



# SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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## Executive Summary General Plan Amendment, Planning Code Text Amendment and Zoning Map Amendment

HEARING DATE: SEPTEMBER 24, 2015  
CONTINUED FROM: JULY 16, 2015 & AUGUST 13, 2015

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*Project Name:* **Amendments to the General Plan, Planning Code and Zoning Map for 525 Harrison Street**

*Case Number:* 2013.0159TZ

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*Recommendation:* **Adoption of Recommendation of Approval for the General Plan Amendment, Planning Code Text Amendment & Zoning Map Amendment.**

The action before the Commission is an adoption of a recommendation specifying approval of amendments to the Rincon Hill Area Plan (General Plan Amendment), Planning Code, and Height and Bulk District Map, as described below. On May 28, 2015, the Commission initiated the General Plan Amendment, Planning Code Text Amendment and Zoning Map Amendment for 525 Harrison Street, as noted in Planning Commission Resolution No. 19382. The Commission's recommendation shall be forwarded to the Board of Supervisors for their consideration.

### GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT

The proposed General Plan Amendment would add text to Policies 3.3 and 3.4 of the Rincon Hill Area Plan to address modification of the tower spacing and tower bulk requirements of the San Francisco Planning Code.

### PLANNING CODE TEXT AMENDMENT

The proposed Planning Code Text Amendment would add criteria to Planning Code Section 270(e) to allow for exceptions to the tower bulk, upper tower sculpting, and tower spacing requirements on Block 3764 under Planning Code Section 309.1.

## ZONING MAP AMENDMENT

The proposed Zoning Map Amendment would amend Block/Lot 3764/063 on Height and Bulk District Map No. 01 (HT01) to decrease the height limit from 65/400-R to 65/250-R.

### The Way It Is Now:

#### General Plan

Currently, the Policy 3.3 and 3.4 of the Rincon Hill Area Plan provide specific dimensions and requirements for tower bulk and tower spacing. Currently, the Rincon Hill Area Plan states:

##### *Policy 3.3*

*Minimize tower bulk to the dimensions shown in Figure 4, to ensure a feasible tower floorplate, to create elegant, slender towers and to preserve views and exposure to light and air.*

##### *Policy 3.4*

*Require towers to be spaced no less than 115 feet apart, the maximum plan dimension per Figure 4 for towers over 85 feet in height, to minimize shadowing of streets and open space, and to preserve at least as much sky plane as tower bulk.*

*In recognition of pipeline housing projects at 375 and 399 Fremont Street, tower spacing less than 115 feet to a minimum of 80 feet may be permitted to encourage the provision of housing on these sites in keeping with the overall goals of this plan, provided that the other urban design and planning policies of the plan are met.*

#### Planning Code Text

Currently, the subject parcel is located in the R (Rincon Hill and South Beach DTR) Bulk District. Per Planning Code Section 270(e), in the R-Bulk District, the bulk limitations include:

- A proposed building may not exceed a plan length of 90 feet and a diagonal dimension of 120 square feet.
- To encourage tower sculpting, the gross floor area of the top one-third of the tower must be reduced by 10 percent from the maximum floor plates, unless the overall tower floor plate is reduced by an equal or greater volume.
- In order to provide adequate sunlight and air to streets and open spaces, a minimum distance of 115 feet must be preserved between all structures above 110 feet in height at all levels above 110 feet in height.

#### Zoning Map

Currently, Block/Lot 3764/063 on Height and Bulk District Map No. 01 (HT01) has a height and bulk designation of 65/400-R.

## The Way It Would Be:

### General Plan Amendment

The following text would be added to Policies 3.3 and 3.4 of the Rincon Hill Area Plan to allow for a deviation from the tower bulk and tower separation policies:

*In recognition of a new housing project at 525 Harrison Street, tower spacing less than 115 feet to a minimum of 82 feet and tower bulk in excess of the bulk control dimensions shown in Figure 4 may be permitted to encourage the provision of housing on this site in keeping with the overall goals of this plan, provided that the other urban design and planning policies of the plan are met.*

(See the Attached Ordinance)

### Planning Code Text Amendment

Planning Code Sections 270(e) and 309.1 would be amended to allow the Planning Commission to consider exceptions to the tower bulk, tower sculpting and tower spacing requirements on Block 3764 under Planning Code Section 309.1 (Permit Review in Downtown Residential Districts). The Planning Commission may grant an exception only on Assessor's Block 3764 Lot 063, if the proposed tower is no more than 250-ft in height, is located on a lot no more than 15,000 square feet, is primarily residential with no more than 250,000 gsf, and has a tower separation of 82-ft. (See the Attached Ordinance)

### Zoning Map Amendment

Block 3764/063 on Height and Bulk District Map No. 01 (HT01) would be amended from 65/400-R to 65/250-R. (See the Attached Ordinance)

## ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The environmental effects of the Project were determined by the San Francisco Planning Department to have been fully reviewed under the Rincon Hill Plan Environmental Impact Report (hereinafter "EIR"). The EIR was prepared, circulated for public review and comment, and, at a public hearing on May 5, 2005, by Motion No. 17007, certified by the Commission as complying with the California Environmental Quality Act (Cal. Pub. Res. Code Section 21000 et seq., (hereinafter "CEQA"). The Commission has reviewed the Final EIR, which has been available for this Commission's review as well as public review.

The Department is preparing an Addendum to the previously-certified Final EIR. Copies of the EIR Addendum will be provided upon availability.

## PUBLIC COMMENT

As of the date of this report, the Department has one public correspondence regarding the proposed project, which has expressed neither support nor opposition to the proposed legislative amendments.

**AMENDED HEARING NOTIFICATION (FOR PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION)**

TYPE	REQUIRED PERIOD	REQUIRED NOTICE DATE	ACTUAL NOTICE DATE	ACTUAL PERIOD
Classified News Ad	20 days	July 24, 2015	July 24, 2015	20 days
Posted Notice	20 days	July 24, 2015	July 24, 2015	20 days
Mailed Notice	10 days	August 3, 2015	July 24, 2015	20 days
Intersection Notice	10 days	August 3, 2015	July 24, 2015	20 days

**ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS**

- On May 28, 2015, the Commission initiated the General Plan Amendment, Planning Code Text Amendment and Zoning Map Amendment for 525 Harrison Street, as noted in Planning Commission Resolution No. 19382.
- Currently, the subject lot is irregularly-shaped and is bounded Harrison Street to the west and a freeway on-ramp to the east and south. The subject lot has 140-ft of frontage along Harrison Street. The subject lot contains a two-story concrete building that is occupied by a nightclub (d.b.a. Sound Factory).
- The Project Sponsor has applied for the amendments to General Plan, Planning Code and Zoning Map Amendment to accommodate a proposed project at 525 Harrison Street. The proposed project would construct a new 17-story residential tower (approximately 173-ft tall; measuring 229,270 gsf) with 179 dwelling units, 575 gsf of ground floor retail spaces and three levels of below-grade, off-street parking with 97 parking spaces.
- The proposed project requires a Downtown Project Authorization (DPA), as defined in Planning Code Section 309.1. The public hearing for the DPA is also scheduled on August 13, 2015.
- Currently, the Rincon Hill Area Plan and Planning Code include modifications to the requirements for the housing projects at 375 and 399 Fremont Street. The Rincon Hill Area Plan includes accommodations for a lesser tower separation and a modification of the bulk requirements for the projects at 375 and 399 Fremont Street. This precedent for lessening the tower separation is reinforced in the Planning Code through Planning Code Sections 270(e)(3) and 270(e)(4), which provide for a variation in the tower spacing and upper tower sculpting requirements for Block 3747 Lots 001E, 002 and 006. 375-399 Fremont Street first received its entitlements from the Planning Commission in March 2006.
- The surrounding area is mixed in character with smaller-scale commercial and light industrial uses and newer residential towers. Directly to the east of the subject lot is a vacant lot and a three-story commercial building. Across Harrison Street is a four-story commercial building and a residential tower at 45 Lansing Street, which is under construction. The surrounding area is predominantly located within the RH-DTR (Rincon Hill Downtown Residential) Zoning District. Further west and north, the area is characterized by either: TB-DTR (Transbay Downtown Residential), P (Public) or MUO (Mixed-Use Office) Zoning Districts.
- The subject lot would maintain its current zoning (RH-DTR).

- Subsequent to the July 2<sup>nd</sup> Planning Commission Design Review Hearing, the Project Sponsor has undertaken a redesign of the proposed project at 525 Harrison Street to address the concerns voiced by the Commission and to better align the project to the Rincon Hill Area Plan. The revised project entails construction of a new 23-story residential tower (approximately 250-ft tall; measuring 259,905 gsf) with 205 dwelling units, 575 gsf of ground floor retail spaces and three levels of below-grade, off-street parking with 103 parking spaces (See Attached Schematic Plans). Therefore, the Project Sponsor is also requesting a modification to the proposed Zoning Map Amendment to decrease the height limit from 65/400-R to 65/250-R for Block 3764 Lot 063.

### **REQUIRED COMMISSION ACTION**

The Department recommends that the Commission recommend *approval* of amendment to the General Plan, Planning Code and Zoning Map and adopt the attached Draft Resolution.

### **BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

The Department recommends approval of the proposed amendments to the Rincon Hill Area Plan, so the Commission can consider the Project under Planning Code Section 309.1. The proposed legislative amendments would assist in facilitating a new residential housing project in support of the City's overall goals for housing production.

<b>RECOMMENDATION:</b> <b>Recommendation of Approval</b>
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**Attachments:**

- Draft Commission Resolution
- Draft Ordinances
- Planning Commission Resolution No. 19382
- Zoning Map
- Special Use District Map
- Block Book Map
- Sanborn Map
- Aerial Photographs