



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Certificate of Determination Exemption from Environmental Review

Case No.: 2011.0864E
 Project Title: 312 Connecticut Street – Board of Supervisor’s File No. 110845
 Zoning: RH-2 [Residential House, Two Family] Use District
 40-X Height and Bulk District
 Block/Lot: 4035/003
 Lot Size: 3,367 square feet
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PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The proposed project is a Board of Supervisors ordinance (BOS File No. 110845) to rezone the parcel located at 312 Connecticut Street from RH-2 (Residential House, Two-Family Use District) to NC-2 (Small-Scale Neighborhood Commercial Use District). The project site is located on the block surrounded by 18th Street, Arkansas Street, and 19th Street in San Francisco’s Potrero Hill Neighborhood. No new development is proposed. The project would require an amendment to the San Francisco Section Map ZNO8.

(Continued on next page)

EXEMPT STATUS:

General Rule Exclusion (State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15061(b)(3))

REMARKS:

See next page.

DETERMINATION:

I do hereby certify that the above determination has been made pursuant to State and Local requirements.



Bill Wycko
 Environmental Review Officer



Date

cc: Supervisor Malia Cohen, District 10
 Aaron Starr, Current Planning Division

Virna Byrd, M.D.F.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION (continued):

The property is currently a religious institution owned by the Gurdjieff Group. The building contains one dwelling unit. The rest of the property is used to hold meetings and gatherings for the Gurdjieff Group. Prior to its current use, the property operated as a theater. The proposed project involves the rezoning of the project site to conform to its longstanding existing use. The rezoning would involve an Amendment to the Zoning Map of the San Francisco Planning Code, which would require recommendation by the Planning Commission and approval by the Board of Supervisors. No development is proposed as part of this project.

REMARKS (continued):

Planning Code Section 711.1 describes NC-2 as follows: "The NC-2 District is intended to serve as the City's Small-Scale Neighborhood Commercial Use District. These districts are linear shopping streets which provide convenience goods and services to the surrounding neighborhoods as well as limited comparison shopping goods for a wider market. The range of comparison goods and services offered is varied and often includes specialty retail stores, restaurants, and neighborhood-serving offices. NC-2 Districts are commonly located along both collector and arterial streets which have transit routes."

The proposed project would change the zoning of the subject lot from RH-2 (Moderate Density Residential, Mixed) District to NC-2 (Small-Scale Neighborhood Commercial Use) District. Adjacent properties and corner lots at 18th and Connecticut Street are currently zoned NC-2. More specifically, on 18th Street, the following addresses are zoned NC-2: 1424 -1426, 1434, 1459, 1521, 1523, 1510, and 1532. On Connecticut Street, the following addresses are zoned NC-2: 286-288, 293, 300, 315, and 317. Planning Code Section 206.2 describes RH-2 as follows: "The overall density of units is greater and the mixture of building types and unit sizes is more pronounced. Building widths and scales remain moderate, and considerable outdoor space is still available. The unit density permitted requires careful design of new structures in order to provide adequate amenities for the residents. Where nonresidential uses are present, they tend to offer services for wider areas."

CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) establishes the general rule that CEQA only applies to projects that have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment the activity is not subject to CEQA.

The proposed project would change the zoning controls of the project site, as summarized in the following table:

Zoning Control	Existing Zoning: RH-2	Proposed Zoning: NC-2
Maximum dwelling unit density	Two dwelling units per lot (up to one unit per 1500 square feet of lot area with conditional use approval)	One dwelling unit per 800 square ft
Front setback requirements	Based upon average of adjacent buildings; up to 15 feet or 15% of lot depth	None required.
Zoning Control	Existing Zoning: RH-2	Proposed Zoning: NC-2
Required rear yard	45% of lot depth, except of reductions based upon average of adjacent buildings; if averaged, last 10 feet is limited to height of 30 feet.	Required at the second story and above and at all residential levels. 25% of the lot depth or 15 feet whichever is greater.
Usable open space requirements per dwelling unit	125 square feet per unit if all private; common space substituted must be one-third greater.	Generally, either 100 sq. ft. if private, or 133 sq. ft. if common
Commercial Use	Not permitted.	Permitted at a floor area ratio limit of 2.5 times the lot area.
Residential Parking	Generally 1 space per dwelling unit	Generally 1 space per dwelling unit
Commercial Parking	Not applicable	Generally none required if less than 5,000 square feet

The rezoning would allow more density than exists on the project site, although no development is proposed as part of this project. The maximum number of dwelling units that could potentially be developed would increase from 2 to 4 units.¹ The proposed rezoning would also allow up to 5,892 square feet of commercial use, which is not permitted under the existing zoning.²

Land Use: The surrounding area is developed with a mix of NC-2 and RH-2. The proposed rezoning would not create a new or substantially more intensive use than what presently exists in the project vicinity, nor substantially alter the development potential or pattern in this area. Primary differences between the existing zoning on the site and the proposed NC-2 zoning include incrementally greater development intensity and/or residential density, and the potential for greater encroachment into the rear yard from new development. The potential impacts of increased development on the site with regard to transportation are discussed below. Greater rear encroachment could have some effect on neighboring properties, but any such effects would not have the potential to be significant in the context of existing development around the site. Any future development would require separate CEQA review. The potential increase in development density on the project site would not physically divide an established

¹ Maximum dwelling unit density: $3,367/1500 = 2$ units under RH-2 District Zoning. $3,367/800 = 4$ units under NC-2 District Zoning.

² Basic floor area ratio: $3,367 \times 2.5 = 8417$ square feet. However, retail is only permitted on the first and second levels, and the second level requires a 25% rear yard, thus the maximum retail possible at the project site would be $3367 + (3367 \times 0.75) = 5892$ square feet.

community, conflict with any applicable land use, plan, policy, or regulation, or have a substantial impact upon the existing character of the vicinity.

Traffic/Trip Generation: Although the rezoning would potentially allow more density, no development is proposed as part of this project. The proposed zoning would allow for a potential maximum for development of an additional 2 residential units and 5,892 square feet of commercial space on the project site. The trip generation rate for residential and retail uses in the Planning Department's *Transportation Impact Analysis Guidelines for Environmental Review* (October 2002) provides a conservative estimate of the maximum possible traffic impacts.

With the maximum potential of development under RH-2 (2 residential units), the project site currently generates 15 average daily person trips and 3 p.m. peak hour person-trips. If the project site were to be developed with the maximum possible residential and commercial uses, which would include the allowance for 2 additional residential units (4 units total) and 5,892 square feet of commercial as determined above, the site would generate a maximum of 884 average daily person trips, including 80 daily person trips during the p.m. peak hour. These p.m. peak-hour person-trips would be distributed among various modes of transportation including 28 automobile person-trips, 13 transit trips, 28 walking trips, and 10 by other means including bicycle, motorcycle, and taxi. If the site were to be developed with the maximum possible residential and commercial uses, the proposed zoning would add a negligible increment to the cumulative long-term traffic increase on the neighborhood's roadway network. Any proposal for development would be subject to environmental review. Thus, the proposed rezoning would not substantially affect the neighborhood's existing transportation and circulation conditions.

Neighborhood Concerns: A "Notification of Project Receiving Environmental Review" was mailed on September 6, 2011, to community organizations and potentially interested parties, requesting comments concerning the potential environmental effects of this project. Several inquires from the public were made asking about the nature of the proposed development at the project site. No development is proposed as part of this project. Future development would require separate CEQA review. One member of the public asked for the rationale for the proposed rezoning. The Board of Supervisors proposes the project site conform to its longstanding existing use. No other comments were received.

Conclusion: CEQA State Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) provides an exemption from environmental review where it can be seen with certainty that the proposed project would not have a significant impact on the environment. As discussed above, the project would not result in significant environmental effects. Thus, the proposed project is appropriately exempt from environmental review under the General Rule Exclusion (CEQA Guidelines Section 15601(b)(3)).