Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement and Public Scoping Meetings

Date: December 19, 2012
Case No.: 2010.0305E
Project Title: Sunnydale-Velasco HOPE SF Master Plan
Zoning: RM-1 (Low Density) 40-X Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 6310/1, 6311/1, 6312/1, 6313/1, 6314/1, 6315/1
Lot Size: 2,127,187 square feet (48.8 acres) of lots and 209,088 square feet (4.8 acres) of public streets
Project Sponsor Ramie Dare, Sunnydale Development Co., LLC
(415) 355-7118
Lead Agency: San Francisco Planning Department
Staff Contact: Nannie Turrell – (415) 575-9047
nannie.turrell@sfgov.org

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The San Francisco HOPE SF Program, a partnership between the Mayor’s Office of Housing and the San Francisco Housing Authority (SFHA), proposes to redevelop the Sunnydale and Velasco Public Housing Developments as a part of its program to revitalize distressed public housing developments in San Francisco. The program—which also includes the Hunters View, Potrero Terrace and Potrero Annex, Westside Courts, and Alice Griffith public housing developments—proposes to rebuild every housing unit, provide homes for current residents, and add new housing at different income levels. HOPE SF plans to redesign these communities with new buildings, streets, parks, and landscaping. Sunnydale Development Co., LLC, comprising co-developers Mercy Housing California and The Related Companies of California, is the developer and project applicant.

Constructed in 1941 and 1963, respectively, the Sunnydale and Velasco Public Housing Developments together comprise the largest public housing community in the City of San Francisco. The current housing at the project site consists of 785 dwelling units in 94 buildings. The 785 replacement units would remain affordable housing, subsidized by the San Francisco Housing Authority but under management by and the ownership of the project sponsor or related entities. An additional 915 units would comprise 24 percent affordable housing and 76 percent market-rate housing. The project would be built in three major phases.

Project Site
The project site is located in the Visitacion Valley area of San Francisco (see Figure 1). The project site, bounded by Hahn Street on the east, Velasco Avenue on the south, and McLaren Park to the north and
west, includes Assessor’s Blocks 6310-Lot 1, Block 6311-Lot 1, Block 6312-Lot 1, Block 6313-Lot 1, Block 6314-Lot 1, and Block 6315-Lot 1. The site is within the RM-1 Residential, Mixed District, Low Density (one unit per 800 square feet of lot area principally permitted), and 40-X height and bulk district (40-foot-high maximum height, no bulk limits). The 2,127,187-square-foot (approximately 50-acre) project site slopes down from west (Brookdale Avenue) to east (Hahn Street), at slopes ranging from 15.5 percent at its highest and steepest point to a 2-percent slope at the lower elevations. The average grade change is 9 percent. Elevations range from 250 feet at the western edge of the site to 75 feet at the southeastern corner. The topography allows for sweeping views to the south and to the east toward the San Francisco Bay.

Project Setting
The surrounding neighborhood to the south and east is primarily zoned RH-1 (Residential House, one dwelling unit per lot), with one block (6320) zoned RH-2 (Residential House, two dwellings per lot) and several parcels zoned NC-1 (Neighborhood Commercial) to the east on Hahn Street. McLaren Park, to the north and west of the project site, is zoned P (Public Use).

The project site is adjacent to Gleneagles International Golf Course on the north. The golf course is a part of John McLaren Park, which occupies 317 acres and includes Herz Playground, Coffman Pool, and an assortment of playgrounds, athletic fields, tennis and basketball courts, as well as an outdoor amphitheatre, trails, open meadows, a lake and a reservoir.\(^1\) Another open space near the project site is Crocker Amazon Playground, which is to the west of the project site and includes play areas as well as athletic fields, tennis and basketball courts, a skateboard park, community garden and recreation center.\(^2\) The project site is adjacent to residential neighborhoods to the south and east.

The Candlestick Point-Hunters Point Shipyard Phase II Development Plan Project, located about two miles to the east of the project site, is approved for a mix of residential and commercial uses.

The Visitacion Valley Redevelopment Program area includes 46 acres extending on both sides of Bayshore Boulevard roughly between Sunnydale Avenue and Blanken Avenue in the center of the Visitacion Valley neighborhood approximately one mile to the east of the project site. This project includes the reuse of the vacant Schlage Lock property along the east side of Bayshore Boulevard and revitalization of the Leland Avenue commercial corridor.\(^3\) The Visitacion Valley Redevelopment Program envisions a mix of residential and commercial uses in the project area.

The Executive Park Special Use District (SUD) is planned for the approximately 70-acre area between Candlestick Point and Highway 101 to the east of the project site. This new SUD would accommodate a

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transition from predominantly office use to mixed use/predominantly residential use with an overall goal to create a vibrant, urban, pedestrian oriented neighborhood characterized by publicly accessible streets.  

**Project Characteristics**

The project sponsor proposes to demolish the existing buildings, including 785 family and senior dwelling units, at the Sunnydale and Velasco public housing complexes in the Visitacion Valley neighborhood, and to build replacement and new housing, new infrastructure, open space and community amenities. Highlights of the plan include:

- Up to 1,700 units of housing, including one-for-one public housing replacement units, affordable rental units and market rate and affordable for-sale units;
- Up to 72,500 square feet of community service, recreational and educational facilities;
- 11.5 acres of new parks and open spaces, including a community garden, a farmer’s market pavilion and secure outdoor courtyards within residential buildings;
- 12.2 acres of a new and reconfigured street network potentially including “green” features including bioswales and landscaping; and
- Up to 16,200 square feet of neighborhood-serving retail.

The project sponsor intends to construct the project to LEED® (Leadership in Energy Efficient Design) ND (Neighborhood Development) standards.

**Figures 2 through 5** illustrate the proposed project plan. The project sponsor proposes to demolish and replace the existing 94 two-story residential buildings within the Sunnydale and Velasco public housing development with approximately 34 new two- to six-story buildings. The completed project would occupy approximately 2,184,560 square feet of floor area for a net increase of 1,419,668 square feet. The height of the new buildings would range from 40 to 60 feet above ground level with 18 buildings at 40 feet or less in height and 15 buildings at 50 feet in height, and one building at 60 feet in height. Thirty-three of the buildings would contain family dwelling units; the single building at 60 feet in height would contain senior housing and would have some retail and community services on the ground floor. The buildings would be a mix of the following:

- Townhouse/Rowhouse—Attached, multistory, single-family homes (15 to 30 units per acre);
- Stacked Flats—One-story apartments arranged one over the other (25 to 40 units per acre);
- Podium Building—A building with a parking garage below and residences or other uses above (40 to 50 units per acre);
- Corridor Building—An apartment building with units accessed from a central corridor (40 to 60 units per acre);
- Mixed Use—Retail or public use on ground floor with senior housing above (50 to 80 units per acre);

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4 San Francisco Planning Department. Executive Park: General Plan, Planning Code Text, and Map Amendments and Adoption of Design Guidelines—Executive Summary, Case No. 2006.0422EMTUZ, April 21, 2011.
Figure 2
Proposed Project - Building Type Plan

SOURCE: Van Meter Williams Pollack

UNIT CALCS

PHASE   UNITS
1.  521
2.  625
3.  554
Total: 1700

PARKING
1437 Off-Street
Parking Spaces
525 On-Street Spaces
1962 Total

HOUSING LEGEND

D - UNITS
SP - OFF STREET PARKING SPACES PER BUILDING

STACKED FLATS
TOWNHOUSES OVER FLAT
TOWNHOUSES WITH TUCK UNDER PARKING
LOBBY/COMMON SPACE
PARKS

Sunnydale-Velasco HOPE SF Redevelopment Project . 210039
PROPOSED PROJECT - HEIGHT DIAGRAM

SOURCE: Van Meter Williams Pollack

Figure 3
Proposed Project - Height Diagram
Figure 4
Proposed Project -
New and Reconfigured Streets and Preliminary Parcel Map
SAN FRANCISCO, CA | APRIL 17, 2010; MERCY HOUSING, THE RELATED COMPANIES OF CALIFORNIA

A NEW SUNNYDALE

100' 50' 0

BROOKDALE

SANTOS

BLYTHDALE

SUNNYDALE

± HEIGHT OF BROOKDALE AT SECTION 165'

± HEIGHT OF SANTOS AT SECTION 100'

± HEIGHT OF SANTOS AT SECTION 107.5'

± HEIGHT OF BLYTHDALE AT SECTION 168'

± HEIGHT OF SUNNYDALE AT SECTION 135'

Figure 5
Proposed Project - Elevation Drawing

SOURCE: Van Meter Williams Pollack
Also proposed is up to 72,500 square feet of community-serving space in several locations, including a separate two-story community center, which would house recreational facilities for use by project residents and residents of the neighborhood, with youth and early childhood education programs.

The project sponsor proposes realigning Sunnydale, Brookdale and Blythedale Avenues and Santos Street and adding new cross streets to create a street grid that would improve connectivity and access within the development and to Hahn Street. Brookdale Avenue would be realigned to connect with Sunnydale Avenue; new cross streets would connect Blythedale Avenue to Sunnydale Avenue at three different locations; Blythedale Avenue would be realigned at Hahn Street to connect with Sunrise Way; and a pair of new streets would link Blythedale Avenue and Hahn Street one block north of Sunrise Way (see Figure 2).

The proposed project would increase the number of dwelling units on the site from 785 to approximately 1,700, an increase of some 915 units. Of the new units, 785 would be replacement public housing dwelling units, on a one-for-one basis, that would remain affordable housing, subsidized by the San Francisco Housing Authority but under management by and the ownership of the developers or related entities. Of the additional approximately 915 units, 24 percent (approximately 221 units including 150 senior housing units) would be affordable housing while 76 percent (approximately 694 units) would be market rate housing. In total, 60 percent of the proposed project would be affordable housing while the remaining 40 percent would be set aside as market-rate housing.

The project site currently contains 430 off-street surface parking spaces (0.55 spaces per dwelling unit) and 452 on-street parking spaces. The proposed project would provide approximately 1,437 off-street parking spaces (0.85 spaces per dwelling unit) in underground and at-grade parking garages in mixed-use and residential buildings, and 525 on-street parking spaces.

Table 1 is a summary of existing and proposed development.

The proposed project would include a stormwater management system that would meet the City’s Stormwater Management Ordinance requirements for stormwater management. The proposed project would collect, detain and potentially retain some stormwater within the project site such that the rate and amount of stormwater run off from the site does not negatively impact the capacity of the City’s treatment facilities. The following features could be included: seasonal waterways and rain gardens (planted depressions that allow rainwater runoff from walkways, parking lots, and roofs, to be absorbed into the ground); bioswales for stormwater retention in the public right of way where grades allow and on private lots; porous concrete pavements used in sidewalks and parking areas of the public right-of-way where grades allow; flexible space for community gatherings and performances; space for a farmer’s market; community growing gardens; residential courtyards; playgrounds; and community parks. The project sponsor anticipates that the proposed project would be built to LEED® ND standards and would be designed to include energy saving and sustainability features.
TABLE 1
EXISTING AND PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Existing Uses (to be demolished)</th>
<th>New Construction (Approximate)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>764,892 square feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking</td>
<td>Surface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>29,276 square feet of daycare youth programs and maintenance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Gross Square Footage (GSF)</td>
<td>794,168 GSF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dwelling units</td>
<td>785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking spaces</td>
<td>430 off street, 452 on street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of buildings</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height of buildings</td>
<td>20-35 feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of stories</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At project buildout, the project site would be configured as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use</th>
<th>No. of Acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New and Configured Streets</td>
<td>12.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential and Community Facilities Development Sites</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Parks</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunnydale Avenue Linear Open Space</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Site Area</td>
<td>48.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The project would be built in three major phases. The current residents would be moved to available residences on the project site as each phase is constructed, or they would be given housing vouchers by the Housing Authority for relocation elsewhere during the construction period. The new dwellings would be populated as each phase is completed.

Approvals Required
The project sponsor proposes to apply for a rezoning that would create a Special Use District (SUD) to allow certain non-residential uses such as community services, retail, and recreational and educational facilities that would otherwise not be permitted or require conditional use authorization. The SUD could also memorialize the ability to distribute the allowed density unevenly across the project site (i.e., certain
blocks could develop at higher densities than would be otherwise allowed as long as the density of the entire site is not exceeded) and enable modifications from the strict quantitative requirements of the Planning Code to allow for more flexibility in placement of rear yards, setbacks, location and number of parking and loading spaces, among other standards. The rezoning would also include changes to the Planning Code height and bulk map for portions of the site to allow buildings up to 60 feet in height.

The project sponsor may also seek approval of a Development Agreement by the Board of Supervisors under Chapter 56 of the Administrative Code.

The proposed new street grid would be subject to approval by the San Francisco Fire Department, San Francisco Department of Public Works, and the Sustainable Streets and MUNI Planning Divisions of the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA).

The project would require a General Plan Referral (Section 2A.53 of the Administrative Code) from the Planning Department or Planning Commission.

The project would also require building and demolition permits, which would require review and approval by the Planning Department and Department of Building Inspection (DBI).

The proposed site stormwater management system would require approval from the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission to meet the Stormwater Design Guidelines.

FINDING

This project may have a significant effect on the environment and an Environmental Impact Report is required. This determination is based upon the criteria of the State CEQA Guidelines, Sections 15063 (Initial Study), 15064 (Determining Significant Effect), and 15065 (Mandatory Findings of Significance).

The Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will be prepared as part of a combined Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement (EIR / EIS). The federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) intends to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to satisfy the requirements of federal environmental statutes. HUD has provided for assumption of its NEPA authority and NEPA lead agency responsibility to the City and County of San Francisco. HUD has given notice that the City and County of San Francisco Mayor’s Office of Housing (MOH), as the Responsible Entity, will prepare a joint EIR / EIS with the San Francisco Planning Department.

PUBLIC SCOPING PROCESS

Pursuant to the State of California Public Resources Code Section 21083.9 and California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines Section 15206, public scoping meetings will be held to receive oral comments concerning the scope of the EIR.
Notice of Preparation of an EIR
December 19, 2012

• The first meeting will be held on Saturday, January 5, 2013, at 10:00 a.m. at the Visitacion Valley Library, 201 Leland Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94134.

• The second meeting will be held on Saturday, January 12, 2013, at 10:00 a.m. at the Sunnydale Community Room, 1652 Sunnydale Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94134.

Written comments will also be accepted at these meetings and until 5:00 p.m. on Friday, January 18, 2013. Written comments should be sent to Bill Wycko, San Francisco Planning Department, 1650 Mission Street, Suite 400, San Francisco, CA 94103.

If you work for a responsible State agency, we need to know the views of your agency regarding the scope and content of the environmental information that is germane to your agency’s statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Your agency may need to use the EIR when considering a permit or other approval for this project. Please include the name of a contact person in your agency.

December 19, 2012
Bill Wycko
Environmental Review Officer