



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

MEMO

DATE: February 1, 2018

TO: File

FROM: Lisa Gibson, Environmental Review Officer, Environmental Planning

RE: Seawall Lot 337 and Pier 48 Mixed-Use Project (Case No. 2013.0208E)

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The purpose of this memorandum is to document the Planning Department's analysis of a possible modification to one of the variants studied in the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Seawall Lot 337 and Pier 48 Mixed-Use Project (proposed project), (Planning Department Case No. 2013.0208E). The EIR for the proposed project was certified on October 5, 2017. This memorandum describes the findings of the environmental review conducted for the proposed project and describes how the proposed modification to Variant 4 differs from the proposed project as it was analyzed in the EIR. It then explains, for the reasons set forth herein, why the modified project variant is not a substantial modification, would not result in any new or more severe significant effects or trigger any mitigation measure not already disclosed in the EIR, and why it does not warrant subsequent environmental review.

Setting

The Seawall Lot 337 and Pier 48 Mixed-Use Project site (Assessor's Block 8719/Lot 002 and Lot 006 and Assessor's Block 9900/Lot 048) is an approximately 28-acre area in the Mission Bay neighborhood. This area includes the 13.6-acre Seawall Lot 337; the 0.3-acre strip of land on the south side of Seawall Lot 337, referred to as Parcel P20; the 6.0-acre Pier 48; the existing 2.6-acre China Basin Park; and 4.6 acres of streets and access areas within or adjacent to the boundaries of Seawall Lot 337 and Pier 48. Seawall Lot 337 and Parcel P20 are in a Mission Bay Open Space (MB-OS) Use District and the Mission Rock Height and Bulk District. Pier 48 is located in a Heavy Industrial (M-2) Use District and the Mission Rock Height and Bulk District.

DESCRIPTION OF APPROVED PROJECT

On October 5, 2017, the Planning Commission certified the Environmental Impact Report for the project (Planning Commission Motion No. 20017) and recommended project approval to the Board of Supervisors (Planning Commission Motion No. 20018).

The proposed project consists of 2.7 to 2.8 million gross square feet (gsf) of mixed uses on 11 development blocks on the project site. The mixed uses are comprised of approximately 1.1 to 1.6 million gsf of residential uses, 972,000 to 1.4 million gsf of commercial uses, and 241,000 to 244,800 gsf of active/retail uses on the lower floors of each development block. Building heights on these development blocks would range from 90 feet to a maximum height 240 feet, excluding the mechanical and other accessory penthouse roof enclosures. In addition, the project would include approximately 1.1

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million gsf of above ground and below ground parking (approximately 3,100 parking spaces), rehabilitation of 242,500 gsf of space on Pier 48 for industrial, restaurant, active/retail, tour, exhibition, and meeting space uses, and construction of 5.4 acres of net new open space for a total of 8 acres of open space on the site.

The proposed project also includes four variants, which were analyzed in the EIR:

- Variant 1: District Energy/Bay-Source Heating and Cooling, which would provide a district-wide heating and cooling system, with hot and cold water piped underground to individual buildings in lieu of chillers and boilers in each building.
- Variant 2: Entertainment Venue, which would accommodate up to 4,000 patrons and up to 50 events per year in one of the proposed project buildings.
- Variant 3: Reconfigured Parking, which would relocate 700 parking spaces from the subterranean garage at Mission Rock Square, which would not be constructed under this variant, to the garage on development block D2.
- Variant 4: Hotel Use, which would provide a hotel with approximately 200,000 gsf in a building that otherwise would have been residential.

MODIFIED PROJECT

The proposed modification to the project would implement a modified Variant 4 from what was analyzed in the EIR. Variant 4, as described in the EIR, would allow construction of an approximately 200,000-gross-square-foot, 300-room hotel, located within a building on one of the development blocks intended for residential uses under the project (blocks A, F, K, D1). There would be no increase in total development at the site. Thus, under Variant 4 that was analyzed in the EIR, the project would result in 200,000 gsf less of residential space than would be provided under the proposed project. All other project features under Variant 4 would remain the same as the proposed project.

The current modification to Variant 4 would change the project so that the 200,000-gsf hotel under Variant 4 would be located within a building on a development block intended for commercial uses (blocks B, C, E, G) instead of a building on a development block intended for residential uses. Thus, under the modified project there would be 200,000 gsf less of commercial space than would be provided under the proposed project. All other project features under Variant 4 would remain the same as the proposed project.

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

Prior Environmental Review

The Final EIR concluded that the proposed project would result in the following significant and unavoidable impacts:

- The proposed project would result in an adverse impact by increasing ridership by more than 5 percent on two individual Muni routes that exceed 85 percent capacity utilization under baseline conditions.
- The proposed project would result in an adverse impact related to a substantial increase in transit delays on Third Street between Channel Street and Mission Rock Street.
- The proposed project would have significant impacts on pedestrian safety at the unsignalized intersections of Fourth Street/Mission Rock Street and Fourth Street/Long Bridge Street.
- The proposed project would contribute considerably to a significant cumulative transit impact because it would increase ridership by more than 5 percent on one individual Muni route that would exceed 85 percent capacity utilization.
- The proposed project would contribute considerably to significant cumulative impacts related to transit delays.
- The proposed project would contribute considerably to significant cumulative pedestrian impacts.
- Construction of the proposed project would generate noise levels in excess of standards or result in substantial temporary increases in noise levels.
- Operation of the proposed project could result in the exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of the San Francisco Noise Ordinance or a substantial temporary, periodic or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity, above levels existing without the project.
- Construction of the proposed project would expose persons to or generate excessive groundborne vibration or ground-borne noise levels related to annoyance. Construction of the proposed project could expose persons to or generate excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels related to damage to buildings.
- Construction activities for the proposed project, in combination with other past, present, and reasonable future projects in the city, would result in a substantial temporary increase in noise or noise levels in excess of the applicable local standards.
- Construction activities associated with project-related development, in combination with other past, present, and reasonable future projects in the city, would expose sensitive receptors to excessive ground-borne vibration related to annoyance and could result in similar impacts related to damage to buildings. (Significant and Unavoidable for Annoyance).
- Operation of the proposed project, in combination with other past, present, and reasonable future projects in the city, would result in the exposure of persons to noise in excess of the applicable local standards or a substantial permanent ambient noise level increase in the project vicinity.

- Construction of the proposed project would generate fugitive dust and criteria air pollutants, which for criteria air pollutants but not fugitive dust, would violate an air quality standard, contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation, or result in a cumulatively considerable net increase in criteria air pollutants. (Significant and Unavoidable with Mitigation for Criteria Air Pollutants).
- During project operations, the proposed project would result in emissions of criteria air pollutants at levels that would violate an air quality standard, contribute to an existing or projected air quality violation, or result in a cumulatively considerable net increase in criteria air pollutants.
- During combined project construction and operations, the proposed project would result in emissions of criteria air pollutants at levels that would violate an air quality standard, contribute to an existing or projected air quality violation, or result in a cumulatively considerable net increase in criteria air pollutants.
- The proposed project's construction and operation, in combination with other past, present, and reasonable future projects, would contribute to cumulative regional air quality impacts.
- The proposed project would alter wind in a manner that would substantially affect public areas.
- The proposed project, in combination with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects, would alter wind in a manner that would substantially affect public areas.

All other impacts were found to be less than significant or less than significant with mitigation. The EIR determined that Variant 4 would not result in more severe or different impacts than those identified for the project, and all mitigation measure would apply to Variant 4.

Evaluation of the Modified Project Variant 4

The currently modification to Variant 4 would require that any hotel (up to 200,000-gsf) be placed in a building identified for commercial uses rather than a building identified for residential uses. This means that any hotel would replace up to 200,000 gsf of commercial use rather than the same amount of residential use (as proposed under Variant 4). However, there would be no change to the overall site plan, building footprints and heights, intensity of development, or intensity or duration of construction. The types of land uses would otherwise be the same as under the proposed project. Thus, impacts to land use and land use planning, aesthetics, cultural resources, noise, air quality, wind and shadow, public services and recreation, utilities and service systems, biological resources, geology and soils, hydrology and water quality, and hazardous materials would be the same as those identified in the certified EIR for Variant 4.

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Replacing 200,000 gsf of commercial use rather than 200,000 gsf of residential uses (an estimated 200 two-bedroom units) would not change the range of permitted residential uses (1.1 to 1.6 million gross square feet) studied in the EIR under the proposed project. The proposed modification to Variant 4, therefore, would not result in any new or more severe impacts on population and housing than the version of Variant 4 that was analyzed in the EIR.

The modified Project Variant 4 would also result in fewer trips. This is because trip generation is higher for commercial uses than for residential uses. By the proposed hotel replacing commercial use rather than residential use, the modification to Variant 4 would replace the higher trip generating use (commercial use). Thus, the modification to Variant 4 would likely result in a reduction in trips compared to the version of Variant 4 that was studied in the EIR. Therefore, the modified Variant 4 would also not create any new or more severe impacts on transportation and circulation than the version of Variant 4 that was studied in the EIR.

For these reasons, the modified Variant 4 would have the same impacts as were identified for Variant 4 that was studied in the EIR, and would not result in more severe or different impacts than what were identified in the EIR. Because there are no new impacts, the modified Variant 4 does not trigger any mitigation measure not already disclosed in the EIR and does not warrant subsequent environmental review.

CONCLUSION

For the reasons articulated above, the modification to Variant 4 does not constitute a substantial modification pursuant to Administrative Code Section 31.19(a), and would not create any new or more severe environmental impacts. Based on the analysis, this memorandum finds that no further environmental review is required for the modified project Variant 4.