

FINAL LUPC STAFF REPORT, October 6, 2008

Project Address: 10 19th Avenue

Case Number: APCW-2007-2429-SPE-SPP-CDP-MEL
ENV 2007-2430-MND

Applicant: Glen and Jane Hickerson, Sonoma, CA; email: GHickerson@JetWorks.aero; phone: (415) 568-4822

Applicant's Representative: Steve Kaali, Windrich Group, Canoga Park, CA; email: askaaliman@gmail.com; phone: (818) 795-7697

Size of parcel: two adjacent lots of equal size totaling 5,279 square feet, as per ZIMAS; 60' x 88', on the southwest corner of 19th Avenue and Speedway. 19th Avenue is a walk street, and there is alley access from the south side of the property and on Speedway.

Size of project: Existing 7,600 square foot 10-unit apartment building constructed in 1971 (as per ZIMAS); approximately 41' tall (as per City Planning Recommendation Report); 16 parking spaces inside closed garages, 12 tandem, 4 standard

Parking:

Unit mix/parking: 2 2-bedroom units, 1 tandem parking space per unit
2 1-bedroom + loft units, 1 tandem parking space per unit
4 1-bedroom units, 1 standard parking space per unit
2 singles, tenants share a tandem parking space

The Manager's unit (existing illegal 11th unit) uses the remaining tandem space for parking and for himself and for vendor/maintenance/repair person parking

The Manager reports that no tenants park on the street, and there is no guest parking.

The project is located in the Beach Impact Zone as defined in Section 5.D. of the VCZSP, and the Beach Impact Zone parking requirement is "One parking space for each 640 square feet of floor area of the Ground Floor," as that term is defined in Section 5.M. of the VCZSP. The only Ground Floor area is the lobby and the Manager's unit which are less than 640 square feet, which would require 1 BIZ parking space.

The VCZSP Parking Requirement Table bases parking for multiple dwelling units on the width of a lot. If the two lots are considered as one, the width is 60', and two parking spaces are required per unit, plus .25 guest parking spaces per unit, rounded up. The total number of parking spaces which would be required if this project was built today, 24 parking spaces would be required, whereas the building currently has 16 parking spaces.

Zoning: R3-1-O

General Plan Land Use: Medium Residential

Venice Subarea: North Venice, VCZSP Section 10.F.

Department of City Planning Recommendation Report: recommends that the application be denied in its entirety.

West L.A. Area Planning Commission Hearing Date: September 17, 2008

Nature of Application: A previous owner converted a storage area into an illegal unit which has been occupied by the building manager for the last 16 years. The Applicant is requesting a Specific Plan Exception, Project Permit Compliance review, and a Coastal Development Permit (as per the City Planning Recommendation Report) as follows:

1. Pursuant to Section 11.5.7 F of the Municipal Code, an Exception from the following Sections of the Venice Coastal Zone Specific Plan:

A. Section 10.F.2 to permit density to be calculated by permitting one unit for each 479 square feet of lot area in lieu of the required 1,500 square feet per unit as specified by the Specific Plan.

B. Section 13.D to permit the requested 11th unit to provide only one parking space in lieu of two (2) parking spaces per dwelling unit and one guest parking space as is otherwise required..

2. Pursuant to section 8.B. of the Venice Coastal Zone Specific Plan and Section 11.5.7 of the Municipal Code, a Project Permit Compliance determination.

3. Coastal Development Permit for the above.

ISSUES AND ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR AND AGAINST:

Parking:

Adding a new parking space as proposed by the Applicant in the front yard of the site will result in a loss of outdoor common area and will require the removal of landscaping.

Each tenant has a parking space, but there is no guest parking for this 10-unit building. The building manager who resides in the illegal unit has a tandem parking space for himself and for parking by vendor/maintenance/repair persons. If this 10-unit apartment building could be built today,

Density:

The combined square footage of the two lots is 5,279 square feet. If a new project were built there today, a total of 4 units could be built on the two lots. The existing apartment building is 10 units.

Creating/Preserving Affordable Housing:

In an effort to create and preserve affordable housing, the LUPC has sometimes recommended that the VNC Board recommend approval of the continued use of an illegal unit, so long as it is maintained as an affordable unit.

MOTION PASSED BY LUPC:

On September 10, 2008, the LUPC passed a Motion recommending that the Board of the VNC recommend that the City approve the Specific Plan Exception as requested, on the condition that a unit in the building other than the manager's unit be designated as an affordable unit for the life of the project, at the level of "very low" income, with a covenant duly executed between the City and the Applicant, and that the fence in the front yard be brought down to 3 ½ feet, with no additional parking space.

EXPRESS REASONING UNDERLYING LUPC'S MOTION

The LUPC felt that the designation of an affordable unit at the level of "very low" income was such a significant benefit to the community that no new parking space should be required, particularly because adding a new parking space would take away a landscaped common area.

The LUPC felt that the unit designated as affordable should not be the manager's unit because the manager might not qualify for the "very low" income level and would have to vacate the unit, and because even if the manager qualified, the Applicant might already give the manager a reduced rent, and designation of that unit as "affordable" would be subsidizing the owner's payment to the manager in the form of reduced rent.