

Case File Number: PUD03-552, PUDF03-553

March 24, 2004

Location:	Two blocks bounded by West Grand Avenue, Broadway, Valley and 24th Streets.
Proposal:	Redevelopment of site with a mixed-use project including approximately 409 for-sale residential units, 30,390 square feet of ground-floor commercial space, and 675 structured parking spaces.
Applicant:	Signature Properties, Inc.
Owner:	Negherbon Lincoln Mercury, Inc.
Planning Permits Required:	Preliminary Development Plan, Final Development Plan, Design Review, Major Conditional Use Permit for inconsistency between zoning classification and land use designation, and Subdivision Map.
General Plan:	Central Business District/Community Commercial
Zoning:	C-40 Community Thoroughfare Commercial Zone/C-55 Central Core Commercial Zone/C-60 City Service Commercial Zone/S-4 Design Review Combining Zone/S-17 Downtown Residential Open Space Combining Zone/S-19 Broadway Auto Row Interim Study Combining Zone
Environmental Determination:	Notice of Preparation has been issued and EIR is being prepared.
Historic Status:	Site includes buildings rated Cb+3, Cb-2+, and C2+
Service Delivery District:	II – North Oakland/North Hills
City Council District:	1
For further information:	Contact case planner Lynn Warner at 510-238-6168 or by e-mail at lwarner@oaklandnet.com

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide design review comments for the proposed mixed-use project to be located on a two-block site bounded by West Grand Avenue, Broadway, 24th and Valley Streets. The approximately 5-acre site is located at the southern end of Broadway Auto Row and is surrounded by a mix of commercial and residential uses. The project site is comprised of the Negherbon Auto Center, surface vehicle lots, a few older warehouse buildings, and a 16-unit apartment building. Signature Properties is proposing a phased redevelopment of the site with approximately 409 for-sale residential units, 30,390 square feet of ground-floor commercial space on West Grand Avenue and Broadway, and 675 structured parking spaces. The parking levels will be partially wrapped with commercial space and residential units. The project sponsor is also proposing to widen portions of Valley Street adjacent to the project, and to provide curb bulb-outs along the Broadway and 23rd Street project frontages.

The Design Review Committee (DRC) reviewed the original project design on December 10, 2003 and asked to see the project again once it had been revised to address comments from the DRC, staff, and the public. Staff is now seeking comments regarding the revised design of the proposed project that may provide direction to the applicant and staff in processing the planning applications for the project.

Insert location map

PROJECT SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

The approximately 5-acre site is bounded by West Grand Avenue, Broadway, Valley and 24th Streets. The project site is comprised of the Negherbon Auto Center, surface vehicle lots, a few older warehouse buildings, and a 16-unit apartment building. The properties at the corners of Broadway/23rd Street (2301 Broadway) and Broadway/24th Street (415 24th Street) are not currently part of the project site. The site is located at the southern end of Broadway Auto Row and is surrounded by a mix of commercial and residential uses. Buildings in the surrounding area range in height from one to ten stories. There are also several potentially significant historic resources located on and adjacent to the project site (see Environmental Review section below).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Signature Properties is currently proposing a phased redevelopment of the site with approximately 409 for-sale residential units, 30,390 square feet of ground-floor commercial space on West Grand Avenue and Broadway, and 675 structured parking spaces (546 residential and 129 commercial). The project site consists of almost two entire blocks, which are designated Parcel A and Parcel B. Parcel A is the block bounded by West Grand Avenue, Broadway, Valley and 23rd Streets, and would be developed in Phase I of the project. Parcel B is the block bounded by West Grand Avenue, Broadway, Valley, 23rd and 24th Streets, and would be developed in Phase II of the project. Twelve existing buildings on the entire site would be demolished, but the facades of the two buildings at the corners of 23rd/Valley Streets would be retained and incorporated into the project development.

The buildings are between six and seven stories tall, with a maximum height of about 84 feet to the top of the mechanical penthouses. This height would provide a transition between the high-rise office buildings and the smaller scale commercial and residential structures in the surrounding area. The residential levels will be constructed on a podium over the retail and parking levels. The parking levels will be partially lined by commercial space and residential units. The proposed units range in size from approximately 761 to 1,578 square feet and are a combination of one-, two-, and three-bedroom units. Most of the ground-floor units on Parcel B have street entrances. Vehicle access and loading berths will be provided on 23rd and 24th Streets. Open space will be provided via a combination of private balconies and common interior courtyards at the podium level. The project sponsor is also proposing to widen portions of Valley Street adjacent to the project, and to provide curb bulb-outs along the Broadway and 23rd Street project frontages.

GENERAL PLAN ANALYSIS

There are two General Plan designations for the project site: Central Business District and Community Commercial. The Central Business District designation, which applies to Parcel A, allows a maximum floor area ratio (FAR) of 20.0, and a maximum residential density of 500 units per net acre. The Community Commercial designation, which applies to Parcel B, allows a maximum FAR of 5.0, and a maximum residential density of 166.67 units per net acre. The proposed project is within the allowable FAR and residential density for each parcel, and the uses are consistent with the General Plan designations.

ZONING ANALYSIS

There are several zoning designations for the site including: C-40 Community Thoroughfare Commercial/C-55 Central Core Commercial/C-60 City Service Commercial/S-4 Design Review/S-17 Downtown Residential Open Space/S-19 Broadway Auto Row Interim Study. All of these zoning districts permit the proposed uses except for the C-60 zone, which does not allow residential or retail uses. However, because the uses are consistent with the Community Commercial General Plan land use designation they are allowed with an interim conditional use permit. The Guidelines for Determining Project Conformity with the General Plan and Zoning Regulations include the C-40 zone as a possible best-fit zone for the Community Commercial land use designation. Staff proposes to apply the C-40 zone as the best-fit zone for the portion of Parcel B currently zoned C-60 because the rest of Parcel B is currently zoned C-40. The FAR of the retail portion of the project is within the maximum FAR allowed of 7.7 for Parcel A, and 3.3 for Parcel B. The density of the residential portion of the project is within the maximum allowable residential density of 1 unit per 150 square feet of lot area for Parcel A, and 1 unit per 450 square feet of lot area for Parcel B.

The proposed project will require the following planning approvals: a Preliminary Development Plan (PDP), a Final Development Plan (FDP), a Major Conditional Use Permit (for inconsistency between the zoning classification and the General Plan designation), Design Review, a Subdivision Map, and possibly a Variance. All applicable criteria for these entitlements will be analyzed and appropriate findings will be made in conjunction with review by the full Planning Commission.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The project will undergo review to assess its potential environmental impacts. A staff determination has been made to prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The review will focus on potential impacts of the project on traffic, cultural resources, aesthetics, air quality, noise, and hazardous materials. An Initial Study was prepared and a Notice of Preparation was issued on March 5, 2004.

DESIGN ISSUES

The Design Review Committee reviewed the preliminary project design on December 10, 2003. The applicant has since revised the project design in response to comments received from the DRC, staff, and the public. The project sponsor has also had discussions with the owners of adjacent outparcels regarding their acquisition. The revised site plan now includes the entirety of Parcel A and all of Parcel B except for the buildings at the corners of Broadway/23rd Street and Broadway/24th Street.

In response to a request to retain the older buildings on the project site, the design has been revised to retain the facades of the two existing one-story brick buildings located at the northeast and southeast corners of the 23rd Street/Valley Street intersection. Plans call for new construction above these facades. The project sponsor has stated that retaining any more of these

older buildings would be financially infeasible and architecturally incompatible. A request was also made to step the height of the buildings down on the Valley Street frontage. The project sponsor has stated that the result would be either a reduction in the number of units in the project, or prohibitive construction costs associated with moving units from the Valley Street side of the site to the Broadway side.

The revised design breaks up the building massing by incorporating different materials, styles, and colors. The architectural styles include a combination of traditional and modern design elements, which is compatible with the mix of styles in the surrounding area. The proposed exterior building materials include stucco, brick veneer, concrete, stone, zinc roofing, metal railing and grills, steel and glass canopies, and fiberglass and aluminum windows. Proposed colors include a range of earth tones as well as muted red, orange, and blue tones.

Staff generally supports the revisions to the project made by the project sponsor, and believes that the current design is an improvement. However, we have recommendations to address the following issues:

- The facades of the two-story brick buildings at the corners of 23rd/Valley Streets have been retained and incorporated into the project. Although the additions above these buildings have been designed to be distinct from the style and materials of the existing bases, it is important that the designs of the additions be compatible. This has been done by making the spacing of the columns or windows generally consistent between the existing building bases and the additions. On Parcel A staff proposes minor refinements to the design to remove the projecting bay window at the corner of the building, and to modify the spacing of the columns on the 23rd Street elevation to be more consistent with the base. On Parcel B staff believes that the transition between the middle and the top of the 23rd Street elevation. More design work is necessary to make this transition work.
- In order to maximize the amount of ground-floor commercial space and associated parking on Parcel A, the residential units previously proposed on the first two floors of the Valley Street and 23rd Street frontages have been removed. Staff believes that the residential units should be replaced in order to provide active ground-floor uses in lieu of dead space along the perimeter of the parking garage. This would entail reducing the amount of retail parking currently proposed by between 26 and 29 spaces. Given the location of this building along a major arterial, the removal of this amount of parking is less important than assuring active ground-floor, pedestrian-oriented space.
- A community room should be provided so that residents of the project have a place to hold meetings or social functions.
- Building entrances should be made more prominent through use of additional awnings and/or signage.

CONCLUSION

Staff recommends the Design Review Committee review and comment on the revised project design.

Respectfully submitted:

CLAUDIA CAPPIO
Development Director

Prepared by:

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Planner IV, Major Development Projects

Attachments: A. Revised Project Plans