



DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE

AGENDA ITEM

AGENDA DATE: AUGUST 2, 2017

TO: Chair Imboden and Members of the Design Review Committee

THRU: Anna Pehoushek, Assistant Community Development Director

FROM: Monique Schwartz, Assistant Planner

SUBJECT: DESIGN REVIEW NO. 4914-17 FOR A NEW 727 UNIT MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT WITH ASSOCIATED PARKING AND SITE IMPROVEMENTS

SUMMARY

The applicant is proposing to redevelop an existing office complex with a 727-unit apartment and townhome development (653 apartments and 74 townhomes). The property will be subdivided into three parcels: Parcel 1 (Building A) and Parcel 2 (Building B) would each include apartment units configured around multi-level parking structures with the following amenities: fitness centers, club rooms, pool and lounge courtyards, and amenity decks located on the top floor of each parking structure. Parcel 3 (Townhomes) will include 74 townhomes with attached two-car garages and surface level parking. Townhome amenities will include a pool and lounge courtyard and passive open courtyard.

RECOMMENDATION - PRELIMINARY REVIEW

Staff is requesting preliminary comments from the Design Review Committee (DRC) concerning the proposed infill project. The project will return to the Committee at a later date for a recommendation to the Planning Commission along with the environmental document.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Applicant: FF Realty III LLC / Trevor Boucher

Owner: The Colton Company

Property Location: 702-1078 W. Town and Country Road (Town and Country Office Plaza)

General Plan Designation: Urban Mixed Use (UMIX) 30-60 dwelling units/acre; 1.5-3.0 FAR

Zoning Classification: Urban Mixed Use (UMU)

Existing Development: Seven two-story office buildings totaling 197,874 square feet

Property Size: 12.13-acres

Associated Applications: Tentative Tract Map No. TTM 0045-17, Major Site Plan Review No. 0906-17, Administrative Adjustment No. 0253-17, and Environmental Review No. 1855-17

Previous DRC Review: None

PUBLIC NOTICE

No Public Notice was required for the preliminary Design Review phase of this project. The project will ultimately go before the Planning Commission and City Council, and public hearing notification will be posted and mailed at that time prior to decision making actions.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

A Mitigated Negative Declaration is being prepared to evaluate the potential environmental impacts of the project in accordance with the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per State CEQA Guidelines Section 15070 and in conformance with Local CEQA Guidelines.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The existing Town and Country Office Plaza complex will be demolished and the site will be redeveloped with 727 multi-family units (653 apartments and 74 townhomes), resulting in a density of 60 dwelling units per acre. The property will be subdivided into three parcels: Parcel 1 (Building A) will include 295 five-story apartment units arranged around a seven (7) level parking structure, leasing office, landscaped swimming pool/outdoor lounge area, clubhouse, fitness center, and two interior landscaped courtyards. Access to the individual apartment units will be from an interior corridor system that ties in with each level of the parking structure. An 8,051 square foot amenity deck equipped with fire pits, outdoor kitchen, lounge area, dining area, herb garden, and landscaping is proposed on an eighth level of the parking structure with no parking. Parcel 2 (Building B) will include 358 five-story apartment units arranged around a seven (7) level parking structure, leasing office, landscaped swimming pool/outdoor lounge area, clubhouse, fitness center, and four (4) interior landscaped courtyards. Similar to Building A, access to the individual apartment units will be from an interior corridor system that ties in with each level of the parking structure. A 9,038 square foot amenity deck equipped with an outdoor entertaining space, fireplace, bar area, lounge area and dining area is proposed on the seventh level of the parking structure. The majority of units in Buildings A and B have a private balcony area with views towards the interior courtyards, or are oriented towards Parker Street and Town and Country Road. Parcel 3 (townhomes) will include 74 three-story townhomes with attached two-car garages, arranged within eleven (11) detached buildings. Each unit will be provided with a private balcony with views towards interior courtyards, landscaped areas, Town and Country Road, and Parker Street. Common amenities include a landscaped swimming pool/outdoor lounge area and landscaped passive interior courtyard. Surface parking is also provided for residents and guests.

The applicant is also proposing streetscape enhancements on the site frontages along Lawson Way, Town and Country Road, and Parker Street consisting of trees and landscaped planters. Existing

street trees (Crape Myrtles and Plane Trees) will remain or be replaced with similar trees. The frontage landscaping is intended to provide a friendly pedestrian-oriented interface with the sidewalk for existing and anticipated patterns of pedestrian activity in the area.

EXISTING SITE AND AREA CONTEXT

The 12.13-acre site is presently developed with seven 2-story office buildings and associated surface parking lot. To the north of the project site is Town and Country Road and a 4-story office building with associated surface parking lot. Also to the north, on an adjacent parcel, is a 5-story office building with associated surface parking lot. To the south is the Celebration Church and Town and Country Manor senior living community/health center in the City of Santa Ana. To the east is Parker Street, multiple office buildings, and Santiago Park Nature Preserve. Santiago Creek is located beyond the Nature Preserve a short distance to the east and southeast. To the west is Lawson Way and a 16-story office building (Orange Executive Tower) with associated parking structure, and a 260 unit multi-family residential apartment complex over 2-story subterranean parking currently under construction (Eleven 10 West).

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Orange Municipal Code (OMC) Section 17.10.070 establishes the general criteria the Design Review Committee should use when reviewing the project. This section states the following:

The project shall have an internally consistent, integrated design theme, which is reflected in the following elements:

1. **Architectural Features.**
 - a. The architectural features shall reflect a similar design style or period.
 - b. Creative building elements and identifying features should be used to create a high quality project with visual interest and an architectural style.
2. **Landscape.**
 - a. The type, size and location of landscape materials shall support the project's overall design concept.
 - b. Landscaping shall not obstruct visibility of required addressing, nor shall it obstruct the vision of motorists or pedestrians in proximity to the site.
 - c. Landscape areas shall be provided in and around parking lots to break up the appearance of large expanses of hardscape.
3. **Signage.** All signage shall be compatible with the building(s) design, scale, colors, materials and lighting.
4. **Secondary Functional and Accessory Features.** Trash receptacles, storage and loading areas, transformers and mechanical equipment shall be screened in a manner, which is architecturally compatible with the principal building(s).

ANALYSIS/STATEMENT OF THE ISSUES

Issue 1: Building Architecture:

The proposed project features a modern architectural style that reflects an urban housing aesthetic. Parcels 1 and 2 include two, 5-story (66 - 81'-8" tall) apartment buildings (Buildings A and B) configured around 7-story (77-81'-8" tall) parking structures. Parcel 3 will feature eleven, 3-story (36 feet tall) townhome buildings with attached two-car garages located on the ground floor. Taking into consideration the City's Urban Mixed Use land use designation and the future development objectives of the South Main Street Corridor/Town and Country General Plan Focus Area, the applicant has designed a project that integrates with surrounding retail, professional office, and residential development, provides high density innovative housing options, considers existing pedestrian activity in relation to adjacent office and retail uses as well as future pedestrian activity that is expected to increase over time as infill development occurs in the area.

Apartments:

Buildings A and B incorporate a variety of architectural features that strive to achieve a distinctive urban character. These features include varied roof lines, extensive use of windows and balconies, alternating and repetitive rectangular wall planes, and dimensional accent details. While both buildings display similar design details and style, the alternating and repetitive wall planes appear heavier and more articulated on Building A. The use of a variety of exterior building materials also contribute to the distinctive architectural character of the project. These materials include wood plank tile, horizontal metal siding, sand finish stucco, metal and glass balcony railing, metal awnings, aluminum storefront systems on the ground floor, white vinyl windows and balcony doors, and concrete/CMU parking structure construction.

Townhomes:

The three-story building height and more conservative architectural features of the townhome buildings distinguish this product type from the adjacent apartment buildings. The townhome buildings display varied wall planes, alternating window sizes, and covered balconies. Exterior building materials include stucco, horizontal and vertical siding, stone veneer, metal balcony railing, vinyl windows and paneled sectional garage doors.

Streetscape:

Streetscape treatment includes retention of existing street trees (Crape Myrtles and Plane Trees) or replacement with similar trees, foundation planting, and landscape planters to enhance the streetscape and create a relationship between the buildings and the pedestrian.

Staff is seeking feedback from the DRC on the proposed architectural design and materials for the project in its own right, as well as an element of the emerging new mixed-use character of Town and Country Road. While the design of the buildings present a modern urban character, the apartment buildings (Buildings A and B) appear to have many similar architectural features (alternating rectangular wall planes, extensive windows and balconies, dimensional accent details) as the proposed five-story residential development located on the north side of Town and Country Road, at 999 W. Town and Country Road. Because of the similar architectural aesthetics, the projects appear to be related to one another, and perhaps without adequate distinction when considered together as part of the overall foreseeable development context on Town and Country Road. In addition, the repetitive and alternating rectangular wall planes on Buildings A and B may appear busy and distracting over the expansive street frontage along Town and Country Road. Also, there is a 260 unit multi-family residential apartment complex over 2-story subterranean parking currently under construction at 1110 W. Town and Country Road that will display similar architectural characteristics; however, the project is buffered by an existing 16 story office building (Orange Executive Tower) that is situated at the southwest corner of W. Town and Country Road and Lawson Way, providing enough separation to be considered a separate and distinct project. Elevations of nearby development projects have been provided as Attachment 4 for the DRC's reference.

Staff is also seeking feedback from the Committee on the design approach regarding the configuration of the apartment units around the multilevel parking structures.

Issue 2: Landscape and Streetscape Treatment:

The proposed landscape palette incorporates a range of drought-tolerant plant material. Because of the urban context of the site, the majority of the landscaping occurs in the pool and lounge courtyards, as well as interior passive courtyards. New landscaping is integrated on the street frontages along Lawson Way, Town and Country Road, and Parker Street to provide a transition between the project and sidewalk, and to provide a friendly pedestrian environment. Enhanced landscaping, including Date Palms and decorative paving articulate the main vehicular entrances adjacent to the leasing offices/club houses/fitness centers of Buildings A and B and at the main entrance to the townhome parcel along Parker Street. Although not included on the project Landscape Plans (Sheet L.1), trees will be planted within a landscape planter along the entire southern project boundary, adjacent to the vehicle drive aisle providing access to Buildings A and B, and along the south property line of the townhome parcel. These trees will provide a buffer between the scale of the proposed buildings and the adjacent development to the south. Planting areas also play a role in the water quality features of the project and are under review by the Public Works Department's Water Quality Division.

The townhome parcel Landscape Plans (Sheet L.5) do not adequately illustrate pedestrian access throughout the development. Enhanced/decorative pavement may be implemented to simulate at-grade walkways/sidewalks in order to provide connectivity between each building, and to common open space areas.

Staff is seeking feedback from the DRC on the proposed landscape design and plant palette.

ADVISORY BOARD RECOMMENDATION

The project went before the SMART Committee (inter-departmental staff review) on December 7, 2016 and May 3, 2017 for preliminary comments.

CONDITIONS

Staff is recommending that the Design Review Committee provide comments and design direction only on the proposed project. No findings are stated. This is only a preliminary review.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Vicinity Map
2. Site Photos
3. Project Booklet dated July 3, 2016
4. Project Elevations for 999 W. Town and Country Road and 1110 W. Town and Country Road

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