



City of Culver City

Mike Balkman Council
Chambers
9770 Culver Blvd.
Culver City, CA 90232

Staff Report

File #: 16-1169, **Version:** 1

Item #: PH-2.

PC: Tentative Parcel Map No. 74877, P2017-0053-TPM, for the Creation of a Two (2) Unit Condominium Subdivision at 4115 Lincoln Avenue in the Residential Two Family (R2) Zone.

Meeting Date: July 12, 2017

Contact Person/Dept: Gabriela Silva, Associate Planner;
Michael Allen, Contract Planning Manager

Phone Number: (310) 253-5736/ (310) 253-5727

Fiscal Impact: Yes ☐ No ☒

General Fund: Yes ☐ No ☒

Public Hearing: ☒

Action Item: ☐

Attachments: ☒

Public Notification: (Mailed) Property owners and occupants within a 500-foot radius of the site (06/20/17); (Sign) Posted on the site (06/20/17); (Email) Master Notification List (06/21/17); (Posted) City website (06/21/17).

Department Approval: Sol Blumenfeld, Community Development Director (06/29/2017)

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission 1) Adopt a Categorical Exemption for this project pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act Section 15315, Class 15, Minor Land Divisions, finding that there are no potentially significant adverse impacts on the environment, and 2) Approve Tentative Parcel Map No. 74877, P2017-0053-TPM, subject to the Conditions of Approval as stated in Resolution No. 2017-P013 (Attachment No. 1).

PROCEDURES

1. Chair calls on staff for a brief staff report and Planning Commission poses questions to staff as desired.
2. Chair opens the public hearing, providing the applicant the first opportunity to speak, followed by the general public.
3. Chair seeks a motion to close the public hearing after all testimony has been presented.
4. Commission discusses the matter and arrives at its decision.

BACKGROUND

Request

On March 21, 2017, an application was submitted for a Tentative Parcel Map to allow the subdivision of the subject site into a two (2) airspace lot condominium subdivision for the future development of two (2) attached residential condominium dwelling units (i.e. one (1) on each of the airspace lots) within the project site located at 4115 Lincoln Avenue in the Residential Two Family (R2) Zone. The demolition of an existing duplex dwelling structure and detached accessory structure (garage), and the construction of a new two-story duplex with two (2) attached 2-car garages at the project site is permitted by the R2 zoning through a building permit, without discretionary review.

Existing Conditions

The site is located on the west side of Lincoln Avenue, south of Braddock Drive and north of Farragut Drive, as outlined in the Vicinity Map (Attachment No. 2). The Land Use Element of the City's General Plan designates this site and surrounding areas as Low Density Two Family Residential, which is consistent with the site's zoning designation of R2. Properties to the north, south, east and west are also zoned R2, with properties along and north of Braddock Drive being RMD, as well as properties east of Lincoln Avenue along Duquesne Avenue; the site is the third property south of Braddock Drive. The parcel is rectangular in shape, generally flat in topography, and measures 6,750 square feet. The neighborhood surrounding the site to the north, south, east, and west consists of largely rectangular parcels, similar in size, and developed with mostly multiple-family housing with only a few single-family properties, in both single story and multi-story designs.

The subject site is currently developed with a duplex residential structure and detached two-car garage located at the rear of the property and accessible from Lincoln Avenue via an existing driveway at the southeast corner of the site. There are two existing trees at the rear yard area, as well as front yard landscaping.

Project Description

The applicant proposes to create two (2) condominium airspace lots in an R2 zoned property, as shown on the Tentative Parcel Map (Attachment No. 3). The condominium subdivision is associated with two (2) future dwelling units designed as one (1) attached 2-story structure with two (2) attached 2-car garages as shown in the Preliminary Development Plans (Attachment No.4), which are attached for reference. Pursuant to Zoning Code Section 17.540.010, a Site Plan Review is required for the construction of new residential projects of three (3) or more units. This code section further states that any construction, addition, or alteration to an individual single-family or two-family dwelling is exempt from Site Plan Review. Therefore, the two (2) residential dwelling units are not subject to any discretionary review and will be reviewed for compliance with applicable Zoning Code development standards, as well as the Gateway Neighborhood Design Guidelines, as part of the City's building permit process. The Planning Commission is only required to take action on the proposed subdivision, and the preliminary plans for the proposed two (2) unit development are for reference purposes only. The plans show the duplex will be arranged such that the main entries for both will face Lincoln Avenue. The front unit will comprise 2,093 square feet while the rear unit will be 2,106 square feet, with each unit containing three (3) bedrooms and 3.5 baths; each dwelling will also have its own attached two-car garage. The structure is designed in the a modern architectural style, characterized by straight lines and ninety (90) degree angles, incorporating a flat roof with parapets, and reaching a maximum height of 25'-2" to the top of parapet. All improvements shown in the preliminary development plans are consistent with the provisions of the Culver City Municipal Code (CCMC).The proposed condominium subdivision will create airspace lots that allow for separate ownership of the units, but will not subdivide the land or change the lot dimensions.

ANALYSIS/DISCUSSION:

The R2 Zone allows a total of two (2) units on the site, regardless of the lot area. The minimum required setbacks in the R2 Zone are fifteen (15) feet, four (4) feet, and ten (10) feet, for the front, sides, and rear respectively. The maximum allowable dwelling area is 1,500 square feet plus 40% of the lot area, and the maximum allowable height is two (2) stories and thirty (30) feet. The minimum lot size and area are fifty (50) feet in width, one hundred (100) feet in depth, and 5,000 square feet in area. The proposed development conforms to the regulations of the R2 Zone.

Subdivision, Density, and Lot Area Requirements

The State Subdivision Map Act and CCMC Chapter 15.10 regulate the subdivision of land, and require the submittal of a tentative parcel map for subdivisions meeting certain criteria, including specific airspace subdivisions for condominium purposes. In addition, CCMC Section 17.210.020 - Table 2-3, Residential Districts Development Standards (R1, R2, R3), requires a minimum lot area of 5,000 square feet or the average area of residential lots within a 500-foot radius of proposed subdivision, whichever is greater. This Zoning Code section further notes condominium, townhome, or planned development projects may be subdivided with smaller parcel sizes for ownership purposes, with the minimum lot area determined through the subdivision review process, provided that the overall development site complies with the minimum lot size requirements of the Zoning Code. The lot size requirements for the R2 Zone are fifty (50) feet in width and one hundred (100) feet in depth.

A majority of the lots in the area measure approximately 6,750 square feet, with outlier parcels measuring as little as 2,095 square feet and as much as 13,490 square feet. The subject site measures 50 by 135 for a total of 6,750 square feet, as do the parcels along both sides of Lincoln Avenue in the segment between Culver Boulevard and Farragut Drive; therefore, the overall site complies with this requirement and there will not be any changes to the current overall lot area or lot dimensions. The proposed subdivision will create two airspace lots, but will maintain the same lot lines and the same allowable density of two (2) units for the overall site, while creating additional opportunities for home ownership. One of the various objectives of the tentative parcel map process is to allow the City to review the proposed condominium subdivision to ensure all necessary improvements and requirements are provided. The Public Works Department has reviewed the tentative parcel map (Attachment No. 3) for the proposed condominium subdivision and found it to be in compliance with all applicable State and local regulations as more specifically outlined in the recommended conditions of approval.

Neighborhood Compatibility

The proposed development is located along the 4100 block of Lincoln Avenue, which is a local residential street developed with a variety of one-story and two-story, single- and multiple-family residences. The block and surrounding streets (Madison Avenue and Duquesne Avenue) have been transitioning to two- and multiple-family development consistent with the density designations (Low Density Two Family and Medium Density Multiple Family) envisioned for the neighborhood by the City's General Plan Land Use Element, with many of the properties being redeveloped as condominium subdivisions. The proposed subdivision to create condominium airspace lots for the future development of a duplex will be consistent with the existing density and land uses in the neighborhood. As shown on the "site development comparison table" of the preliminary development plans, the future development complies with the Zoning Code requirements, including development standards for the R2 Zone, as well as the average and prevailing conditions related to lot coverage, front setback, building height, and density as identified in the Gateway Neighborhood Multi-Family

Residential Design Guidelines. The building design also incorporates architectural features and materials that break-up the massing and bulk so as to be compatible with development in the neighborhood, and is sensitive to the preservation of privacy, including the consideration of window locations.

Landscaping and Open Space

As required by the CCMC, the applicant must landscape all front, side and rear yards not devoted to paved driveways, walkways or patios; these setback areas are also required in order to meet the open space requirement in the R2 Zone. The front and rear yard setbacks will provide approximately 810 and 1,010 square feet of open space area respectively; second floor balconies provide additional open space for each unit. The front yard, exclusive of the area necessary for vehicular access, will have approximately 75 percent landscape coverage, in compliance with requirements of CCMC Section 17.310.020; additional landscape is provided throughout the site, including green roof areas. Landscape will include a variation in plant materials, including trees, and colors to soften the building façade and enhance the street view aesthetics of the site. Preliminary landscape information is included in the preliminary development plans made part of this report (Attachment No. 4).

Traffic, Parking, and Circulation

The existing sixty (60) foot wide public right-of-way, Lincoln Avenue, has been deemed by the Engineering Division of the Public Works Department to be of adequate width to serve the site and the proposed condominium subdivision and associated two-unit development. The gutter, curb, sidewalk, and driveway approach along the project's frontage are required to be removed and replaced, while preserving the existing street tree, as more specifically outlined in the recommended conditions of approval. The density of the overall development will not create any significant traffic impacts and is below the threshold requiring a traffic study or off-site improvements related to traffic.

In accordance with the Zoning Code requirements, each unit will be provided with the minimum required two (2) parking spaces in a standard side-by-side configuration, and designed to provide the minimum required width, depth, and height clearances. The proposed ten (10) foot wide common driveway along the southerly edge of the site will provide vehicular and pedestrian access to both dwelling units. Direct pedestrian access is provided from the garages to the corresponding unit. A back-up clearance of 25'-0" is provided, exceeding the minimum Code requirement of twenty-four (24) feet and allowing a sufficient turning radius and circulation/maneuvering area.

The configuration of the proposed onsite parking, vehicular access and maneuvering area are designed in accordance with all applicable CCMC standards. Based on the above, the proposed subdivision project is in conformance with all applicable CCMC requirements relating to parking, circulation, and traffic.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

As part of public outreach for discretionary projects the City requires up to three community meetings prior to the formal Public Hearing. Since the project application is only to create the condominium airspace subdivision, which would have no perceivable effect on the site, no community meetings were required as part of the application review. As of the writing of this report, staff has not received any public comments on the proposed project, in response to the public notification for the public hearing.

CONCLUSION/SUMMARY:

The applicant has worked with staff to produce a project that is compliant with CCMC regulations. In addition, the preliminary plans provided for the two-unit development are shown to also comply with Zoning Code requirements and applicable neighborhood design guidelines, so as to be compatible with the neighborhood and the immediately surrounding properties, and addresses the issues of importance to the Culver City residential community, including scale, massing, and privacy. Based on the proposed tentative parcel map, preliminary development plans and recommended conditions of approval, staff considers the subdivision to be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood consistent with applicable development standards and guidelines, with adequate public facilities, and consistent with the Culver City General Plan and the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance. The Tentative Parcel Map meets all requirements of the CCMC and the State Subdivision Map Act. Staff believes the findings, per CCMC Section 15.10.630, for Tentative Parcel Map No. 74877, P2017-0053-TPM, can be made as outlined in Resolution No. 2017-P013 (Attachment No. 1).

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, initial review of the project by staff established that there are no potentially significant adverse impacts on the environment and the proposed project has been determined to be a Class 15 Categorical Exemption as a "Minor Land Division" (Section 15315) project. Specifically, as outlined herein, the project consists of the subdivision of the site into two (2) airspace condominium lots, thereby establishing one (1) condominium residential unit on each airspace lot. The project is deemed to be consistent with the applicable General Plan and R2 zoning designation and regulations without any variances or exceptions, does not involve a parcel from a larger subdivision within the previous two (2) years, and will not result in a parcel with an average slope greater than 20 percent. In addition, the project will be adequately served by all required utilities and public services; and will have all services and access to local standards. Therefore, the project is categorically exempt pursuant to the above noted CEQA sections.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:

The following alternative actions may be considered by the Planning Commission:

1. Approve the proposed project with the recommended conditions of approval if the applications are deemed to meet the required findings.
2. Approve the proposed project with additional and/or different conditions of approval if deemed necessary to meet the required findings and mitigate any new project impacts identified at the meeting.
3. Disapprove the proposed project if the applications do not meet the required findings.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Draft Planning Commission Resolution No. 2017-P013 and Exhibit A: Conditions of Approval
2. Vicinity Map
3. Tentative Parcel Map No. 74877
4. Preliminary Development Plans (For Reference Only)

MOTION

That the Planning Commission:

1. Adopt a Categorical Exemption pursuant to CEQA Section 15315, Class 15, Minor Land Divisions, finding that there are no potentially significant adverse impacts on the environment, and
2. Approve Tentative Parcel Map No. 74877, P2017-0053-TPM, subject to the Conditions of Approval as stated in Resolution No. 2017-P013.