



# City of Culver City

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

## Staff Report

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**File #:** 21-289, **Version:** 1

**Item #:** PH-1.

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**CC - PUBLIC HEARING:** Adoption of a Resolution Approving Tentative Tract Map No. 83049 (P2020-0056-TTM), for the Development of a Five-Unit Residential Condominium Subdivision at 4080 Lafayette Place in the Residential Medium Density Multiple Family Zone.

**Meeting Date:** October 12, 2020

**Contact Person/Dept:** Michael Allen, Current Planning Manager;  
Gabriela Silva, Associate Planner;  
Deborah Hong, Planning Technician

**Phone Number:** (310) 253-5736 / (310) 253-5727 / (310) 253-5714

**Fiscal Impact:** Yes ☐ No ☒

**General Fund:** Yes ☐ No ☒

**Public Hearing:** ☒

**Action Item:** ☐

**Attachments:** ☒

**Commission Action Required:** Yes ☒ No ☐ **Date:** August 26, 2020

**Commission Name:** Planning Commission

**Public Notification:** (Mailed) Property owners and occupants within a 500-foot radius and extended (09/21/2020); (Posted) City website (09/22/2020), Onsite Sign (09/18/2020); (Email) Master Notification List (09/22/2020), Meetings and Agendas - City Council (10/07/2020).

**Department Approval:** Sol Blumenfeld, Community Development Director (09/30/2020)

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends the City Council adopt a resolution approving Tentative Tract Map No. 83049, subject to the conditions of approval contained in Planning Commission Resolution No. 2020-P013, for the development of a five-unit residential condominium subdivision (Attachment No. 1).

### **PROCEDURE**

1. The Mayor seeks motion to receive and file the affidavit of mailing and posting of public notice.
2. The Mayor calls on staff for a brief staff report and City Council poses questions to staff as desired.

3. The Mayor seeks a motion to declare the public hearing open and the City Council receives public comment, providing the applicant the first opportunity to speak followed by the remaining general public.
4. The Mayor seeks a motion to close the public hearing after all testimony has been presented.
5. The City Council discusses the matter and arrives at its decision.

## **BACKGROUND**

On February 25, 2020, Breakform Design (the “Applicant Representative”) submitted an application on behalf of 4080 Lafayette, L.P. (the “Property Owner”) for an Administrative Site Plan Review (ASPR) and Tentative Tract Map (TTM) to allow the development of a five (5) unit residential condominium subdivision on a site located in the Residential Medium Density (RMD) Zone (Attachment No.2).

The Project site is located on the east side of Lafayette Place, south of Culver Boulevard and at the northerly corner of Braddock Drive and is currently developed with a three (3) single family dwelling structures and a detached garage.

The existing improvements will be demolished and proposed to be replaced by a new five-unit multi-family residential building. The proposed new dwelling units are two-story and designed in a modern architectural style. Off-street parking will be provided within a shared subterranean garage. The proposed multi-family building complies with applicable Zoning Code development standards, including setbacks, height, off-street parking, and landscaping.

On August 26, 2020, the Planning Commission unanimously adopted Resolution No. 2020-P013, approving Administrative Site Plan Review, P2020-0056-ASPR and recommending to the City Council approval of Tentative Tract Map No. 83049, P2020-0056-TTM (Attachment No. 3). The Planning Commission decision on the ASPR is final as no appeals were filed.

The City Council is requested to act only on the TTM. For a detailed review of the Project, the Planning Commission staff report, preliminary development plans, and minutes may be referenced (Attachment Nos. 4 to 6).

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Tentative Tract Map**

The State Subdivision Map Act and Culver City Municipal Code (CCMC) Chapter 15.10 - Subdivision regulate land subdivisions and require the submittal of a tentative tract map for airspace lot subdivisions for condominium purposes.

In addition, CCMC Section 17.210.020 - Table 2-4, Residential District Development Standards (RLD,

RMD, RHD), requires a minimum lot area of 5,000 square feet or the average area of residential lots within a 500-foot radius of a proposed subdivision, a lot width and depth of 50 feet and 100 feet respectively, and 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 Project will create five (5) new airspace condominium units on an existing parcel. The subject site currently measures approximately 50 feet in width by 154 feet in depth, for a total of 7,708 gross square feet. A 4'-0" wide easement is conditioned to be provided at the rear or easterly edge of the site for alley widening. The overall site complies with the above requirements and the development standards of the RMD Zone.

A key objective of the tentative tract map process is to allow the City to review the proposed subdivision to ensure all necessary improvements and requirements are provided. City staff has reviewed proposed Tentative Tract Map No. 83049 for the proposed airspace subdivision and found it to follow all applicable State and local regulations, as more specifically outlined in the findings and recommended conditions of approval.

In condominium or townhome developments, the driveway along with the land surrounding the units, are held in common and any necessary vehicular access easements will be secured through the condominium association Covenants, Restrictions, and Conditions (CC&Rs). The Project is providing a 10-foot wide driveway to access the common parking area within the subterranean garage, in conformance with Zoning Code requirements.

### Public Comments

Staff received public comments expressing concern regarding impacts to the integrity of nearby historical structures and the neighborhood in general. (Attachment No. 7).

This matter was reviewed by the City's Cultural Affairs staff and the issue is referenced in a Historic Resources Technical Report (Technical Report). According to the Technical Report, the integrity of a historic resource is defined as "the ability of a property to convey its significance." The report states that replicating the architectural style of a historically recognized structure does not necessarily help the historic structure better convey its significance or enhance its integrity or value. It further describes that contextualism in architecture does not urge that new construction follow the prevailing architectural style or, in this case, the style of a few significant buildings in the vicinity, as there is no one specific prevailing architectural style in the surrounding neighborhood. Rather, proper contextualism is to design with respect to the physical, socio-cultural, and/or other characters of its surrounding neighborhood, regardless of the architectural style, and to relate to them in a deliberate manner in form and bulk. The mass of the proposed project is broken into smaller parts, set back, and leans away from the street to not dominate the streetscape.

The Zoning Code and Multifamily Residential Design Guidelines (Guidelines) do not prescribe specific architectural styles, but rather address building location on a lot, lot coverage, building height and other related standards to help ensure neighborhood compatibility. Accordingly, neither the Zoning Code nor the Guidelines requires that new developments follow the architectural style of the

surrounding neighborhood. **The Historic Resource Technical Report** concludes that the proposed Project is consistent in mass and scale with the surrounding neighborhood.

In summary, density, front yard setback, building height, and lot coverage of properties on both sides of Lafayette Place on the project block and beyond were surveyed to consider the prevailing conditions of the surrounding neighborhood and the design was found to be consistent with the neighborhood.. Existing street trees and on-site trees will be preserved following an arborist's monitoring and advice throughout the construction process.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:**

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines, a Categorical Exemption, Class 32-In-Fill Development Projects, was adopted by the Planning Commission on August 26, 2020, which determined that the Project will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment. Tentative Tract Map No. 83049 is within the scope of the adopted Categorical Exemption and the circumstances have not significantly changed and no new significant information has been found that would impact the environmental determination. Therefore, no new or additional CEQA analysis is required.

### **CONCLUSION:**

This Project will add two (2) net-new dwelling units to Culver City's housing stock. The proposed airspace lot condominium subdivision allows for increased ownership opportunities, while maintaining the existing minimum overall parcel dimensions and configuration. The Project has been designed with a modern façade utilizing a mixture of building materials that is oriented to communicate with the street, and staff has worked together with the Applicant to conduct public outreach in the surrounding community. The Project meets the area density, minimum setback requirements, maximum building height, is articulated to minimize visual mass and provides required parking. Based on the proposed preliminary development plans and recommended conditions of approval, staff considers the Project to be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood, adequately served by public facilities, and consistent with the General Plan, Zoning Code, and all CCMC and State subdivision requirements. Staff believes the findings for Tentative Tract Map, P2020-0056-TTM, can be made as outlined in the City Council Resolution and recommends approval of the Tentative Tract Map.

### **FISCAL ANALYSIS**

There is no fiscal impact associated with the adoption of the proposed resolution.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Proposed City Council Resolution
2. Tentative Tract Map No. 83049
3. Planning Commission Resolution No. 2020-P013 with Exhibit A - Conditions of Approval

4. August 26, 2020, Planning Commission Staff Report (without attachments)
5. Preliminary Development Plans dated August 20, 2020
6. August 26, 2020, Planning Commission Minutes
7. Public comments following the August 26, 2020 Planning Commission Meeting

**MOTION**

That the City Council:

Adopt a resolution approving Tentative Tract Map No. 83049, subject to conditions of approval set forth in Planning Commission Resolution No. 2020-P013, for the construction of a five-unit residential condominium subdivision.