



# City of Culver City

## Staff Report

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**File #:** 20-461, **Version:** 1

**Item #:** A-2.

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**CC - (1) Report on the Status of City-Owned Property Located at 10858 Culver Boulevard, and (2) Direction to the City Manager as Deemed Appropriate.**

**Meeting Date:** February 24, 2020

**Contact Person/Dept:** Todd Tipton/CDD

**Phone Number:** (310) 253-5783

**Fiscal Impact:** Yes  No

**General Fund:** Yes  No

**Public Hearing:**  **Action Item:**  **Attachments:**

**Commission Action Required:** Yes  No  **Date:**

**Public Notification:** (E-Mail) Meetings and Agendas - City Council (02/18/20); Mailed notice to all property and business owners within 1,000 feet of the property (2/10/20); Posted on Next Door and the City's Social Media Outlets (02/18/20); (E-Mail) Community Garden users (02/04/20)

**Department Approval:** Sol Blumenfeld, Community Development Director (02/12/20)

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### RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the City Council (1) receive a report on the status of City-owned property located at 10858 Culver Boulevard (Property); and (2) provide direction to the City Manager as deemed appropriate.

### BACKGROUND

Since the late 1970s, the Property has been used by organizations that offer services to veterans. Over the years the Property fell into disrepair and now has life safety and structural deficiencies. As a result, the Property was vacated in November 2018.

In early 2018, the condition of buildings on the Property were analyzed and it was determined that the two-story building at the front of the property should be demolished and the A-frame portion at the rear could be reused at a cost of approximately \$673,000, which does not include environmental remediation and demolition costs.

In July 2019 the City Council received a report on the status of the Property and identified five potential uses including (1) affordable housing for artists (2) modular affordable housing; (3) a multi-use facility created by combining parcels to the west; (4) a community center operated by the Wende Museum; and (5) veteran services in the form of a service center and/or housing. Upon conclusion of the discussion, the City Council directed the City Manager to initiate required studies<sup>1</sup>, convene a community meeting and prepare an online survey<sup>2</sup> in order to understand which use is preferred by the community.

In September 2019, the community meeting was conducted, and an overview of the proposed uses was provided by various experts. The meeting attendees indicated strong support for the Wende's proposal. There was also some support for veteran services and/or housing (due in part to the historic use of the Property). There was also discussion of combining parcels to the west or leaving the Property as is.

In October 2019, an informal working group comprised of two City Council members, (Mayor Meghan Sahli-Wells and Council Member Thomas Small), and the experts representing the various uses met to determine if the proposed uses could be accommodated on the Property. The experts agreed the Property is too small to accommodate the proposed uses and instead recommended increasing the site area if more than one use is to be accommodated. The site area could be increased if the community garden to the south and the existing parking area between the Property and Culver Boulevard are utilized<sup>3</sup>.

## **DISCUSSION**

The Wende's proposal includes reuse of the Property's A-frame building as a 99-seat theatre (available regularly to the community at no charge) and construction of a new building that would:

- Be developed in conjunction with a private foundation that specializes in empowering grassroots community spaces and supports Vista del Mar, Inner City Arts, and Mar Vista Family Center;
- Provide theater space to Veteran's Artists Alliance for rehearsals and performances;
- Provide lobby space and restrooms for the theatre;
- Provide affordable housing for one to two artists-in-residence;
- Be used as an auxiliary hub for the Mayme Clayton Library and Museum for exhibitions, performances and lectures;
- Provide a community/demonstration garden with bee-supporting plants, in partnership with Upward Bound House; and
- Provide related classroom space for the Culver City Unified School District.

The community garden site measures approximately 6,000 square feet and could accommodate approximately six residential units for use by veterans' families. Modular units are proposed because they are less costly, and easier and faster to construct. With six units, the development could be low scale and oriented so that the privacy of the existing residences to the east would be preserved. The site could be designed to function with the Wende's proposal in order to coordinate access and sight lines, replace or possibly increase the amount of existing community garden space, and to make amenities available to veterans' families. If the City Council is interested in pursuing reuse of the

community garden site for six units of affordable housing, a Request for Proposals could be issued that specifies the maximum number of units, building type, and design parameters such as maximum height, building orientation, community garden space, access/circulation, parking and sight lines, among others.

### Surplus Land Act

With certain exceptions, the Surplus Land Act (SLA) applies when a local agency wants to “dispose of” property, which triggers a requirement to make the surplus property available to other public agencies in order to satisfy specific public purposes/needs. When a public agency leases land to a third party, the lease falls outside the scope of the SLA. The nature of the project that is ultimately pursued will inform the appropriate process for disposition or use of the property.

### FISCAL ANALYSIS

There is no fiscal impact associated with the City Council’s discussion of this item.

### ATTACHMENTS

None.

### MOTION

That the City Council:

1. Receive a report regarding the status of City-owned property located at 10858 Culver Boulevard; and
2. Provide direction to the City Manager as deemed appropriate.

### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The studies conducted relate to the environmental condition and historic status of the Property. The environmental study determined the Property contains asbestos and lead paint. Additional studies are needed in order to determine if the soil is contamination.

The buildings on the Property are designated “Recognized” pursuant to the Culver City Historic Preservation Advisory Committee Report (HPAC) that was completed in 1990. Pursuant to the HPAC report, properties were designated as either Landmark, Significant or Recognized. The Recognized designation is applied to properties determined to be of architectural, historic or cultural interest. The City has undertaken a recent historic analysis to determine if the buildings should be reclassified. The analysis recommends the buildings not be reclassified.

<sup>2</sup> The survey allowed those unable to attend the community meeting to provide input. The survey was

available on the City's website and required participants to prioritize the proposed uses from most to least preferred and allowed "other" uses to be submitted. The survey did not allow participants to select only one use; rather, it required them to prioritize the uses. This approach allowed for the City Council to understand how participants felt about all of the proposed uses. The survey results reflected support for:

1. Community center operated by the Wende Museum;
2. Multiuse facility created by combining parcels to the west;
3. Veteran services and/or housing;
4. Affordable housing for artists and modular affordable housing.

Other uses included an expand community garden; more courts (basketball, volleyball, tennis, etc.); a skateboard park; child care; and, an intimate theater.

<sup>3</sup> In order to determine if the parking area can be used, a parking demand study must be performed. The study analyzes the Wende's proposed project and uses on the community garden site in order to determine how much parking is needed and when.