



Staff Reports

File #: 1821-2019, **Version:** 1

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of City Council

From: Vincent Smith, Community Development Director

Prepared By: Michael Allen, Senior Planner

TITLE:

First Street Apartments II Project - New 50-unit Apartment Complex on 1.7 Acres at 2611 and 2617 First Street

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Adopt a resolution approving a Design Review Permit for the First Street Apartments II at 2611 and 2617 First Street (APNs: 004-081-002 & 004-081-003) (PL18-0111) and determining that the potential environmental effects of the actions authorized by this Resolution were adequately analyzed by a previous CEQA action.

DISCUSSION:

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Applicant, Napa One LP, is requesting a Design Review Permit to construct a 50-unit apartment complex on two properties located at 2611 and 2617 First Street. A Lot Merger (subject to Staff approval) is also requested to merge the two parcels. The 50 units would be contained within three 3-story buildings. The mix of unit types is 11 one-bedroom units (490 square feet), 35 two-bedroom units (734 square feet and 765 square feet) and four three-bedroom units (1,034 square feet). Parking would be provided for 98 vehicles with 25 spaces located in garages, 25 spaces located under carports, and 48 open spaces located along the perimeter of the site.

BACKGROUND

This project was originally approved by the City Council on October 21, 2014 after recommendation by the Planning Commission (File No PL13-0020). Although the Applicant subsequently submitted a building permit application and improvement plans, the permits were never issued and the Design Review Permit expired on October 12, 2016. The Applicant is now ready to proceed with the project and has submitted this new application for approval.

CONTEXT

The project site is comprised of a vacant 1.1-acre parcel and an adjacent 0.62-acre parcel containing two single family residences and accessory structures which will be demolished. A large oak tree located on the east side of the site will be saved. The project site is bordered by a small duplex

housing development on the west with four single family homes to the east. The Valley Oak Villas condominiums are adjacent to the south and the First Street Church of Christ is located to the north across First Street. Also, under construction across First Street to the north is the 48-unit Napa Creek Village condominiums and the 36-unit Napa Villas townhomes. Additionally, the 24-unit Keller Apartments project was approved on a property 200 feet to the east on Freeway Drive.

GENERAL PLAN

The project site has a General Plan designation of MFR-132, which provides for multi-family residential development at a density range of 20 to 30 units per acre. Therefore, the 1.7-acre project site would allow for the development of 34 to 51 units. The proposed 50 units are consistent with this range.

ZONING

The project site is within the Multi-Family Residential (RM). Multi-family apartment developments are a permitted use within the RM District. Design Review approval by the City Council is required for multi-family projects with more than 30 units. Therefore, this project is subject to final review and approval of the City Council.

The project meets or exceeds all applicable development standards of the RM zoning district. A height over 35 feet and up to 40 feet is allowed under Section 17.08.030 of the Zoning Ordinance with a Design Review Permit “to implement design guidelines.” In this case, the proposed 40-foot height allows for the inclusion of pitched roof elements on these three-story buildings consistent with the Residential Design Guidelines.

PARKING

A total of 98 parking spaces is required by the Zoning Ordinance based upon the mix of one, two, and three bedroom units in the project. The 98 parking spaces must include at least one garage or carport space for each of the 50 units. The project provides a total of 98 spaces, which include 25 spaces in garages, 25 spaces under carports and 48 open spaces along the perimeter of the site.

DESIGN REVIEW

The project will be accessed via a single driveway at the far west end in order to minimize conflicts with the First Street/ Freeway Drive intersection. The looped driveway places parking along the west, east and south boundaries of the property. A large landscape area is situated between Building 1 and First Street, with no intervening parking.

The buildings are contemporary in design and feature a variety of exterior materials including stucco on the ground floor and a combination of horizontal cement fiber planks and wood panels on the upper two floors. The pitched roof elements have standing seam metal roofing.

Staff has reviewed the project for consistency with the City’s Residential Design Guidelines, and has found it to be consistent with all applicable Guidelines including the orientation of the dwellings toward First Street, unobtrusive parking, location of trash bins away from public streets, buildings that

are complementary in design and scale to adjacent development, provision of common use space, and elevations with three-dimensional elements to break up the wall surfaces.

TRAFFIC

A traffic study was prepared for the original project approval in 2014 by W-Trans Inc. focusing on the First Street/ Freeway Drive intersection. That study determined that the project would not adversely change the levels of service at that intersection. An updated traffic study for the current application was prepared by W-Trans Inc. in January 2019. The updated traffic study took the newly constructed and approved projects into consideration and came to the same conclusion as the 2014 Study, which is that the project would not adversely affect the level of service of the First Street/ Freeway Drive intersection.

The project will add a three-vehicle westbound left turn lane on First Street to enter the project. It is also noted that the Keller Apartments project (which is currently in the improvement plan review stage) is required to add a right turn overlay to the signal at the First Street/ Freeway Drive intersection. This will add a right-turn arrow to the signal for northbound Freeway Drive vehicles to turn onto eastbound First Street without stopping at the same time that vehicles are turning from westbound First Street onto southbound Freeway Drive. This improvement has also been included as a condition of approval for this project in case the Keller Apartments project does not proceed.

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETINGS

The Planning Commission held two hearings on the project. At the first meeting on April 18, 2019, which the Applicant did not attend, the Planning Commission expressed a number of questions and concerns and continued the hearing in order for the Applicant to address those concerns. The Applicant submitted additional information and details in May 2019 and the continued hearing was held on June 20, 2019 at which the Applicant presented new information to address the Commission's previous concerns. The following is a summary of the Commission's concerns and the Applicant's responses:

Commission Direction: Provide a better representation of the architecture and building materials.

Applicant's Response: The Applicant provided an improved building elevations page and separate, additional renderings which provided a more realistic depiction of how the building would appear on the site. The plans contain a materials sheet (Sheet A1.2M). An actual materials board was presented at the Planning Commission meeting.

Commission Direction: Provide more outdoor amenities/ create a more livable environment.

Applicant's Response: The original site plan contained two seating areas, each containing a bench, a picnic table, and sand box. The revised site plan contains four seating areas, each with a picnic table and bench seat. The two sandboxes remain but the revised plans propose the addition of playground equipment. Three barbeque pits have also been added to three of the seating areas. The overall area containing outdoor amenities has been increased from 9,692 square feet to 11,325 square feet.

Commission Direction: Include more energy efficient measures/ solar/ electric charging stations/ bike racks.

Applicant's Response: Two electric vehicle charging stations have been added to the parking lot and a bike rack has been added on the west side of Building #3. An electric photovoltaic panel system has been added to the roofs of all buildings to provide solar heated water.

Commission Direction: Provide additional analysis of potential traffic impacts. Review the possibility of extending the left turn pocket on First Street.

Applicant's Response: The Applicant's traffic engineer, W-Trans Inc., reviewed the Planning Commission's concerns and provided a written response. Based upon testimony from the traffic engineer, the Commission recommended adding a condition of approval requiring the left turn pocket to be increased in length to accommodate three (rather than two) vehicles. Staff has included the recommended condition in the draft resolution.

Based upon their satisfaction with the Applicant's response to their previous concerns, the Commission recommended approval of the Design Review Permit by a vote of 4-0 (Painter absent).

FINANCIAL IMPACTS:

No direct financial impacts to the General Fund have been identified with this application.

CEQA:

City staff recommends that the City Council determine that the potential environment effects of the recommended action authorized by this Resolution were adequately analyzed by the Mitigated Negative Declaration that was adopted by the City Council on October 21, 2014 in conjunction with the approval of the First Street Apartments Design Review Permit PL13-0020 by Resolution R2014-170, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15162.

DOCUMENTS ATTACHED:

ATCH 1 - Draft Resolution

EX A- NapaSan Conditions

ATCH 2 - Initial Study

ATCH 3 - April 18, 2019 Planning Commission Minutes Excerpts and Late Communications

ATCH 4 - June 20, 2019 Planning Commission Staff Report and Draft Minutes Excerpts

ATCH 5 - Plan Drawings

ATCH 6 - Traffic Engineer Response

NOTIFICATION:

Notice of the scheduled public hearing was provided on July 24, 2019 by US Postal Service to all property owners within a 500-foot radius of the subject property. Notice of the public hearing was also published in the Napa Valley Register on July 26, 2019 and provided to people previously requesting notice on the matter at the same time notice was provided to the newspaper for publication. The Applicant was also provided a copy of this report and the associated attachments in advance of the public hearing on the project.