



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Certificate of Determination EXEMPTION FROM ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Case No.: 2013.0614E
 Project Address: 600 South Van Ness Avenue
 Zoning: UMU (Urban Mixed Use) District
 58-X Height and Bulk District
 Block/Lot: 3575/070
 Lot Size: 9,496 square feet
 Plan Area: Eastern Neighborhoods (Mission Plan Area)
 Project Sponsor: Michael Leavitt, Leavitt Architecture, Inc. - (415) 674-9100
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PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

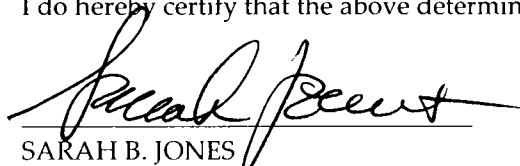
The 9,496-square-foot (sf) project site is located on the northeast corner of the block bounded by South Van Ness Avenue, 18th Street, Capp Street, and 17th Street in the Mission District neighborhood. The proposed project would involve: 1) demolition of an existing, 14-foot-tall, one-story, 1,750-sf former auto repair building (currently not in use) and a 29-space, 7,750-sf parking lot; and 2) construction of a 58-foot-tall (plus 9-foot-tall stair penthouse and 12-foot-tall elevator penthouse), five-story, approximately 34,715-sf mixed-use building. The proposed building would provide: 1) 27 dwelling units including 15 one-bedroom units and 12 two-bedroom units on floors two through five; 2) approximately 3,060 sf of retail space on the ground floor level; 3) 17 off-street parking spaces on the ground floor level; and 4) 27 Class I bicycle parking spaces on the ground floor level. Open space would be provided on seven private roof decks, two private decks at the 2nd floor, and common open space on the 2nd floor for the remaining 18 units. The proposed project would provide a total of ten street trees, five on 17th Street and five on South Van Ness Avenue. Access to the ground floor parking spaces would be provided by a new curb cut proposed along 17th Street. Construction would last approximately 12 months and the project would meet the San Francisco Green Building Code requirements. The project would require a mat a mat slab foundation supported, in turn, by compaction grouted sand from a depth of approximately 5 feet (ft) below ground surface (bgs) to a depth of approximately 19-24 ft. bgs.

EXEMPT STATUS:

Exempt per Section 15183 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines and California Public Resources Code Section 21083.3.

DETERMINATION:

I do hereby certify that the above determination has been made pursuant to State and Local requirements.



SARAH B. JONES
 Environmental Review Officer

April 9, 2015
 Date

cc: Michael Leavitt, Project Sponsor
 Brittany Bendix, Current Planner
 Supervisor David Campos, District 9

Virna Byrd, M.D.F.
 Exclusion/Exemption Dist. List

PROJECT APPROVAL

The project would require Large Project Authorization per Section 329 of the Planning Code. Approval of the Section 329 application by the Planning Commission would constitute the Approval Action date. The Approval Action date establishes the start of the 30-day appeal period for this CEQA exemption determination pursuant to Section 31.04(h) of the San Francisco Administrative Code.

COMMUNITY PLAN EXEMPTION OVERVIEW

California Public Resources Code Section 21083.3 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15183 provide an exemption from environmental review for projects that are consistent with the development density established by existing zoning, community plan or general plan policies for which an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was certified, except as might be necessary to examine whether there are project-specific significant effects which are peculiar to the project or its site. Section 15183 specifies that examination of environmental effects shall be limited to those effects that: a) are peculiar to the project or parcel on which the project would be located; b) were not analyzed as significant effects in a prior EIR on the zoning action, general plan or community plan with which the project is consistent; c) are potentially significant off-site and cumulative impacts that were not discussed in the underlying EIR; or d) are previously identified in the EIR, but which, as a result of substantial new information that was not known at the time that the EIR was certified, are determined to have a more severe adverse impact than that discussed in the underlying EIR. Section 15183(c) specifies that if an impact is not peculiar to the parcel or to the proposed project, then an EIR need not be prepared for the project solely on the basis of that impact.

This determination evaluates the potential project-specific environmental effects of the 600 South Van Ness Avenue project described above, and incorporates by reference information contained in the Programmatic EIR for the Eastern Neighborhoods Rezoning and Area Plans (PEIR)¹. Project-specific studies were prepared for the proposed project to determine if the project would result in any significant environmental impacts that were not identified in the Eastern Neighborhoods PEIR.

After several years of analysis, community outreach, and public review, the Eastern Neighborhoods PEIR was adopted in December 2008. The Eastern Neighborhoods PEIR was adopted in part to support housing development in some areas previously zoned to allow industrial uses, while preserving an adequate supply of space for existing and future production, distribution, and repair (PDR) employment and businesses. The Eastern Neighborhoods PEIR also included changes to existing height and bulk districts in some areas, including the project site at 600 South Van Ness Avenue.

Prior to rezoning that occurred under the Eastern Neighborhoods Rezoning and Area Plans process, the project site was zoned Light Industrial (M-1). This zoning designation was changed to the current UMU designation. As discussed above, the project site is currently occupied by an existing auto repair building and paved parking lot. Development of the proposed project would require this business to relocate elsewhere. The proposed change of the approximately 9,496-sf project site from the previous PDR use (auto repair service) to residential and commercial uses represents a small part of the loss of PDR space analyzed in the Eastern Neighborhoods PEIR and would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to the significant and unavoidable cumulative land use impact related to the loss of PDR use identified in the Eastern Neighborhoods PEIR.

¹ Planning Department Case No. 2004.0160E and State Clearinghouse No. 2005032048

The Planning Commission held public hearings to consider the various aspects of the proposed Eastern Neighborhoods Rezoning and Area Plans and related Planning Code and Zoning Map amendments. On August 7, 2008, the Planning Commission certified the Eastern Neighborhoods PEIR by Motion 17659 and adopted the Preferred Project for final recommendation to the Board of Supervisors.^{2,3}

In December 2008, after further public hearings, the Board of Supervisors approved and the Mayor signed the Eastern Neighborhoods Rezoning and Planning Code amendments. New zoning districts include districts that would permit PDR uses in combination with commercial uses; districts mixing residential and commercial uses and residential and PDR uses; and new residential-only districts. The districts replaced existing industrial, commercial, residential single-use, and mixed-use districts.

The Eastern Neighborhoods PEIR is a comprehensive programmatic document that presents an analysis of the environmental effects of implementation of the Eastern Neighborhoods Rezoning and Area Plans, as well as the potential impacts under several proposed alternative scenarios. The Eastern Neighborhoods Draft EIR evaluated three rezoning alternatives, two community-proposed alternatives which focused largely on the Mission District, and a “No Project” alternative. The alternative selected, or the Preferred Project, represents a combination of Options B and C. The Planning Commission adopted the Preferred Project after fully considering the environmental effects of the Preferred Project and the various scenarios discussed in the PEIR.

A major issue of discussion in the Eastern Neighborhoods rezoning process was the degree to which existing industrially-zoned land would be rezoned to primarily residential and mixed-use districts, thus reducing the availability of land traditionally used for PDR employment and businesses. Among other topics, the Eastern Neighborhoods PEIR assesses the significance of the cumulative land use effects of the rezoning by analyzing its effects on the City's ability to meet its future PDR space needs as well as its ability to meet its housing needs as expressed in the City's General Plan.

As a result of the Eastern Neighborhoods rezoning process, the project site has been rezoned to the UMU (Urban Mixed Use) District. The UMU District is intended to promote a vibrant mix of uses while maintaining the characteristics of this formerly industrially-zoned area. It is also intended to serve as a buffer between residential districts and PDR districts in the Eastern Neighborhoods. The proposed project and its relation to PDR land supply and cumulative land use effects is discussed further in the Community Plan Exemption (CPE) Checklist, under Land Use. The 600 South Van Ness Avenue project site, which is located in the Mission District of the Eastern Neighborhoods, was designated as a site allowing buildings up to 58 feet in height.

Individual projects that could occur in the future under the Eastern Neighborhoods Rezoning and Area Plans will undergo project-level environmental evaluation to determine if they would result in further impacts specific to the development proposal, the site, and the time of development and to assess whether additional environmental review would be required. This determination concludes that the proposed project at 600 South Van Ness Avenue is consistent with and was encompassed within the analysis in the Eastern Neighborhoods PEIR. This determination also finds that the Eastern

² San Francisco Planning Department. Eastern Neighborhoods Rezoning and Area Plans Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR), Planning Department Case No. 2004.0160E, certified August 7, 2008. Available online at: <http://www.sf-planning.org/index.aspx?page=1893>, accessed August 17, 2012.

³ San Francisco Planning Department. San Francisco Planning Commission Motion 17659, August 7, 2008. Available online at: <http://www.sf-planning.org/Modules/ShowDocument.aspx?documentid=1268>, accessed August 17, 2012.

Neighborhoods PEIR adequately anticipated and described the impacts of the proposed 600 South Van Ness Avenue project, and identified the mitigation measures applicable to the 600 South Van Ness Avenue project. The proposed project is also consistent with the zoning controls and the provisions of the Planning Code applicable to the project site.^{4,5} Therefore, no further CEQA evaluation for the 600 South Van Ness Avenue project is required. In sum, the Eastern Neighborhoods PEIR and this Certificate of Exemption for the proposed project comprise the full and complete CEQA evaluation necessary for the proposed project.

PROJECT SETTING:

The project site, which is located on the southwest corner of South Van Ness Avenue and 17th Street, is in the Mission neighborhood approximately four blocks south of Highway 101 and approximately two blocks southeast of the 16th Street BART Station. The immediate area around the project site is characterized by a mix of commercial, residential, and small PDR uses. To the east and west along 17th Street, are predominantly residential uses with an auto repair shop a half block down 17th Street west of the project site. The project site is also adjacent and across the street from residential uses along South Van Ness Avenue, sometimes accompanied by ground floor commercial uses. The northeast corner of the 17th Street and South Van Ness Avenue intersection includes a gas station. Other PDR uses (paint store, plumbing supply, and auto parts) are located north and south along South Van Ness Avenue within a block of the project site. Surrounding building heights range from 20 feet to 40 feet in height.

POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

The Eastern Neighborhoods PEIR included analyses of environmental issues including: land use; plans and policies; visual quality and urban design; population, housing, business activity, and employment (growth inducement); transportation; noise; air quality; parks, recreation and open space; shadow; archeological resources; historic architectural resources; hazards; and other issues not addressed in the previously issued initial study for the Eastern Neighborhoods Rezoning and Area Plans. The proposed 600 South Van Ness Avenue project is in conformance with the height, use and density for the site described in the Eastern Neighborhoods PEIR and would represent a small part of the growth that was forecast for the Eastern Neighborhoods plan areas. Thus, the plan analyzed in the Eastern Neighborhoods PEIR considered the incremental impacts of the proposed 600 South Van Ness Avenue project. As a result, the proposed project would not result in any new or substantially more severe impacts than were identified in the Eastern Neighborhoods PEIR.

Significant and unavoidable impacts were identified in the Eastern Neighborhoods PEIR for the following topics: land use, historic architectural resources, transportation and circulation, and shadow. The proposed change of the approximately 9,496-sf project site from the previous PDR use (auto repair service) to residential and commercial uses represents a small part of the loss of PDR space analyzed in the Eastern Neighborhoods PEIR and would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to the significant and unavoidable cumulative land use impact related to the loss of PDR use identified in the Eastern Neighborhoods PEIR. In regards to significant and unavoidable transportation impacts related to traffic and transit, project-generated vehicle and transit trips would not contribute considerably to significant and unavoidable cumulative traffic and transit impacts and would not be a substantial portion

⁴ Adam Varat, San Francisco Planning Department, Community Plan Exemption Eligibility Determination, Citywide Planning and Policy Analysis, 600 South Van Ness Avenue, April 13, 2014. This document is available for review at the San Francisco Planning Department, 1650 Mission Street, Suite 400, as part of Case File No. 2013.0614E.

⁵ Jeff Joslin, San Francisco Planning Department, Community Plan Exemption Eligibility Determination, Current Planning Analysis, 600 South Van Ness Avenue, May 13, 2014. This document is available for review at the San Francisco Planning Department, 1650 Mission Street, Suite 400, as part of Case File No. 2013.0614E.

of the overall additional traffic and transit volume anticipated to be generated by Plan Area projects. The proposed project would not contribute to significant and unavoidable historic architectural resource impacts since the proposed project would not involve the demolition of a historic resource and would not cause a significant adverse impact upon any nearby adjacent historic resources. The proposed project would not contribute to significant and unavoidable shadow impacts since the proposed project would not result in shadows on any nearby parks.

The Eastern Neighborhoods PEIR identified feasible mitigation measures to address significant impacts related to noise, air quality, archeological resources, historical resources, hazardous materials, and transportation. **Table 1** below lists the mitigation measures identified in the Eastern Neighborhoods PEIR and states whether each measure would apply to the proposed project.

Table 1 – Eastern Neighborhoods PEIR Mitigation Measures

Mitigation Measure	Applicability	Compliance
E. Transportation		
E-1: Traffic Signal Installation	Not Applicable: plan-level mitigation to be implemented by San Francisco Municipal Transportation Authority (SFMTA).	N/A
E-2: Intelligent Traffic Management	Not Applicable: plan-level mitigation to be implemented by SFMTA.	N/A
E-3: Enhanced Funding	Not Applicable: plan-level mitigation to be implemented by SFMTA & San Francisco Transit Authority (SFTA).	N/A
E-4: Intelligent Traffic Management	Not Applicable: plan-level mitigation to be implemented by SFMTA & Planning Department.	N/A
E-5: Enhanced Transit Funding	Not Applicable: plan-level mitigation to be implemented by SFMTA.	N/A
E-6: Transit Corridor Improvements	Not Applicable: plan-level mitigation to be implemented by SFMTA.	N/A
E-7: Transit Accessibility	Not Applicable: plan-level mitigation to be implemented by SFMTA.	N/A
E-8: Muni Storage and Maintenance	Not Applicable: plan-level mitigation to be implemented by SFMTA.	N/A
E-9: Rider Improvements	Not Applicable: plan-level mitigation to be implemented by SFMTA.	N/A
E-10: Transit Enhancement	Not Applicable: plan-level	N/A

Mitigation Measure	Applicability	Compliance
	mitigation to be implemented by SFMTA.	
E-11: Transportation Demand Management	Not Applicable: plan-level mitigation to be implemented by SFMTA.	N/A
F. Noise		
F-1: Construction Noise (Pile Driving)	Not Applicable: pile driving not proposed.	N/A
F-2: Construction Noise	Applicable: temporary construction noise from use of heavy equipment.	The project sponsor has agreed to develop and implement a set of noise attenuation measures during construction.
F-3: Interior Noise Levels	Not Applicable: subject to California Noise Insulation Standards in Title 24.	The project sponsor has conducted and submitted a detailed analysis of noise reduction requirements.
F-4: Siting of Noise-Sensitive Uses	Applicable: noise-sensitive uses proposed where street noise exceeds 60 A-weighted decibels (dBA).	The project sponsor has conducted and submitted a detailed analysis of noise reduction requirements.
F-5: Siting of Noise-Generating Uses	Not Applicable: noise-generating uses not proposed.	N/A
F-6: Open Space in Noisy Environments	Applicable: noise-sensitive uses are proposed where noise exceeds 60 dBA.	The project sponsor provided an environmental noise report that demonstrates that the proposed open space is adequately protected from the existing ambient noise levels.
G. Air Quality		
G-1: Construction Air Quality	Not Applicable: has been superseded by the Construction Dust Control Ordinance.	N/A
G-2: Air Quality for Sensitive Land Uses	Not Applicable: the project site is not located within an Air Pollutant Exposure Zone.	N/A
G-3: Siting of Uses that Emit DPM	Not Applicable: project does not include a use that would emit substantial levels of diesel particulate matter.	N/A
G-4: Siting of Uses that Emit other TACs	Not Applicable: project does not include a use that would emit other toxic air contaminants.	N/A
J. Archeological Resources		
J-1: Properties with Previous Studies	Not Applicable: project site is	N/A

Mitigation Measure	Applicability	Compliance
	located within the Mission Dolores Archeological District.	
J-2: Properties with no Previous Studies	Not Applicable: project site is located within the Mission Dolores Archeological District.	N/A
J-3: Mission Dolores Archeological District	Applicable: project site is located within the Mission Dolores Archeological District.	The requirements of this mitigation measure have been complied with as part of this environmental review process. No further mitigation is required.
K. Historical Resources		
K-1: Interim Procedures for Permit Review in the Eastern Neighborhoods Plan Area	Not Applicable: plan-level mitigation completed by Planning Department.	N/A
K-2: Amendments to Article 10 of the Planning Code Pertaining to Vertical Additions in the South End Historic District (East SoMa)	Not Applicable: plan-level mitigation completed by Planning Commission.	N/A
K-3: Amendments to Article 10 of the Planning Code Pertaining to Alterations and Infill Development in the Dogpatch Historic District (Central Waterfront)	Not Applicable: plan-level mitigation completed by Planning Commission.	N/A
L. Hazardous Materials		
L-1: Hazardous Building Materials	Applicable: project involves removal of hazardous building materials.	The project sponsor has agreed to ensure that any equipment containing PCBs or DEPH, such as fluorescent light ballasts, are removed and properly disposed of according to applicable federal, state, and local laws prior to the start of demolition.

Please see the attached Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) for the complete text of the applicable mitigation measures. With implementation of these mitigation measures the proposed project would not result in significant impacts beyond those analyzed in the Eastern Neighborhoods PEIR.

PUBLIC NOTICE AND COMMENT

A "Notification of Project Receiving Environmental Review" was mailed on May 19, 2014 to adjacent occupants and owners of properties within 300 feet of the project site. No comments were received from the public regarding concerns and issues to be taken into consideration and incorporated in the environmental review.

CONCLUSION

As summarized above and further discussed in the CPE Checklist:⁶

1. The proposed project is consistent with the development density established for the project site in the Eastern Neighborhoods Rezoning and Area Plans;
2. The proposed project would not result in effects on the environment that are specific to the project or the project site that were not identified as significant effects in the Eastern Neighborhoods PEIR;
3. The proposed project would not result in potentially significant off-site or cumulative impacts that were not identified in the Eastern Neighborhoods PEIR;
4. The proposed project would not result in significant effects, which, as a result of substantial new information that was not known at the time the Eastern Neighborhoods PEIR was certified, would be more severe than were already analyzed and disclosed in the PEIR; and
5. The project sponsor will undertake feasible mitigation measures specified in the Eastern Neighborhoods PEIR to mitigate project-related significant impacts.

Therefore, the proposed project is exempt from further environmental review pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21083.3 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.

⁶ The CPE Checklist is available for review at the Planning Department, 1650 Mission Street, Suite 400, San Francisco, in Case File No. 2013.0614E and online at <http://www.sf-planning.org/index.aspx?page=2780>.