



# PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION NO. 21554

**HEARING DATE: MAY 2, 2024**

**Project Name:** Wawona Street and 45th Avenue Cultural Center Special Use District  
**Case Number:** 2024-002677PCA [Board File No. 240228]  
**Initiated by:** Supervisors Joel Engardio, Aaron Peskin / Introduced March 12, 2024  
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**RESOLUTION APPROVING A PROPOSED ORDINANCE THAT WOULD AMEND THE PLANNING CODE TO CLARIFY THE WAWONA STREET AND 45TH AVENUE SPECIAL USE DISTRICT'S (ORDINANCE NO. 241-23) HEIGHT LIMIT AND PRINCIPAL PERMITTED USE FOR PURPOSES OF THE CITY'S LOCAL COASTAL PROGRAM, AMEND THE CITY'S LOCAL COASTAL PROGRAM TO ADD THE WAWONA STREET AND 45TH AVENUE CULTURAL CENTER SPECIAL USE DISTRICT, AND AMEND THE LOCAL COASTAL PROGRAM (PLANNING CODE SECTION 330) TO DESIGNATE THE PRINCIPAL PERMITTED USE WITHIN THE CITY'S COASTAL ZONE FOR PURPOSES OF APPEAL TO THE CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION; ADOPTING FINDINGS, INCLUDING ENVIRONMENTAL FINDINGS, PLANNING CODE SECTION 302 FINDINGS, AND FINDINGS OF CONSISTENCY WITH THE GENERAL PLAN AND PLANNING CODE SECTION 101.1.**

WHEREAS, on March 12, 2024, Supervisors Joel Engardio and Board President Aaron Peskin introduced a proposed Ordinance under Board of Supervisors (hereinafter "Board") File Number 240228, which would amend the Planning Code to clarify the Wawona Street and 45th Avenue Special Use District's (Ordinance No. 241-23) height limit and principal permitted use for purposes of the City's Local Coastal Program, amend the City's Local Coastal Program to add the Wawona Street and 45th Avenue Cultural Center Special Use District, and amend the Local Coastal Program (Planning Code Section 330) to designate the principal permitted use within the City's Coastal Zone for purposes of appeal to the California Coastal Commission;

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission (hereinafter "Commission") conducted a duly noticed public hearing at a regularly scheduled meeting to consider the proposed Ordinance on May 2, 2024; and,

WHEREAS, the proposed Ordinance has been determined to be exempt under Public Resources Code Section 21094.5 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.3 on July 17, 2023 (Planning Case No. 2022-001407ENV); and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission has heard and considered the testimony presented to it at the public hearing and has further considered written materials and oral testimony presented on behalf of Department staff and other interested parties; and

WHEREAS, all pertinent documents may be found in the files of the Department, as the Custodian of Records, at 49 South Van Ness Avenue, Suite 1400, San Francisco; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission has reviewed the proposed Ordinance; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission finds from the facts presented that the public necessity, convenience, and general welfare require the proposed amendment; and

MOVED, that the Planning Commission hereby **approves** the proposed ordinance.

## Findings

Having reviewed the materials identified in the preamble above, and having heard all testimony and arguments, this Commission finds, concludes, and determines as follows:

The Commission finds that the proposed Ordinance will support social, recreational, athletic, and cultural needs of the San Francisco and greater Bay Area Irish community and facilitate the redevelopment of a distinctive building that reflects the Irish heritage helps maintain a sense-of-place for the community. The Commission also finds that the proposed Ordinance will remove an unintended consequence of the Coastal Act and remove uncertainty in the regulatory review process for developments that advance the City's goals of providing housing, job, and business opportunities, fostering community, and promoting recreational activities.

## General Plan Compliance

The proposed Ordinance is consistent with the following Objectives and Policies of the General Plan:

### HOUSING ELEMENT

#### Goals, Objectives, and Policies

**GOAL 5. PROMOTE NEIGHBORHOODS THAT ARE WELL-CONNECTED, HEALTHY, AND RICH WITH COMMUNITY CULTURE.**

#### OBJECTIVE 5.C

**ELEVATE EXPRESSION OF CULTURAL IDENTITIES THROUGH THE DESIGN OF ACTIVE AND ENGAGING NEIGHBORHOOD BUILDINGS AND SPACES.**

Policy 37

Facilitate neighborhoods where proximity to daily needs and high-quality community services and amenities promotes social connections, supports caregivers, reduces the need for private auto travel, and advances healthy activities.

**COMMUNITY FACILITIES ELEMENT**

Objectives and Policies

**OBJECTIVE 3**

ASSURE THAT NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTS HAVE ACCESS TO NEEDED SERVICES AND A FOCUS FOR NEIGHBORHOOD ACTIVITIES.

Policy 3.1

Provide neighborhood centers in areas lacking adequate community facilities.

Policy 3.3

Develop centers to serve an identifiable neighborhood.

Policy 3.4

Locate neighborhood centers so they are easily accessible and near the natural center of activity.

Policy 3.5

Develop neighborhood centers that are multipurpose in character, attractive in design, secure and comfortable, and inherently flexible in meeting the current and changing needs of the neighborhood served.

Policy 3.6

Base priority for the development of neighborhood centers on relative need.

Policy 3.8

Provide neighborhood centers with a network of links to other neighborhood and citywide services.

**COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY ELEMENT**

Objectives and Policies

**OBJECTIVE 1**

MANAGE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND CHANGE TO ENSURE ENHANCEMENT OF THE TOTAL CITY LIVING AND WORKING ENVIRONMENT.

Policy 1.1

Encourage development which provides substantial net benefits and minimizes undesirable consequences. Discourage development which has substantial undesirable consequences that cannot be mitigated.

## OBJECTIVE 2

MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE A SOUND AND DIVERSE ECONOMIC BASE AND FISCAL STRUCTURE FOR THE CITY.

### Policy 2.1

Seek to retain existing commercial and industrial activity and to attract new such activity to the city.

### Policy 2.3

Maintain a favorable social and cultural climate in the city in order to enhance its attractiveness as a firm location.

## OBJECTIVE 3

PROVIDE EXPANDED EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR CITY RESIDENTS, PARTICULARLY THE UNEMPLOYED AND ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED.

### Policy 3.1

Promote the attraction, retention and expansion of commercial and industrial firms which provide employment improvement opportunities for unskilled and semi-skilled workers.

### Policy 3.2

Promote measures designed to increase the number of San Francisco jobs held by San Francisco residents.

*The Ordinance will facilitate the development of an expanded community facility for the United Irish Cultural Center, a longtime community member of the Outer Sunset neighborhood, within proximity to public transportation. The Ordinance will foster the development of a high-quality design and prominent mixed-use building that better meets the needs of an established community facility that provides recreational, educational, and civic opportunities for the residents of the Outer Sunset neighborhood. The Ordinance will also preserve an important part of San Francisco and its Irish community's history.*

## WESTERN SHORELINE AREA PLAN

### TRANSPORTATION AND ACCESS

## OBJECTIVE 1

IMPROVE PUBLIC TRANSIT ACCESS TO THE COAST.

### Policy 1.2

Provide transit connections amongst the important coastal recreational destinations.

### Policy 1.4

Provide incentives for transit usage.

*Located less than a block from the 18 and 23 bus lines and less than a quarter mile from L-MUNI line, the proposed Ordinance and associated development will increase transit usage and further increase public access to the immediate neighborhood and coast. The associated development will implement a Transportation Demand*

*Management (TDM) plan that intends to decrease the number of single occupancy vehicle trips, and the pressures they add to San Francisco's limited public streets and rights-of-way, contributing to congestion, transit delays, and public health and safety concerns caused by motorized vehicles, air pollution, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and noise, thereby negatively impacting the quality of life in the City. Specifically for the immediate neighborhood of the subject site, the concern is the pressure that potential increase in demand for on-street parking associated with private businesses spills over to public beach parking, thereby limiting coastal access to only those people who live within walking or biking distance of the shoreline. The TDM plan includes providing real time transportation information displays at the site, multimodal wayfinding signage, tailored marketing and communication campaigns for employees and attendees of the site and improving walking conditions. As part of the development, the adjacent sidewalk will increase in width, new street trees will be planted, and new ADA ramps and bulbout will be provided at the intersection of Wawona Street and 45<sup>th</sup> Avenue.*

*In addition to incentivizing transit usage, the proposed Ordinance and associated development will also encourage other means of transportation to the site and immediate neighborhood. As part of the TDM plan, the development will provide four car-share spaces on site and 86 bicycle parking spaces either on site or within the adjacent public-right-of-way. Bicycle parking is a prominent form of transportation in the immediate neighborhood. The location of the development is located less than four blocks from Great Highway, a prominent recreational and bike trail along the coast. Attendees and employees traveling by bicycle and looking to enjoy the Great Highway can easily access it via a connecting bike lane along Sloat Boulevard, directly south of the site.*

*The proposed Ordinance will facilitate a development that includes 54 off-street parking spaces, including ADA passenger spaces, and commercial loading spaces along the public-right-of-way. As identified in the project specific transportation study, the proposed development will generate an estimated 352 net new vehicle trips during the weekday p.m. peak hour, including 334 trips by vehicle and 18 trips by taxi or transportation network company. However, the project site is located in an area where existing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) is more than 15 percent below the existing Bay Area regional average VMT per capita (or employee). The associated development would not cause substantial additional VMT nor create significant public transit delay impacts. The number of proposed off-street parking spaces at the site will not generate a significant volume of vehicular traffic such that public transit operations on nearby roadways would be affected.*

## **OCEAN BEACH**

### **OBJECTIVE 6**

#### **MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE THE RECREATIONAL USE OF SAN FRANCISCO'S OCEAN BEACH SHORELINE.**

##### **Policy 6.1**

Continue Ocean Beach as a natural beach area for public recreation.

##### **Policy 6.5**

Enhance the enjoyment of visitors to Ocean Beach by providing convenient visitor-oriented services, including take-out food facilities.

*The proposed Ordinance and associated development will also not significantly impact the enjoyment of the adjacent recreation areas or parks nor impact any candidate, sensitive, or special-status species, wetlands as*

*defined by section 404 of the Clean Water Act, riparian habitat, or any other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations. The site does not contain any candidate, sensitive, or special-status species, wetlands as defined by section 404 of the Clean Water Act, riparian habitat, or any other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations.*

*A geotechnical investigation was prepared for the proposed development that reviewed available geologic and geotechnical data in the site vicinity to develop preliminary recommendations regarding soil and groundwater conditions, site seismicity and seismic hazards, the most appropriate foundation type(s) for the proposed structure, and construction considerations, among other topics. The geotechnical report includes recommendations related to construction, including site preparation and grading, seismic design, foundations, retaining walls, slab-on-grade floors, site drainage, underpinning, temporary and finished slopes, and temporary shoring. Implementation of these recommendations, which would be overseen by the Department of Building Inspection, would ensure that the proposed project would not cause the soil underlying the project site to become unstable and result in on or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse. The potential for risk of loss, injury, or death related to landslides of liquefaction would be low as the site is also not in within landslide or liquefaction hazard zones, Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone, nor within a 100-year flood hazard zone, or a tsunami or seiche hazard area.*

*Additionally, the proposed Ordinance and associated development is the culmination of a collaborative effort between the applicants, United Irish Cultural Center, and the community. Prior to the submittal of the required applications, the applicants conducted a Pre-Application Meeting on August 4, 2021 and subsequently held a kick-off meeting on August 28, 2021. Both meetings were well attended. Since the kick-off meeting, the applicants have continued to provide community members with updates via a monthly newsletter and a dedicated website.*

## **RICHMOND AND SUNSET RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS**

### **OBJECTIVE 11**

#### **PRESERVE THE SCALE OF RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT ALONG THE COASTAL ZONE AREA.**

##### **Policy 11.3**

Continue the enforcement of citywide housing policies, ordinances and standards regarding the provision of safe and convenient housing to residents of all income levels, especially low- and moderate-income people.

##### **Policy 11.7**

Maintain a community business district along Sloat Boulevard within the Coastal Zone to provide goods and services to residents of the outer Sunset and visitors to the Zoo and Ocean Beach.

*The proposed Ordinance will eliminate an unintended consequence of the Coastal Act. By identifying a principally permitted land use for the purposes of the Coastal Act, an uncertainty from regulatory review processes will be removed for the identified land uses (i.e. housing) that are already permitted by the Planning Code within their respective Zoning Districts. The identified land uses reflect the City's goals in advancing housing, business, and job opportunities, and in fostering community within neighborhoods.*



*The proposed Ordinance and associated Project will also reinforce and enhance the existing commercial corridor along Sloat Boulevard that includes the Zoo and Ocean Beach by introducing new patrons to the area. The surrounding neighborhood includes variety of land uses including residential, restaurant, motel, retail, and the Zoo. As one of the few community facilities on the west side of the City, the proposed new and improved community facility, operated by the United Irish Cultural Center, will continue to serve as a recreational outlet aside from the coast and Zoo and continue to enhance the lives of its community members by providing a space for informal activities and programs related to recreation, education and civic concerns of all age groups. While the center's programming will have a focus on preserving and reflecting the history of Irish community, the center will continue to enhance the community life of Outer Sunset residents by providing a space for all recreational, educational, and civic activities. Having served the community for more than 45 years, the United Irish Cultural Center, a non-profit organization, has deep roots in the neighborhood and is a respected and beloved member of the Parkside and Outer Sunset communities. For these reasons, supporters of the center include Cub Scout Park 0108, the Kennelly School of Irish Dance, Michel Dillion School of Irish Dance, SF Connaught Social and Athletic Club, and more than 260 public members,*

*Designed with an eye on reflecting the history and aspirations of the Irish community, the proposed mixed-use building to be facilitated by the proposed Ordinance will be prominent high-quality design that incorporate elements of the Irish culture including blue Kilkenny limestone and a rooftop that represents the four provinces of Ireland. The rooftop will be designed to include a roof deck that faces the coast and provides a view onto the Pacific Ocean. Located more than four blocks from the coast, the proposed building will not impact protected views to and along the ocean and scenic coastal areas. As a new and improved United Irish Cultural Center with public and civic importance, the building warrants a prominent design. The surrounding neighborhood is characterized by a mix of buildings with a variety of building heights, architectural styles, and materials. While there is a majority of smaller scale, one-to-three story residential and commercial buildings immediately adjacent to the subject property, the property is located within close proximity to a commercial corridor that includes buildings that are taller and bigger in size including a five-story-over-basement development at 2800 Sloat Boulevard.*

### **Planning Code Section 101 Findings**

The proposed amendments to the Planning Code are consistent with the eight Priority Policies set forth in Section 101.1(b) of the Planning Code in that:

1. That existing neighborhood-serving retail uses be preserved and enhanced and future opportunities for resident employment in and ownership of such businesses enhanced;

*The proposed Ordinance would not have a negative effect on neighborhood serving retail uses and will not have a negative effect on opportunities for resident employment in and ownership of neighborhood-serving retail.*

2. That existing housing and neighborhood character be conserved and protected in order to preserve the cultural and economic diversity of our neighborhoods;

*The proposed Ordinance would not have a negative effect on housing or neighborhood character.*

3. That the City's supply of affordable housing be preserved and enhanced;

*The proposed Ordinance would not have an adverse effect on the City's supply of affordable housing.*

4. That commuter traffic not impede MUNI transit service or overburden our streets or neighborhood parking;

*The proposed Ordinance would not result in commuter traffic impeding MUNI transit service or overburdening the streets or neighborhood parking.*

5. That a diverse economic base be maintained by protecting our industrial and service sectors from displacement due to commercial office development, and that future opportunities for resident employment and ownership in these sectors be enhanced;

*The proposed Ordinance would not cause displacement of the industrial or service sectors due to office development, and future opportunities for resident employment or ownership in these sectors would not be impaired.*

6. That the City achieve the greatest possible preparedness to protect against injury and loss of life in an earthquake;

*The proposed Ordinance would not have an adverse effect on City's preparedness against injury and loss of life in an earthquake.*

7. That the landmarks and historic buildings be preserved;

*The proposed Ordinance would not have an adverse effect on the City's Landmarks and historic buildings.*

8. That our parks and open space and their access to sunlight and vistas be protected from development;

*The proposed Ordinance would not have an adverse effect on the City's parks and open space and their access to sunlight and vistas.*

### **Planning Code Section 302 Findings.**

The Planning Commission finds from the facts presented that the public necessity, convenience and general welfare require the proposed amendments to the Planning Code as set forth in Section 302.



NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Commission hereby APPROVES the proposed Ordinance as described in this Resolution.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was adopted by the Commission at its meeting on May 2, 2024.



Jonas P. Ionin  
Commission Secretary

**Jonas P Ionin**

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AYES: Williams, Braun, Imperial, Koppel, Moore, Diamond

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

ADOPTED: May 2, 2024