



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Planning Commission Resolution No. 18757

HEARING DATE DECEMBER 6, 2012

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Date: November 29, 2012
Case No.: **2008.0877EMTZU**
Project: *Western SoMa Community Plan –
Adoption of CEQA Findings*
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ADOPTING ENVIRONMENTAL FINDINGS AND A STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS UNDER THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT AND STATE GUIDELINES IN CONNECTION WITH THE ADOPTION OF THE WESTERN SOMA COMMUNITY PLAN AND RELATED ACTIONS NECESSARY TO IMPLEMENT SUCH PLAN.

WHEREAS, the Planning Department, the Lead Agency responsible for the implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") has undertaken a planning and environmental review process for the proposed Western SoMa Community Plan and provided appropriate public hearings before the Planning Commission.

The Western SoMa community planning process began in 2001, originally as a part of Eastern Neighborhoods, with the goal of developing new zoning controls for the industrial portion of this neighborhood. The Western SoMa plan area, which focuses on the area roughly bounded by 7th Street, Mission Street, Division Street, and Bryant Street on the western portion of the plan area, and 7th Street, Harrison Street, 4th Street, and Townsend Street on the eastern portion of the plan area, was eventually removed from the Eastern Neighborhoods planning process.

On November 23, 2004 the Board of Supervisors passed Resolution No. 731-04 creating the Western SoMa Citizens Planning Task Force ("Task Force"). The Task Force was charged with conducting a comprehensive analysis of the Western SoMa plan area and developing recommendations, and specifically to:

- (1) Use existing zoning as the starting point for an analysis of land use decisions that will shape the future of the entire community;
- (2) Map and evaluate existing Residential Enclave Districts (REDs) and consider modifications to existing RED zoning map boundaries;
- (3) Recommend basic RED preservation policies including height, density and design guidelines;

- (4) Map and evaluate land uses proximate to existing and proposed REDs and develop basic height, density and design guidelines in order to provide a buffer between REDs and areas where more intense development might be allowed;
- (5) Map overall western SoMa existing land use conditions;
- (6) Recommend policies for the preservation of service and light industrial jobs, residential uses, and arts and entertainment opportunities;
- (7) Consider policies to guide increased heights and density along the major arterial streets where appropriate;
- (8) Recommend policies that promote more community-serving retail and commercial uses and that encourage improvements to transportation, open space, street safety, bicycle circulation, and mass transit; and
- (9) Develop recommendations to ensure that the creation of a future Folsom Boulevard be developed in such a manner as to complement all of the above referenced goals.

The Task Force, with assistance from the, Planning Department held numerous public workshops and worked with consultants throughout 2008, resulting in the publication of a Draft Western SoMa Community Plan in September 2008. An updated version of the plan was published in October 2011.

The Western SoMa Area Plan (“the Plan”) supports and builds on the Eastern Neighborhoods Plan’s vision for the traditionally industrial and mixed use areas in the eastern part of the City. The Plan complements the Eastern Neighborhoods Plan’s patterns of land use, urban form, public space, circulation, and historic preservation, and makes adjustments to this specific area based on today’s understanding of the issues and focused community outreach to the residents and workers in the area.

The Plan lays the policy foundation for additional changes that are detailed in the Planning Code, Zoning Map and other implementation measures. The following Key Principles inform all the objectives and policies contained in the Plan:

- Encourage new housing at appropriate locations and make it as affordable as possible to a range of City residents;
- Reserve sufficient space for production, distribution and repair activities, in order to support the City’s economy and provide good jobs for residents
- Generally maintain the existing scale and density of the neighborhood, allowing appropriate increases in strategic locations;

- Plan for transportation, open space, community facilities and other critical elements of complete neighborhoods;
- Protect and support the social heritage resources of the Filipino and LBGT communities within the plan area;
- Plan for new development that will serve the needs of existing residents and businesses; and
- Maintain and promote a diversity of land uses, and reserve new areas for arts activities and nighttime entertainment.

The San Francisco Planning Department is seeking to adopt and implement the Western SoMa Community Plan. The core policies and supporting discussion in the Plan have been incorporated into an Area Plan proposed to be added to the General Plan. The Area Plan, together with the General Plan, Planning Code, Zoning Map Amendments, and Implementation Document provide a comprehensive set of policies and implementation programming to realize the vision of the Plan. The Implementation Document outlines public improvements, funding mechanisms and interagency coordination the City must pursue to implement the Plan.

The actions listed in Attachment A hereto (“Actions”) are part of a series of considerations in connection with the adoption of the Western SoMa Community Plan and various implementation actions (“Project”), as more particularly described in Attachment A hereto.

The Planning Department determined that an Environmental Impact Report (hereinafter “EIR”) was required for the proposed Western SoMa Community Plan and provided public notice of that determination by publication in a newspaper of general circulation on August 11, 2009.

Notices of availability of the DEIR and of the date and time of the public hearing were posted in the project area by Department staff on June 20, 2012.

On June 20, 2012, copies of the DEIR were mailed or otherwise delivered to a list of persons requesting it, to those noted on the distribution list in the DEIR, to adjacent property owners, and to government agencies, the latter both directly and through the State Clearinghouse.

Notice of Completion was filed with the State Secretary of Resources via the State Clearinghouse on June 20, 2012.

The Commission held a duly advertised public hearing on said DEIR on July 26, 2012, at which opportunity for public comment was given, and public comment was received on the DEIR. The period for acceptance of written comments ended on August 6, 2012.

The Department prepared responses to comments on environmental issues received at the public hearing and in writing during the 60 day public review period for the DEIR, prepared revisions to the text of the DEIR in response to comments received or based on additional information that became available during the public review period, and corrected errors in the DEIR. This material

was presented in a Draft Comments and Responses document, published on November 21, 2012, distributed to the Commission and all parties who commented on the DEIR, and made available to others upon request at the Department.

A Final Environmental Impact Report (hereinafter "FEIR") was prepared by the Department, consisting of the DEIR, any consultations and comments received during the review process, any additional information that became available, and the Comments and Responses document all as required by law.

The Planning Commission, on December 6, 2012, by Motion No. 18756 reviewed and considered the FEIR and found that the contents of said report and the procedures through which the FEIR was prepared, publicized and reviewed complied with the provisions of CEQA, the CEQA Guidelines and Chapter 31 of the San Francisco Administrative Code.

Also by Motion No. 18756, the Planning Commission, finding that the FEIR was adequate, accurate and objective, reflected the independent judgment of the Planning Commission and that the Comments and Responses document contains no significant revisions to the DEIR, adopted findings of significant impacts associated with the Project and certified the completion of the FEIR for the Project in compliance with CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines.

The Planning Department prepared proposed Findings, as required by CEQA, including mitigation measures and significant environmental impacts analyzed in the FEIR, adoption of such measures, rejection of alternatives, and overriding considerations for approving the Project, including all of the actions listed in Attachment A hereto, and a proposed mitigation monitoring and reporting program, attached as Exhibit 1 to Attachment A. These materials were made available to the public and this Planning Commission for the Planning Commission's review, consideration, and actions.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Planning Commission has reviewed and considered the FEIR and hereby adopts the Project Findings attached hereto as Attachment A, including adoption of Exhibit 1, the mitigation monitoring and reporting program, and imposition of those mitigation measures in that are within the Planning Commission jurisdiction as project conditions, and incorporates the same herein by this reference.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Planning Commission at its regular meeting of December 6, 2012.

Jonas P. Ionin
Acting Commission Secretary

AYES: Antonini, Borden, Fong, Hillis, Moore, Sugaya, and Wu

NOES:

ABSENT:

ADOPTED: December 6, 2012