Camino Real and located within a ¼-mile of a high-quality and high-frequency bus service (SamTrans ECR buses and SSF City Shuttle). The project generally complies with all applicable development standards for Live-Work Units under SSFMC Section 20.090.002. Further, the project itself maintains consistency with the requirements set forth in the Community Commercial zoning district.

Table 1. Community Commercial Zoning District - Development Standards

Development Standards -- CC, BPO, CMX Districts		
Table 20.090.003	Required	Proposed
Lot Standards		
Minimum Lot Size (sq. ft.)	5,000 sq. ft.	10,703 sq. ft.
Minimum Lot Width (ft)	50 ft	ECR frontage 207'-3"
Maximum Density (dwelling units/net acre)	15 dwelling units/net acre	4 units (<1 acre)
Minimum Site Area per Dwelling Unit (sq. ft.)	2,904 sq. ft.	4,641 sq. ft.
Building Form and Location		
Maximum Height		
Height Limit	Main Building: 50 ft Accessory Building: 20 ft	33'-6"
Minimum Yards		
Front	10'	10'-0"
Interior Side	0, 10' when abutting an R district	0
Street Side	10'	10'-0"
Rear	0, 10' when abutting an R district	0
Maximum Lot Coverage	50% of lot	26%
Minimum FAR	n/a	n/a
Maximum FAR	0.5	0.449
Additional Standards		
Usable Open Space (sq. ft. per residential unit)	150 sq. ft.	1,456 sq. ft.
Minimum Amount of Landscaping (% of site)	10% of site	3,775 sq. ft.

Additionally, Live-Work Units have specific development standards as outlined in SSFMC Section 20.350.025. These development standards include additional requirements related to floor area, open space, parking, and others, and these additional requirements aim to provide a higher level of compliance, due to the mixed nature of live-work units. As shown in Table 2, the project generally complies, or meets, all additional development standards under SSFMC Section 20.350.025. The project provides parking for both residential and commercial uses on the site, provides for additional open space and landscaping, as well as provisions for bicycle and pedestrian travel on El Camino Real.

Table 2. Additional Development Standards for Live-Work Units

Development Standards -- CC, BPO, CMX Districts		
Table 20.090.003	Required	Proposed
Lot Standards		
Minimum Lot Size (sq. ft.)	5,000 sq. ft.	10,703 sq. ft.
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Minimum FAR	n/a	n/a
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Additional Standards		
Usable Open Space (sq. ft. per residential unit)	150 sq. ft.	1,456 sq. ft.
Minimum Amount of Landscaping (% of site)	10% of site	3,775 sq. ft.

Further, Live-Work Units include additional development standards outlined in SSFMC 20.350.025 that place requirements on allowable work activities on-site. For future commercial uses proposed, the Code retains a provision which would require additional use permits to protect the health and safety of persons who reside in a live-work unit, or in a building which contains one or more live-work units.

Should the following uses be proposed for the site: automobile/vehicle sales and services, bars/lounges/night clubs, adult businesses, animal sales and services, liquor stores, funeral parlors and mortuaries, outdoor storage as a primary use, and salvage and wrecking, the applicant would be required to apply for a use permit and conditions regarding health and safety, hours of operation, and others, would be determined at the time of review. At this time, the applicant has not determined the type of commercial or 'work' uses on the project site. Staff would continue to work with the applicant once the commercial use has been established and Condition of Approval #25-30 would ensure that the applicant coordinate with staff on establishing applicable uses on the site.

GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS

The proposed project is consistent with the City's General Plan, which designates the site as Community Commercial (CC). This land use designation is intended for major commercial districts, including El Camino Real and permits various types of commercial activities, retail, and business/personal services. The use is consistent with the land use designation in that while the proposed live-work units are a hybrid commercial and residential use, the Municipal Code maintains a greater portion of each live-work unit be designated for "work" or commercial uses. Also, the proposed project can be accommodated by a developed site that is integrated

within an urban environment consisting of other commercial uses. The project includes the construction of four live-work units with new access for pedestrians, bicycles, and vehicles, and would activate the immediate area, meeting the intent of the adopted General Plan designation.

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

The project was reviewed by the Design Review Board on September 23, 2020, and July 29, 2021. During the first DRB review, the Board provided numerous comments and shared concerns with the applicant team regarding overall design, site access constraints, lack of provisions for pedestrians/bicyclists, and provided direction on landscaping and trees. Since that meeting, the applicant team has revised the overall building design and worked to address the Board's numerous comments on the project. During the second DRB review, the Board was generally supportive of the applicant's design revisions and provided additional suggestions for landscaping, maintaining the Corten steel metal design features, and suggestions for solar panels. The project was ultimately recommended for approval to the Planning Commission and the project was determined to comply with Title 20, Section 20.480 of the SSFMC. DRB's final comments and recommendations are included in Attachment C. The Applicant's responses to DRB's comments are addressed in Attachment D.

SUSTAINABILITY/CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

The proposed project is consistent with sustainability regulations that have been adopted at State, regional and local levels. Examples include Senate Bill 375, passed in 2008, which aims to located developments near transit. The project, located along a high-quality and high frequency bus service help meet this goal.

In February 2014, the City adopted a Climate Action Plan (CAP), which serves as South San Francisco's greenhouse gas reduction strategy. As currently designed, the proposed project will comply with CAP development standards, and staff will continue to work with the applicant to incorporate as many sustainable features as possible into the project. Staff has included a Condition of Approval that requires the applicant to include the CAP requirements subject to Chief Planner review and approval prior to the issuance of a building permit.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The proposed project has been determined to be categorically exempt under the provisions of CEQA, Class 32, Section 15332, In-Fill Development Projects. The project site includes the construction of a new hybrid commercial/residential live-work units and is located on a vacant lot surrounded by existing commercial buildings. As discussed herein, the project is consistent with the City's General Plan, applicable policies and zoning designations and regulations, and will be located on a site of less than 5 acres within the City's limits and surrounded by urban uses. Further, there is no evidence indicating that the Project site would have any value as habitat for endangered, rare, or threatened species as it is located in a developed area along El Camino Real, a major commercial corridor for the City. The project would be adequately serviced by utilities and public services. Based on the evidence presented herein, there is no indication that approval of the Project would result in any significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality or water quality.

CONCLUSION

The project, as conditioned, is compliant with the City's Municipal Code, General Plan, Zoning Development Standards, and Design Criteria. Therefore, staff recommends that the Planning Commission make findings and approve Project P20-0021, including Design Review Permit DR20-0015, subject to the attached draft Findings and Conditions of Approval, and determine that the Project is categorically exempt under the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Class 32, Section 15332 In-Fill Development Projects.

Attachments:

- A. Draft Findings and Conditions of Approval
- B. Project Plans (September 18, 2021)
- C. Design Review Board Letter (July 29, 2021)
- D. Applicant's Response to DRB Letter (September 17, 2021)