

## PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

### STAFF REPORT

**DATE:** APRIL 10, 2019

**TO:** PLANNING COMMISSION

**FROM:** DAVID M. REYES, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

**SUBJECT:** REQUEST TO RENEW THE PLANNED DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR PLANNED DEVELOPMENT-35 (COLORADO HILL)  
1347-1355 EAST COLORADO BOULEVARD AND 39 NORTH HILL AVENUE;  
1336 EAST COLORADO BOULEVARD

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#### RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Planning Commission:

1. **Find** that there are no changed circumstances or new information as part of the proposed application that necessitate further environmental review beyond the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) adopted by the City Council on September 12, 2016; and
2. **Approve** the renewal of the Planned Development Plan for Planned Development-35 with the adoption of the finding in Attachment A.

#### BACKGROUND:

The applicant, J&K Plus Investments LLC, has submitted a request to renew the Planned Development (PD) Plan for PD-35 (Colorado Hill). PD-35, originally approved by the City Council on September 12, 2016, included a PD Plan to facilitate development of the properties generally located at 1347-1355 East Colorado Boulevard and 39 North Hill Avenue (north parcel) and 1336 East Colorado Boulevard (south parcel). The north parcel was approved to be developed with a 375-room hotel and ground-floor commercial uses totaling 349,090 square feet. For the south parcel, the PD prescribed a building floor area of 89,595 square feet, where 10,000 square feet would be allocated as ground-floor commercial uses. The remaining 79,595 square feet could be utilized by a 'Single Room Occupancy' land use restricted to student

housing or residential units as part of a 'Mixed-Use Project' land use as an allowed use by right per the PD Plan. Additionally, the 79,595 square feet could be utilized by a 'Lodging (Hotel)' land use subject to approval of a Conditional Use Permit (CUP).

The PD Plan became effective on March 29, 2017, per Ordinance No. 7296. Pursuant to Section 17.26.020.C.3.e(2) of the City's Zoning Code, a PD Plan shall expire two years from the effective date of the ordinance, unless a building permit has been issued and construction diligently pursued to completion. The request is to renew the PD Plan for two additional years from the expiration date of March 29, 2019 to March 29, 2021.

A Renewal of the PD Plan requires the review and approval of the Planning Commission. Staff's analysis concludes that the finding to approve the requested Renewal of the PD Plan can be made.

Existing Site Characteristics:

The project site is located at 1347-1355 East Colorado Boulevard and 39 North Hill Avenue (north parcel) and 1336 East Colorado Boulevard (south parcel). The north parcel is bordered by Hill Avenue on the east, Colorado Boulevard on the south, Holliston Avenue on the west, and measures approximately 2.97 acres. The north parcel contains multiple buildings and a large surface parking lot used previously for the display, sales, and service of vehicles.

The south parcel is located in the northwestern portion of the block bound by Hill Avenue to the east, Green Street to the south, Holliston Avenue to the west, and measures approximately 0.71 acres. The south parcel contains two small buildings used in conjunction with automotive sales. Both parcels have been temporarily vacant since 2008, but used periodically for temporary vehicle storage and the sale of pre-owned vehicles, and seasonally for the sale of pumpkins and holiday trees.

Adjacent Uses (Overall Site):

North: Institutional (Church)  
South: Institutional (Pasadena City College); Public and Semi-Public (Hill Avenue Branch Library)  
East: Institutional (Pasadena City College); Commercial  
West: Institutional (Church); Commercial

Adjacent Zoning (Overall Site):

North: PS (Public and Semi-Public)  
South: CG (Commercial General)  
East: ECSP-CG-2 (East Colorado Specific Plan, Commercial General, College District) CG (Commercial General); PS (Public and Semi-Public)  
West: ECSP-CG-1 (East Colorado Specific Plan, Commercial General, Mid-City)

The project site is located within the boundaries of the East Colorado Specific Plan and within a developed area of Pasadena on one of the City's main commercial streets, surrounded by residential, commercial and institutional land uses. More specifically, the Prism Church and Hill Avenue Grace Lutheran Church border the project to the north. The F. Suie One Antiques Store building (which also includes private offices and residences) is on the same block as the proposed project. Across Holliston Avenue to the west is the Holliston Avenue United Methodist Church and, to the south of the north parcel are the south parcel and a Chevron gas station.

Pasadena City College is located to the southeast of the north parcel and a McDonald's restaurant is located to the southwest. To the east of the north parcel, across Hill Avenue, is a drive-through restaurant and other commercial uses. Within the same block as the south parcel is the Chevron gas station, a surface parking lot utilized by Pasadena City College students, and the Hill Avenue Branch Library.

#### Approved PD-35 Project Description

On September 12, 2016, the City Council approved PD-35 to allow development on the north and south parcels. The approval to establish the PD zoning district included simultaneous approval of a PD Plan that set development standards for the PD zoning district including, but not limited to, a mix of allowed uses and permit requirements, floor area ratio, maximum lot coverage, setbacks, height and driveway access.

The north parcel was approved to be developed with a full-service hotel (332,690 square feet) and ground-floor commercial uses (16,400 square feet). The hotel would include up to 375 guest rooms and related services (311,300 square feet), a ballroom (12,500 square feet), and conference rooms (8,890 square feet). The total floor area would be 349,090 square feet. The building would range in height from two stories up to a maximum of five stories along roadway frontages. Along the interior of the site, portions of the building would be up to seven stories with a height of 78.5 feet and up to 90 feet for a rooftop pool and bar area and other appurtenances. A portion of the roof would have architectural features and a rooftop pool and bar, resulting in an overall height of 90 feet. Vehicle access to the site would be provided from multiple locations. A driveway is proposed running parallel to the north property line between Holliston Avenue and Hill Avenue, providing access to the subterranean parking. Along Colorado Boulevard, a driveway serving as the drop-off and pick-up to the hotel, as well as valet service, would be centered approximately 150 feet away from the intersection of Colorado Boulevard and Hill Avenue. Access to the subterranean parking would also be provided at this location. All existing buildings on-site would be demolished to accommodate the development, except that the existing automobile showrooms would be retained.

For the south parcel, the PD approved a building floor area of 89,595 square feet, where 10,000 square feet would be allocated for ground-floor commercial uses. The remaining 79,595 square feet could be utilized by a 'Single Room Occupancy' land use restricted to student housing or residential units as part of a 'Mixed-Use Project' land use as an allowed use by right per the PD Plan. Additionally, the 79,595 square feet could be utilized by a 'Lodging (Hotel)' land use subject to approval of a Conditional Use Permit.

#### Revision of PD-35 Project Description

On August 22, 2018, the Planning Commission approved a revision to the PD Plan of PD-35. The revision modified development standards related to setbacks and height applicable to the South Parcel. Pursuant to P.M.C 17.26.020.C.3.e(6), a revision to a PD Plan requires the approval of the Planning Commission. The applicant did not propose any modifications of uses or standards on the North Parcel.

## **ANALYSIS:**

Pursuant to Section 17.26.020.C.3.e(2) of the Zoning Code, a PD Plan shall expire two years from the effective date of the ordinance, unless a building permit has been issued and construction diligently pursued to completion. The expiration date is March 29, 2019. As of the date of this report, building permits have not been issued and construction has not commenced. Pursuant to Section 17.26.020.C.3.e(5), the applicant is required to file a written request for renewal of a PD Plan not less than 30 days (February 27, 2019) and not more than 60 days (January 28, 2019) before expiration of the PD plan. The applicant submitted the request on February 5, 2019, within the required time period, which if approved, would extend the expiration date to March 29, 2021.

According to information provided by the applicant, the renewal of the PD Plan is being requested to allow the project additional time to complete the Design Review process. The project has completed the Preliminary Consultation phase of the Design Review process and is currently in the Concept Design Review phase. Additionally, the applicant is requesting the renewal to allow the project additional time to obtain approval of a Conditional Use Permit (CUP). The applicant has elected to establish a 'Lodging (Hotel)' land use on the South Parcel. Per the PD Plan, a CUP is required to establish a hotel use on the South Parcel. The project would then be subject to the building plan check process to obtain building permits.

Pursuant to Section 17.26.020.C.3.e(4), the Planning Commission may renew a PD Plan if it finds the renewal consistent with the purposes of subsection 17.26.020.C (Planned Development District). As indicated in Attachment A, the findings to renew the PD Plan can be made.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:**

The City Council adopted a resolution certifying a Final Environment Impact Report (EIR), a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP), and a Water Supply Assessment on September 12, 2016. The EIR analyzed the environmental impacts to the following study areas: Air Quality, Cultural Resources, Greenhouse Gases, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Land Use and Planning; Noise and Vibration; Public Services, Transportation and Traffic, and Utilities and Service Systems. The EIR identified potentially significant effects related to the following topics: Air Quality, Cultural Resources, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Noise and Vibration; and Transportation and Traffic. With the incorporation of mitigation measures in the MMRP, the EIR determined that all potentially significant effects would be reduced to a less than significant level. There are no changed circumstances or new information that would require further additional environmental review as a result of the proposed PD Plan renewal application.

## **CONCLUSION**

Staff concludes that the finding necessary for approving the request to renew the PD Plan for PD-35 can be made. The renewal was filed in writing within the specified time period, before the expiration date. The PD Plan is currently subject to the conditions of approval established by the Planning Commission. There are no proposed revisions associated with the renewal. The renewal is being considered by the Planning Commission, the designated review authority for this request. Therefore, staff recommends that the Planning Commission approve the request to renew the PD Plan for PD-35.

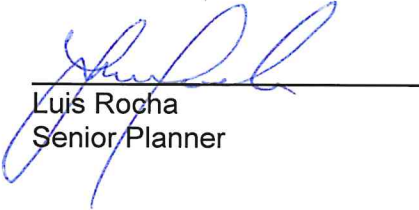
Respectfully Submitted,



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DAVID M. REYES  
Director of Planning & Community  
Development

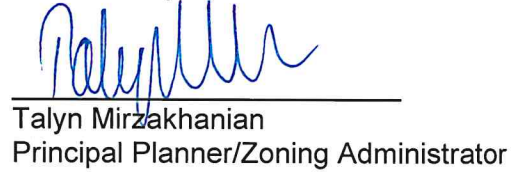
Prepared by:



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Luis Rocha  
Senior Planner

Reviewed by:



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Talyn Mirzakhonian  
Principal Planner/Zoning Administrator

Attachments: (2)

Attachment A – Specific Findings for Approval  
Attachment B – Approved PD Plan

**ATTACHMENT A**  
**SPECIFIC FINDINGS FOR RENEWAL OF THE PD PLAN FOR**  
**PD 35 COLORADO HILL PLANNED DEVELOPMENT**

1. The renewal is consistent with the following purposes of Section 17.26.020.C (Planned Development District) of the Zoning Code:
  - a) *Establish a procedure for the development of large parcels of land in order to reduce or eliminate the rigidity, delays, and inequities that otherwise would result from application of land use regulations and administrative procedures designed primarily for small parcels.* The renewal is for a previously approved PD Plan that consolidates nine small parcels to create a 2.97 acre project site. The PD Plan facilitates development by establishing specific land use regulations and development standards; thereby, reducing rigidity, delays, and inequities that otherwise would result from application of land use regulations and administrative procedures designed primarily for small parcels.
  - b) *Ensure orderly and thorough planning and review procedures that will result in quality urban design.* The renewal is for a previously approved PD Plan that facilitates development on a 2.97 project site. Pursuant to Section 17.26.020.C,3.c of the Zoning Code, the proposed development has been reviewed by the Design Commission, who determined that the drawings exhibited a project that was of high quality, exhibited architectural excellence, and was contextual to the surrounding neighborhood. The project will continue to be refined through the Design Review process as it completes the Concept Design Review phase.
  - c) *Encourage variety and avoid monotony in large developments by allowing greater freedom in selecting the means to provide access, light, open space, and amenity.* The renewal is for a previously approved PD Plan that facilitates development on a 2.97 project site. The proposed development will provide a variety of hardscape and landscape courtyards, outdoor recreational amenities (e.g. swimming pools), promenades and loggias, and articulated building planes that will provide a variation of pedestrian access to the site, opportunity to access natural light and various forms of active and passive open space.
  - d) *Allow certain types of development consistent with the general plan that can be acceptable at a specific location only under standards significantly more restrictive than those of a base district in which the use is permitted.* The renewal is for a previously approved PD Plan that facilitates development that is consistent with the general plan. The PD Plan establishes regulations for various land uses (i.e. hotels, retail sales, services, and mixed-use projects) and sets forth applicable development standards. The PD Plan allows for the establishment of a Single-Room Occupancy land use, a use that was determined to be acceptable for the site, under standards more restrictive than those of a base district in which the use is permitted.

- e) *Provide a mechanism whereby the city may authorize desirable developments in conformity with the general plan without inviting speculative rezoning applications that if granted, often could deprive subsequent owners of development opportunities that do not necessarily result in construction of the proposed facilities.* The renewal is for a previously approved PD Plan that facilitates development on a 2.97 project site, in conformance with the General Plan. The development project is in the Design Review process. The project has completed the Preliminary Consultation phase of the Design Review process and is currently in the Concept Design Review phase. Additionally, the applicant is requesting the renewal to allow the project additional time to obtain approval of a Conditional Use Permit (CUP). The applicant has elected to establish a 'Lodging (Hotel)' land use on the South Parcel. Per the PD Plan, a CUP is required to establish a hotel use on the South Parcel. The project would then proceed to the building plan check process to obtain building permits. The applicant intends to obtain all necessary permits to construct the approved facilities.
  
- f) *Encourage allocation and improvement of common open space in residential areas, and provide for maintenance of the open space at the expense of those who will directly benefit from it.* The project site is not located in a residential area; therefore, this purpose is not applicable to the renewal of the PD Plan for PD-35.
  
- g) *Encourage the preservation of serviceable existing structures of historic value or artistic merit by providing the opportunity to use them imaginatively for purposes other than that for which they were originally intended.* The renewal is for a previously approved PD Plan that facilitates development on a 2.97 project site. The PD Plan and mitigation requirements for the project include preservation, restoration, and adaptive reuse of the historic former auto showrooms and the "Welcome" sign, as well as the provision of an on-site interpretive sign or display that presents a history of the site and the significance of the International Style of architecture to the automobile-related industry of Pasadena.
  
- h) *Encourage the assembly of properties that might otherwise be developed in unrelated increments to the detriment of surrounding neighborhoods.* The renewal is for a previously approved PD Plan that consolidates nine small parcels to create a 2.97 acre project site. The PD Plan facilitates one cohesive development project by establishing specific land use regulations and development standards.

**ATTACHMENT B**

**PD Plan Development Standards**

**TO BE PROVIDED UNDER SEPARATE COVER**