



PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

STAFF REPORT

DATE: October 4, 2023

TO: Hearing Officer

SUBJECT: Certificate of Exception #412

LOCATION: 270 & 282 N. Los Robles Avenue

APPLICANT: CDB Investments, LP

ZONING DESIGNATION: CD-3 (Central District Specific Plan, Walnut Housing subdistrict)

GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION: Medium Mixed Use (0 – 2.25 FAR, 0-87 du/ac)

CASE PLANNER: Ivan Galeazzi

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Adopt the Environmental Determination and Specific Findings in Attachment A to **approve** Certificate of Exception #412 with the conditions in Attachment B.

PROJECT PROPOSAL: Certificate of Exception: To allow a lot line adjustment to consolidate two adjacent parcels at 282 N. Los Robles Avenue (APN 5723-005-044) and 270 N. Los Robles Avenue (APN 5723-005-029) into a single parcel.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION: In conjunction with the amendments to the Fuller Theological Seminary Master Plan and Development Agreement approved by City Council on January 30, 2023, it was determined that the project is Categorical Exempt from CEQA (Section 15305, Class 5, Minor Alterations in Land Use Limitations, and Section 15332, Class 32, In-fill Development Projects). It has further been determined that there are no changed circumstances or new information as part of the proposed Certificate of Exception application that necessitate further environmental review and there are no features that distinguish this project from others in the exempt class; therefore, there are no unusual circumstances.

BACKGROUND:

Site characteristics: The subject site consists of two separate parcels, the parcel at 282 N. Los Robles Avenue is located at the northeast corner of Los Robles Avenue and Corson Street and is currently developed with a parking lot with access from Corson Street. The parcel located at 270 N. Los Robles Avenue is located immediately to the south on the east side of N. Los Robles Avenue and is currently vacant with access from Los Robles Avenue.

Adjacent Uses: North – I-210 Freeway
South – Multi-Family residential
East – Multi-Family residential
West – Office/Professional

Adjacent Zoning: North – PS (Public/Semi-Public)
South – CD-3 (Central District Specific Plan, Walnut Housing)
East – CD-3 (Central District Specific Plan, Walnut Housing)
West – CD-2 (Central District Specific Plan, Civic Center/Midtown)

Previous Zoning Cases on this Property: Master Plan Amendment (MP2021-00001): To allow an amendment to the Fuller Seminary Master Plan and Development Agreement to facilitate the construction of 105 residential apartment units and 161 parking spaces in an underground garage. The proposed project included a 32.5% density bonus. Approved on January 30, 2023.

The following Conditional Use Permits have been superseded by the Master Development Plan for the Fuller Theological Seminary:

Conditional Use Permit #1509: To establish and construct a parking lot for 81 automobiles. Approved on March 20, 1985.

Conditional Use Permit #1485: To construct a 47-space surface parking lot. Approved on November 7, 1984.

Certificate of Exception #78-E9441: To construct a 50-space parking lot to be used by residents of an apartment complex located on the west side of Los Robles Avenue. Approved on November 11, 1978.

Variance #7801: To allow the use of the existing building on the property for a real estate office. Off-street parking would be provided at the rear of the building. Approved on July 27, 1967.

Variance #7383: To allow the use of the existing building on property for a real estate office. Off-street parking would be provided at the rear of the building. Denied on June 10, 1965. Appeal granted for two years. Zoning Committee Reversed.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The applicant, CDB Investments, LP, has submitted a Certificate of Exception application to allow a lot line adjustment between two adjacent parcels at 282 N. Los Robles Avenue (APN 5723-005-044) and 270 N. Los Robles Avenue (APN 5723-005-029). The proposal would consolidate two existing parcels into a single parcel. The parcel resulting from the boundary adjustment would be 39,209 square-feet.

The lot line adjustment would facilitate the development of a new six-story, 105-unit residential project, that includes eight very low-income units with 161 parking spaces. Three protected specimen trees and one protected mature tree, as well as 12 non-protected on-site trees, are proposed to be removed to accommodate the project. The project previously completed the Concept Design Review, obtaining approval on March 14, 2023, and it is currently under review for Final Design Review.

The lot consolidation is required in order to apply the floor area ratio singly across the one project site. This application only concerns an adjustment to the existing lot boundaries, no demolition or new construction is proposed as part of this application.

ANALYSIS:

Applicants may request a Certificates of Exception application for a lot line adjustment between two or more adjacent parcels, where: 1) the land taken from one parcel is added to the adjacent parcel; and 2) a greater number of parcels than originally existed is not thereby created. The Hearing Officer may approve a Certificate of Exception provided the resulting parcels conform to the General Plan, any applicable Specific Plan, and zoning and building ordinances. The table below summarizes the existing parcels sizes.

Address	Assessor's Number	Existing Lot Area
282 N. Los Robles Avenue	5723-005-044	29,902 sf
270 N. Los Robles Avenue	5723-005-029	9,307 sf
Total		39,209 sf

The applicant's proposal would take land from one parcel and add to the adjacent parcel, consolidating all into a single parcel. A greater number of parcels than currently exists would not be created. The analysis that follows discusses the proposed parcels consistency with applicable provisions of the Zoning Code.

Minimum Lot Size (Area and Width):

Both parcels are located in the Central District Specific Plan (CD-3)-Walnut Housing subdistrict. The property located at 282 N. Los Robles Avenue is currently a parking lot. The property located at 272 N. Los Robles Avenue is developed with five residential units and associated garage structures, all of which are proposed to be demolished. Pursuant to Table 3-2 (CD District General Development Standards), Zoning Code Section 17.30.040 (CD General Development Standards), the minimum lot size (area and width) is determined through the subdivision process, consistent with the General Plan. The proposed lot line adjustment would result in a parcel with an area of 39,209 square feet, and a lot of width of 215 feet along Los Robles Avenue and 165 feet along Corson Street. The resulting lot area and width would be within the range of sizes in

the surrounding area. More importantly, the proposed lot size would not conflict with the CD-3 zoning district or applicable Central District Specific Plan. Any future development on the site is required to conform to the development standards of the underlining zoning district and Building Code.

GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY:

The proposed project, a mapping action consolidating two lots into one lot, does not conflict with the General Plan Land Use Element. The minor boundary adjustment would not conflict with the applicable General Plan land use designation, Medium Mixed-Use. The lot consolidation is consistent with the General Plan Land Use Element Objectives and Policies, specifically Policy 1.2 (Targeted Growth), by creating a project site that is more suitable for development that would target growth and new construction in infill areas and away from Pasadena’s low-density residential neighborhoods and open spaces. The mapping action is also consistent with Policy 2.1 (Housing Choices) by providing an opportunity to develop the site with a full range of housing types, such as a single-room occupancy development, and/or affordable housing options. The consolidation of lots will be within the range of sizes in the surrounding area.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

In conjunction with the amendments to the Fuller Theological Seminary Master Plan and Development Agreement approved by City Council on January 30, 2023, it was determined that the project is Categorical Exempt from CEQA (Section 15305, Class 5, Minor Alterations in Land Use Limitations, and Section 15332, Class 32, In-fill Development Projects). It has further been determined that there are no changed circumstances or new information as part of the proposed Certificate of Exception application that necessitate further environmental review and there are no features that distinguish this project from others in the exempt class; therefore, there are no unusual circumstances.

COMMENTS FROM OTHER DEPARTMENTS:

The project was reviewed by the Departments of Public Works, Housing, Transportation, Fire, Building and Safety Division, Departments of Water and Power, Community Planning Section, and Design and Historic Preservation Section. No comments were received on this application.

CONCLUSION:

It is staff’s assessment, based on the analysis of the project, that the findings necessary for approving the Certificate of Exception can be made as included in Attachment A of this report. The proposed lot line adjustment would consolidate two parcels into one parcel. Any future development on the subject parcel would be required to conform to the applicable development standards and the Building Code requirements in place at the time of any construction activity. Therefore, staff recommends that the Hearing Officer approve the application with the findings in Attachment A and the recommended Conditions of Approval in Attachment B.

Attachments:

- Attachment A: Recommended Specific Findings for Approval
- Attachment B: Recommended Conditions of Approval

ATTACHMENT A
SPECIFIC FINDINGS FOR CERTIFICATE OF EXCEPTION #412

Certificate of Exception

1. *The parcel resulting from the lot line adjustment will conform to the local general plan, any applicable specific plan, any applicable coastal plan, and zoning and building ordinances.* The proposed project, a mapping action consolidating two lots into one lot, is consistent with the General Plan Land Use Element Objectives and Policies, specifically Policy 1.2 (Targeted Growth), by creating a project site that is more suitable for development that would target growth and new construction in infill areas and away from Pasadena's low-density residential neighborhoods and open spaces. The mapping action will be consistent with Policy 2.1 (Housing Choices) by providing an opportunity to develop the site with a full range of housing types, such as a single-room occupancy development, and/or affordable housing options. The proposed lot line adjustment will result in a parcel with an area of 39,209 square feet. The resulting lot area will be within the range of sizes in the surrounding area. More importantly, the proposed lot size will not conflict with the development standards established for the CD-3 zoning district or applicable Central District Specific Plan. Any future development on the site is required to conform to the development standards of the underlining zoning district and Building Code.

ATTACHMENT B
RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL FOR CERTIFICATE OF EXCEPTION #412

The applicant or successor in interest shall meet the following conditions:

General

1. The site/floor plans submitted for building permits and/or future development shall substantially conform to the site/floor plans submitted and stamped "Approved at Hearing, October 4, 2023," except as modified herein.
2. The right granted under this application must be enacted within 24 months from the effective date of approval. It shall expire and become void, unless a renewal is approved in compliance with Section 16.18.060 of the Pasadena Municipal Code.
3. The approval of this application authorizes the consolidation of two adjacent parcels at 282 N. Los Robles Avenue (APN 5723-005-044) and 270 N. Los Robles Avenue (APN 5723-005-029) into one parcel.
4. The applicant or successor in interest shall provide to the Zoning Administrator a legal description and plan exhibit of the parcels resulting from this Lot Line Adjustment. The legal description and plan exhibit shall be prepared by a licensed civil engineer or land surveyor and shall include the wet stamp and signature of the author.
5. The applicant or successor in interest shall be responsible for recording with the Los Angeles County Recorder a Certificate of Compliance that has been approved by the Zoning Administrator and furnishing a Grant Deed containing a legal description matching the legal description contained in the Certificate of Exception. This lot line adjustment shall not be effective until recorded with the Los Angeles County Recorder. Prior to recordation of the Certificate of Compliance, the applicant or successor in interest shall demonstrate the parcels involved are under common ownership in the same entity or entities.
6. The applicant or successor in interest shall meet the applicable code requirements of all City Departments.