



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

General Plan Referral

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Date: June 30, 2015
Case No. 2015-007815GPR
490 South Van Ness Avenue – Purchase property for new
affordable housing project

Block/Lot No: 3553/008

Project Sponsors: John Updike, Director
San Francisco Real Estate Department
25 Van Ness Avenue, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94102

Applicant: Same as Above

Staff Contact: Nicholas Perry – (415) 575-9066
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Recommendation: Finding the project, on balance, is in conformity with the
General Plan

Recommended
By: 
John Rahaim, Director of Planning

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

On June 22, 2015, the Planning Department (herein “the Department”) received a request from the City and County of San Francisco Real Estate Division on behalf of the Mayor’s Office of Housing and Community Development (MOHCD) to consider the acquisition of the property at 490 South Van Ness Avenue. MOHCD is proposing to purchase the site in order to develop it as an affordable rental housing project. It is currently vacant and was previously used as a gasoline station. The property is fully entitled for a 72 unit multifamily development and, if acquired by MOHCD, would be developed as 100% affordable rental housing for families making no more than 50% of area median income (AMI). 20% of units would be set aside for homeless families making less than 30% AMI.

This project does not propose any additional development, land use changes, or changes to the right-of-way that have not already been approved. This action is simply to acquire the property for MOHCD ownership.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The effects of the project were fully reviewed under the Eastern Neighborhoods Area Plan EIR certified by the San Francisco Planning Commission on 8/7/08, by Motion No. 17661. On 6/24/14, the project was determined to be consistent with the Eastern Neighborhoods Area Plan EIR and exempt from environmental review per CEQA Guidelines Section 15183 (Planning Case No. 2010.0043E).

GENERAL PLAN COMPLIANCE AND BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION

As described below, the Project is consistent with the Eight Priority Policies of Planning Code Section 101.1 and is, on balance, in-conformity with the following Objectives and Policies of the General Plan:

Note: General Plan Objectives and Policies are in **bold font**; General Plan text is in regular font. Staff comments are in *italic font*.

Housing Element

OBJECTIVE 1

IDENTIFY AND MAKE AVAILABLE FOR DEVELOPMENT ADEQUATE SITES TO MEET THE CITY'S HOUSING NEEDS, ESPECIALLY PERMANENTLY AFFORDABLE HOUSING.

POLICY 1.3

Work proactively to identify and secure opportunity sites for permanently affordable housing.

The proposed property acquisition will allow an abandoned gas station to be replaced with 72 new affordable housing units.

POLICY 1.8

Promote mixed use development, and include housing, particularly permanently affordable housing, in new commercial, institutional or other single use development projects.

The proposed property acquisition would allow for the construction of permanently affordable housing over a 655 square foot ground floor retail space.

POLICY 1.10

Support new housing projects, especially affordable housing, where households can easily rely on public transportation, walking and bicycling for the majority of daily trips.

The proposed property is located in a transit-rich, walkable, and bike-friendly neighborhood, just two blocks from the 16th Street BART station and served by multiple Muni bus lines.

OBJECTIVE 4

FOSTER A HOUSING STOCK THAT MEETS THE NEEDS OF ALL RESIDENTS ACROSS LIFECYCLES.

POLICY 4.4

Encourage sufficient and suitable rental housing opportunities, emphasizing permanently affordable rental units wherever possible.

The proposed property acquisition will allow an abandoned gas station to be replaced with 72 new affordable rental housing units.

OBJECTIVE 6

REDUCE HOMELESSNESS AND THE RISK OF HOMELESSNESS.

POLICY 6.1

Prioritize permanent housing and service-enriched solutions while pursuing both short- and long-term strategies to eliminate homelessness.

If purchased by MOHCD, 20% of the project's units will be set aside for homeless families making less than 30% area median income (AMI).

OBJECTIVE 8

BUILD PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR CAPACITY TO SUPPORT, FACILITATE, PROVIDE AND MAINTAIN AFFORDABLE HOUSING.

POLICY 8.1

Support the production and management of permanently affordable housing.

The proposed property acquisition will allow for the production of a permanently affordable housing project.

Eight Priority Policies Findings

The subject project is found to be consistent with the Eight Priority Policies of Planning Code Section 101.1 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 property acquisition will not negatively affect existing neighborhood-serving retail uses or opportunities for employment in or ownership of such businesses. The new development will, however, provide new affordable housing for residents who may support such businesses in the surrounding area.
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 property acquisition would not displace any existing housing and would provide an additional 72 affordable rental housing units and will help preserve the cultural and economic diversity of the Mission.
3. That the City's supply of affordable housing be preserved and enhanced.
The proposed property acquisition will increase the stock of permanent affordable housing in the City.
4. That commuter traffic not impede Muni transit service or overburden our streets or neighborhood parking.
The proposed property acquisition will not result in commuter traffic impeding Muni's transit service, overburdening the streets or altering current neighborhood parking.

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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 residential employment and ownership in these sectors be enhanced.

The proposed property acquisition would not affect the existing economic base in this area.

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

The proposed property acquisition would not affect the City's preparedness to protect against injury and loss of life in an earthquake.

7. That landmarks and historic buildings be preserved.

The proposed property acquisition will not affect landmarks or historic buildings.

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

The proposed property acquisition will not affect City parks or open spaces, or their access to sunlight and vistas.

RECOMMENDATION:	Finding the Project, on balance, in-conformity with the General Plan
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cc: John Updike, Real Estate Division

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