

February 3, 2005

**Honorable Chairman and Members of the
Hermosa Beach Planning Commission**

**Regular Meeting of
February 15, 2005**

SUBJECT: GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT 05-4
ZONE CHANGE 05-4;
CONDOMINIUM 05-3
PRECISE DEVELOPMENT PLAN 05-3
VESTING TENTATIVE PARCEL MAP #26923

LOCATION: 19 2ND STREET

APPLICANT: GARY AND CINDI WELLS
24449 HAWTHORNE BOULEVARD
TORRANCE, CA 90505

REQUEST: GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT FROM NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL
TO HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL AND ZONE CHANGE FROM C-1
(NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL) TO R-3 (MULTI-FAMILY
RESIDENTIAL)

TO ALLOW A TWO-UNIT CONDOMINIUM PROJECT

Recommendation:

ALTERNATIVES FOR GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT/ZONE CHANGE

1. Deny the requested General Plan Amendment and Zone Change by adoption of the attached resolution.
2. Recommend approval of the General Plan Amendment and Zone Change, and direct staff to return with a resolution.

ALTERNATIVE FOR THE 2-UNIT CONDIMINIUM

Approve the Condominium, Precise Development Plan and Vesting Tentative Map subject to conditions contained in the attached Resolution #3 (including the condition that the approval will only go into effect if the City Council approves the General Plan Amendment and Zone Change)

Background:

PROJECT INFORMATION

GENERAL PLAN:	Neighborhood Commercial (HD Residential Proposed)
ZONING:	C-1 (R-3 proposed)
LOT SIZE:	3,838 Square Feet
EXISTING USE:	Duplex
UNITS ALLOWED IF R-3 ZONE:	2 Units
SQUARE FOOTAGE, PROPOSED UNITS:	Front unit: 2,662 square feet Rear unit: 2,676 square feet
PARKING REQUIRED:	4 Standard, 1 Guest
PARKING PROVIDED:	4 Standard. 1 Guest
ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:	Negative Declaration (Initial Study on file).

The Planning Commission previously considered this request in November of 2002, and unanimously voted to deny the requested General Plan Amendment and Zone Change requests

finding that the existing General Plan and Zoning Designations represent the appropriate depth for commercial or mixed use development for this location. The applicant appealed the decision to the City Council, and in February of 2003, the City Council sustained the Planning Commission's decision to deny the requests. There have been no material changes in the use or development of surrounding properties since this request was denied. Planning Commission approved the condominium project only contingent upon Council approval of the General Plan Amendment and Zone Change.

The subject lot is located on the north side of Second Street and is the second lot east of the neighborhood commercial development that fronts on Hermosa Avenue (currently a restaurant). The lot is located at a depth of 60 to 93 feet from Hermosa Avenue and abuts Beach Drive on the west. The intervening property between the subject site and the restaurant (25 2nd Street) is also developed with a duplex. The property is one of three lots located between Hermosa Avenue and Beach Drive designated Neighborhood Commercial on the General Plan Map, and C-1 (Neighborhood Commercial) on the official City Zoning Map. The C-1 zoning for the site does not allow exclusive residential use, and only permits residential use as part of mixed-use project with commercial use on the ground floor.

The subject lot is currently developed with a duplex, constructed in the 1920's. The commercial designation for this block between Hermosa Avenue and Beach Drive dates back to the oldest City land use and zoning maps. The Hermosa Avenue fronting property to the south contains a mix of service and retail commercial uses on both sides of the street, while directly across the Hermosa Avenue the property is developed residentially and zoned R-3. The property directly to the south across 2nd street is also zoned C-1 and formerly was a restaurant use, but is currently vacant, although staff has been in discussion with the buyer for the property planning to building a mixed use project (one unit above ground floor commercial). The properties to the west and north are residential. (See the attached aerial photo and existing land use map).

The Staff Environmental Review Committee, at their meeting of January 6, 2005, recommended an environmental negative declaration for the proposed General Plan Amendment/Zone Change, since it does not change the existing use of the site.

Analysis - General Plan Amendment / Zone Change

The applicant's request to redesignate and rezone the property to HD Residential and R-3 will allow exclusive residential use of the lot and allow a 2-unit condominium project concurrent with this General Plan Amendment/Zone Change. A two-unit development results in a density that is consistent with surrounding residential densities and compatible with the development pattern of the area to the south and west, and on the East Side of Hermosa Avenue.

Approval of this change will preclude any possible future expansion of the Hermosa Avenue fronting commercial property through to the alley, although this is improbable given that both this lot and 25 2nd Street must be combined with the Hermosa Avenue fronting commercial lot. Such land assembly can encourage higher quality commercial projects or add commercial parking to improve existing commercial activity. Also, the change will preclude the possibility of a mixed-use project on the site, with ground floor commercial and residential above.

Recent direction from the City Council on the issue of commercial depths along P .C.H. has been generally to maintain commercial depths and not allow encroachment of residential uses, with only a couple of exceptions. The issue of commercial depth in neighborhood commercial areas

along Hermosa Avenue has only been discussed in connection with this same request two years ago. The General Plan designation of Neighborhood Commercial is described as follows: *This category includes convenience stores, Laundromats and similar uses designed to primarily serve local walk-in traffic.* (page 26 Land Use Element). The purpose of the C-I, Neighborhood Commercial Zone as described in the Zoning Ordinance (Section 17.26.020(B)) is *to provide sites for mix of small local businesses appropriate for, and serving the daily needs of nearby residential neighborhood, while establishing land use regulations that prevent significant adverse effects on abutting residential uses.*

The applicant argues that the opportunities for commercial use of this property are very limited because of the size of the lot and the fact that it is isolated from other commercial uses or lots and is not connected by ownership to the Hermosa Avenue fronting lot. The applicant also argues that its lack of viability as a commercial property is shown by the fact that its current use has not change, and by their unsuccessful efforts to sell this property in the past two years as a C-1 property.

Conclusion:

The City Council and Planning Commission have previously resisted redesignation of commercially zone property in the City and specifically rejected this same request two years ago. Also, the property can currently be developed with neighborhood-oriented commercial with residential units above. Further, there have been no changes in the development and use of surroundings, or any change in City Council policy regarding these types of requests since the last time it was considered.

Analysis - 2-Unit Condominium

The proposed 2-unit project consists of detached three level structures, containing basements with two stories above. The units contain three bedrooms and a ground floor family room. The units are designed in Mediterranean style, with stucco finishes, tile roofs, and pre-cast deck railings.

Required parking is provided in garages on the ground floor of each unit with direct access to the alleys (Beach Drive and 3rd Place). One guest parking space is provided for with access from Beach Drive between the two units. All required yards are provided and the lot coverage calculates to be 64%, below the 65% maximum allowable. However, the separation between the two buildings does not quite comply with minimum 8-feet.

Both units comply with the 30-foot maximum height limit at the critical points, as depicted on the elevations, although the roof plan needs to be revised to properly depict the maximum and proposed heights. The proposed open space areas are provided on second story decks adjacent to the living rooms, and in the yard areas between the units. The total amount provided is a little short of the minimum requirement of 300 square feet which can be corrected by increasing the separation between buildings as required. The amount provided in the second floor decks adjacent to the primary living space is 125 square feet for each unit, which is covered by a trellis. The trellis design shows 6" wide beams spaced 2-feet apart, which amounts to a 25% coverage.

The plan provides for landscaping in the areas available between and around the perimeter of the buildings. The plan includes 12 trees identified as 24" box size. Staff will include the standard condition that at least two be a minimum 36" box trees.

Staff is also including a condition that the condominium approval will only become effective if the City Council approves the General Plan Amendment and Zone Change.

Ken Robertson
Senior Planner

Sol Blumenfeld, Director
Community Development Department

Attachments

1. Proposed Resolution denying GP and Zone Change
2. Draft Resolution to approve 2-unit condominium project
2. Maps (Location, General Plan, Zoning)
3. Aerial Photo
4. Zoning Analysis for Condominiums