



Legislation Text

File #: 23-210, Version: 1

Report regarding applications for Design Review and Transportation Demand Management to construct a new 7-story, 85 foot tall, residential housing development consisting of 543 housing units located at 7 South Linden Avenue in the T5 Corridor zone district, and determination that the project is consistent with the 2040 General Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR), pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines section 15162 and related CEQA requirements. (*Christy Usher, Senior Planner*)

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Planning Commission adopt two resolutions to respectively determine that the proposed project is consistent with the 2040 General Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR), pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines section 15162 and related CEQA requirements, and approve the entitlements request for Design Review (DR22-0007), and Transportation Demand Management (TDM22-0002) subject to the proposed Conditions of Approval.

Motions to adopt staff recommendation:

- 1. Adopt resolution making CEQA determinations**
- 2. Adopt resolution approving entitlements subject to attached conditions of approval.**

BACKGROUND

The project site is located in a sub area of the City called Lindenville. A planning effort is currently underway to draft a new specific plan for Lindenville. The Lindenville sub-area is located in the central southern portion of the city, adjacent to the Downtown sub-area. It is in between Highway 101 and South Spruce Ave. The sub-area stretches over 400 acres and is largely comprised of manufacturing, food processing, warehousing, and other industrial uses, including some of the City's historic "legacy" businesses, such as Produce Terminal and Bimbo Bakeries. The Southline Specific Plan area, adjacent to the San Bruno BART station, is also included in the Lindenville sub-area.

The Lindenville Specific Plan will be the guiding document to help realize the General Plan's vision for the area as a mixed-use neighborhood, employment hub, and cultural center of South San Francisco. Walkable, connected districts, including the South Spruce corridor, are envisioned as lively destinations where people have easy access to retail, parks, and other community resources. The Plan will preserve the city's industrial heritage but will also provide new opportunities for people to live in the district. A revitalized Colma Creek has the potential to become a community-serving linear park with restored ecology that benefits the health and wellbeing of people and wildlife.

The Lindenville Specific Plan is intended to:

- Center the voices of people who will live, work, own property, and recreate in Lindenville.
- Prepare a shared plan for achieving a successful, equitable, and resilient district through design

standards, community benefits, and provision of public amenities and services.

- Retain existing industrial uses, while ensuring new neighborhoods are livable, healthy, quiet, and green.

Adoption of the Final Specific Plan is scheduled for summer 2023. In the meantime, the land use and development standards of the proposed project are anticipated to be consistent with the draft Lindenville Specific Plan document and its vision.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Project and Site Description

The proposed project includes construction of a new 7-story, 85-foot tall, residential housing development consisting of 543 housing units located at 7 South Linden Avenue. The proposed structure is approximately 910,736 gross square feet. The project would include approximately 563 parking spaces that are above grade and enclosed on levels one and two of building. The project site is approximately 4.22 acres and currently developed with industrial warehouse uses.

The project site is bordered by South Linden Avenue to the west. Directly adjacent to the south is the City's storm water pump station which is adjacent to Colma Creek. To the north and east is Southern Pacific Railroad tracks and property. The Lindenville sub-area is located in the central southern portion of the city, adjacent to the Downtown sub-area. It is in between Highway 101 and South Spruce Avenue.

Vehicle access to the site would be provided via two separate driveway entrances off South Linden Avenue that are both two-way. There are two parking garage entrances on the site which can be accessed off either of the South Linden Avenue driveway access points.

Land uses in the project vicinity are predominately a mixture of industrial, commercial, office and warehousing. The project site is currently improved with two single-story industrial warehouses. The Cal Train station is approximately a 0.5 mile walk to the project site.

The proposed unit count and type includes the following: 62 studio units, 252 one-bedroom units, and 229 two-bedroom units. The units range in size from approximately 575 square feet to 1,500 square feet. In compliance with the City's inclusionary housing codes and requirements 15% of the units will be affordable which is a total of 82 units spread proportionately across the various unit bedroom types.

The existing lot is triangular in nature and the architecture and footprint of the proposed building takes into account the triangular shape of the existing site. Ground floor units face Linden Ave, flanked by a resident lobby to the north and tenant amenities to the south. The main facade of the residential building is along South Linden Avenue with stepped down corners with resident roof decks, which serve to break up the massing, while providing pleasant resident amenity spaces. The proposed building is composed of modern high-quality materials and breaks up the facade with cast in place concrete, metal and glass railings and awnings, cementitious horizontal siding, wood-like siding, and painted stucco. The building mass is broken up at one main location, with a 40' setback, creating 2 main building masses that span between 220' to 245'. Each segment includes different materiality, color, and window design to meet the intent of the current zoning code while still delivering the maximum amount of units and allowing the building systems to remain efficient. Open space areas a pocket park, greenway, balconies, patios and interior courtyard areas.

Neighborhood Meeting

The applicant held a neighborhood meeting on January 24, 2023. The meeting was held at the South San Francisco Municipal Services Building from 6:00- 7:00 p.m. Notices were sent to all neighbors within 300 feet of the proposed project. Deanna Chalfant (Essex Property Trust) and Heather Snow and Jon Ennis (BDE Architecture), as well as Christy Usher (South San Francisco City Planner) were present at the meeting. At 6:15 p.m. two neighbors arrived to the meeting, who own and occupy the building across the street from the 7 S Linden project. They learned more about the project from the applicant, architect, and project planner.

Public Comments

No public comments have been received for the file.

ZONING CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS

The site is zoned T5 Corridor District (T5C) and the development is a “Flex High-Rise” Building Type. A flex high-rise building is a large-scale development designed to accommodate a range of uses and configurations with multiple primary building frontages. Retail, restaurant, service, office, and residential uses may be accommodated on all floors. Parking may be at ground level (placed behind other street-facing uses). The T5C zoning district supports a comfortable and walkable high-intensity urban core. Located west of Highway 101 as well as at major nodes along El Camino Real, the district supports walkable sites and high-intensity forms. The project complies with standards for the site and buildings within the transect zoning districts. The project does not require any use permits or variances.

Private Storage Space 50% Reduction

The applicant has requested that the City consider an exception provided in the Zoning Code which allows a 50% reduction in the storage requirement for individual residential units. The Zoning Code (SSFMC 20.310.004 (F)(5)) requires that for every 10 units a minimum of 200 cubic feet of enclosed, weather-proofed, and lockable private storage space must be provided; however, *the total number of private storage spaces may be reduced up to 50 percent by the Chief Planner if the storage is located proximate to the residential unit.*

Specifically, for the proposed project the Code requires private storage for fifty-five (55) units; a 50% reduction would be twenty-eight (28) units; however, the proposed project includes the required storage in forty (40) of the units. As indicated on sheet AP4.04 a storage closet of 200 cubic feet is proposed in the entry way of the 2 bedroom (corner) floor plan.

The applicant has requested this reduction and is proposing dedicated in-unit storage as shown and labeled on the floor plans. Staff has reviewed the private storage space proposal, and finds that the project provides a sufficient amount of dedicated in-unit storage spaces, with the intent of preventing residents from storing large objects on balconies, within parking spaces, or other common areas.

A draft Condition of Approval is included to prevent storage on balconies or within on-site parking spaces. If the proposed reduction to the Private Storage requirement results in unfavorable conditions related to storage on balconies, or within parking spaces, the applicant shall provide off-site storage options to residents at the developer’s expense. Staff recommends approval of the requested reduction in private storage spaces.

As conditioned, the proposed project would be compliant with all development standards and regulations and provisions for entitlements in the City’s Municipal Code.

Table 1. Development Standard Compliance

	Proposed Project	Development Standard
Density	129 du/acre	140 du/acre max
Floor Area	910,736 sf	919,116 sf
Maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	4.95	5
Height	85 ft	85 ft
Setbacks Front (East - Linden Ave) Side (South) Rear (West -South Pacific Railway)	0 ft. 31’-7” ft 22 ft.	0 ft min, 10 max 0 ft min 0 ft. min, 10 max
Maximum Lot Coverage	75%	80%

GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS

The project site is designated as “High Density Mixed Use” in the General Plan. The proposed project is consistent with the following General Plan land use vision, goals, policies, and implementation measures for the Lindenville sub area of the General Plan including but not limited to:

Citywide Land Use Vision

Create new, vibrant residential neighborhoods in East of 101 and Lindenville, ensuring appropriate City services, amenities, and retail to support new residential growth.

Produce a range of housing types for different income levels and household types across the city to balance job and housing growth and distribute the potential impacts of future growth.

Goal SA-22:

A new residential neighborhood centered along Colma Creek within a short walk of Downtown amenities and services that provides a range of housing types for different income levels and housing types.

Policy SA-22.1: Introduce a mix of affordable and market rate housing in Lindenville.

- Goal LU-1: Create complete neighborhoods, where residents can access most of their everyday needs within a short walk, bike, or transit trip.
- Policy LU-1.7: Create new Lindenville and East of 101 mixed use neighborhoods.

Goal SA-23:

Living, working, and shopping options are expanded in new mixed use neighborhoods in Lindenville.

REQUESTED ENTITLEMENTS

As required by the South San Francisco Municipal Code (SSFMC), the proposed project requires the following entitlements:

- Design Review for the proposed housing development; and

- Transportation Demand Management for a residential land use with 20 or more units.

All signage for the proposed housing development will be applied for under separate permits.

Design Review (SSFMC 20.480)

The project was reviewed by the City's Design Review Board (DRB) on January 17, 2023. The DRB liked the design concept and recommended approval with conditions due to the project's well thought out architecture and landscape design as evident in the building elevations and landscape materials. The DRB recommended approval with some minor revisions related to landscaping that have been incorporated into the project. The DRB comment letter is Exhibit D to the Entitlement Resolution.

Transportation Demand Management (20.400.00)

Transportation Demand Management is required for residential land uses with 20 or more units. The Transportation Demand Management proposed for the residential development outlines numerous trip reduction measures applicable to both guests and employees including but not limited to unbundled parking, free transit passes to residents for first year of tenant's residency, and bicycle storage. All of these and more trip reduction measures proposed in the project TDM checklist are feasible and relevant to the operation of the proposed residential development and its residents.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The project site is within the Lindenville sub area as a part of the 2040 General Plan Environmental Impact Report (State Clearinghouse Number 202102006) which was certified on October 12, 2022. Consistent with the City's General Plan EIR, a multifamily development is proposed in compliance with the City's development standards.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Sections 15162 and 15168 provide that when an EIR has been prepared and certified, later activities (such as the current project) determined by the lead agency as being within the scope of the that EIR do not require subsequent environmental review.

The environmental checklist prepared for the project dated January 24, 2023 serves as substantial evidence that the current project is within the scope of the previous environmental analysis including General Plan EIR and Mitigation Monitoring Program and that subsequent CEQA analysis is not required for the proposed project.

Further, under CEQA Guidelines section 15183, projects consistent with a general plan and meeting certain criteria are subject to streamlined review where the City only analyzes whether there are project-specific significant effects peculiar to the project or its site. To qualify, the project must be consistent with the General Plan and zoning, for which the City certified an EIR. In this case, the environmental checklist further demonstrates that there are no negative impacts that are project-specific or peculiar to the project site, or were not previously analyzed in the General Plan EIR.

CONCLUSION

The project, as conditioned, is compliant with the City's Municipal Code, Development Standards and Design

Criteria, General Plan including but not limited to the Lindenville sub planning area.

Therefore, staff recommends that the Planning Commission take the following actions:

1. Adopt a resolution making findings and a determination that the proposed 543-unit multifamily housing development proposed at 7 South Linden Avenue is consistent with the adopted 2040 General Plan EIR and determination that the project is consistent with the 2040 General Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR), pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines section 15162 and related CEQA requirements.
2. Adopt a resolution making findings and approving the entitlements request for Project P22-0024 Design Review (DR22-0007), Transportation Demand Management Plan (TDM22-0002), subject to the attached draft Conditions of Approval.

Associated Resolutions and Exhibits to CEQA Resolution

- I. CEQA Resolution (File ID #23-194)
 - A. Environmental Checklist, dated January 24, 2023
 - B. 2040 General Plan EIR and MMP (available online)
- II. Entitlements Resolution (File ID #23-195)
 - A. Conditions of Approval, dated March 16, 2023
 - B. Project Plans, dated January 13, 2023
 - C. Transportation Demand Management Checklist, dated October 12, 2022
 - D. DRB Comment letter, dated January 17, 2023
 - E. Parking Management Plan, dated February 16, 2023
 - F. Transportation Study, dated March 1, 2023