

Planning Commission Staff Report

February 13, 2008
Item 5.a.

SUBJECT:	PDR-645
APPLICANT:	Howard Parsell
PROPERTY OWNER:	Steve Chess
PURPOSE:	Application for design review approval to construct multi-tenant buildings totaling 70,575 square feet with landscaping and lot improvement.
LOCATION:	3700 Boulder Street
GENERAL PLAN:	General and Limited Industrial
ZONING:	I-G-40 (General Industrial) District
ATTACHMENTS	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Exhibit A -- Site Plan, Floor Plan, Elevations, Grading and Drainage Plan, Landscape Plan, and Colored Building One Perspectives, date "Received January 11, 2008"; LEED Scorecard2. Exhibit B -- Draft Conditions of Approval3. Exhibit C -- Chess Commercial Project Traffic Study4. Exhibit D -- I-P/L-I Zoning Districts5. Location Map

BACKGROUND

In July 2006, the City approved a minor subdivision to divide an existing 6.61-acre site into three parcels (Case No. PMS-54), located at the northwest corner of Boulder Street and Boulder Court adjacent to the Quarry Lane School. In December 2007, the three-lot parcel map (Parcel Map 9014) was recorded by the Alameda County Recorder.

The zoning district is the I-G-40,000 and allows both permitted and conditionally permitted uses in accordance with both the I-P (Industrial Park) and the L-I (Light Industrial) zoning districts. The applicant does not intend on changing the uses that are currently allowed in these districts.

The site is currently being used for recreational vehicle/trailer storage.

The applicant has submitted a design review application to construct four multi-tenant industrial-office type buildings similar to the industrial-offices buildings on Boulder Court. The proposed development does not function well related to the newly created parcels based on the recent minor subdivision and will require a lot line adjustment be processed.

The subject site is one of the last parcels within the Boulder Street industrial zoned development areas. The proposed project meets the development standards and wishes to adhere to the allowed and conditionally allowed uses per the zoning, therefore a planned unit development is not being processed.

The project is before the Planning Commission for consideration and approval. Staff notes that design review applications do not continue to the City Council unless otherwise appealed.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The subject site is a generally flat, in-fill lot approximately 5.15-acres in size. The site is currently paved for recreational vehicle/ trailer storage. The only access to and from the site is via an existing driveway that is located on Boulder Street near the west property line adjacent to the Quarry Lane School. There are no existing sidewalks on either Boulder Street or Boulder Court.



Aerial View of the Site

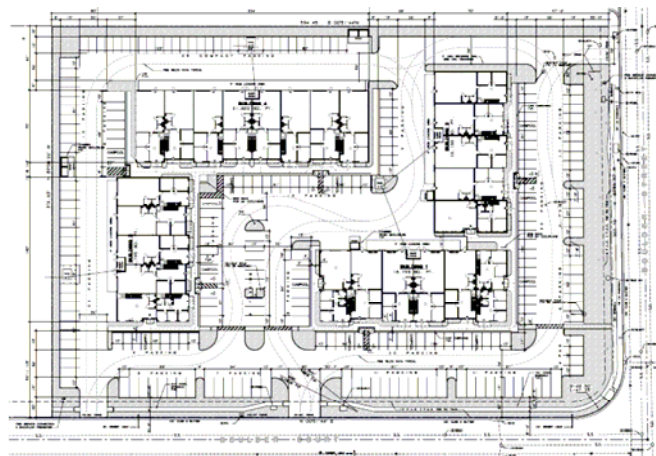
The site has a gentle slope (1.5%) from southeast to the northwest with an elevation difference of approximately seven feet.

The surrounding uses include: light industrial, office uses to the east and south; utility vault manufacturing to the north; light industrial and office uses to the west; and Quarry Lane School and Valley Business Park to the west. Union Pacific railroad tracks are located to the further south; and that residential uses (California Reflections) are located south of the railroad track, approximately 650 feet from the southern end of the proposed development. An approximately 12-foot tall masonry sound wall separates the railroad tracks and the residential properties.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposal includes the following:

- Construct four, two-story office-industrial buildings with the following square-footage breakdown:
 - Building One: 18,793 square feet
 - Building Two: 15,135 square feet
 - Building Three: 14,795 square feet
 - Building Four: 21,852 square feet
- Construct sidewalks along both Boulder Street and Boulder Court
- Construct two new driveways on Boulder Court
- 240 On-Site Parking Spaces
- On-Site Landscaping



Site Plan

Although proposal is for two-story buildings, the floor area on the second floor is significantly smaller; up to 50% less in square footage than the ground level. This mezzanine area would be primarily used as additional office area.

The proposed buildings would a concrete tilt-up with earthtone colors and fabric canopies that break up the wall massing. Two covered trash enclosures, complementary to the architectural style of the buildings, will be located on the north and west sides of the property and screened by landscaping.



ANALYSIS

General Plan and Zoning Land Use

The General Plan land use designation for the subject site is General and Limited Industrial. The I-G-40,000 (General Industrial) is consistent with the General Plan land use designation.

The proposed industrial-office building meets the City's land use standards and is also consistent with the General Plan designation.

The I-G-40 (General Industrial) is the second heaviest industrial zoning classification in the City. In this zoning district, offices, warehouses, building materials assembly, and woodworking shops are permitted uses. Refer to Exhibit D for a list of the allowed uses.

The uses allowed or conditionally allowed at the subject site would be those similar and/or complementary to the existing uses located on Boulder Court and within the adjacent Valley Business Park.

Development Standards

The project would adhere to the floor area ratio (FAR) requirement of the Municipal Code. The 5.13-acre project area proposes an FAR of a 31.6%, whereas a 100% maximum FAR is allowed per the applicable zoning district (I-G-40). The project would also adhere to the maximum

height requirement. A maximum height of 28-feet, measured from finished grade to the parapet, is proposed, whereas a 40-foot maximum height is allowed per the applicable zoning district.

The I-G-40,000 development standards require that accessory structures be located 10 feet from the side property line and 25 feet from the rear property line. The proposed trash enclosure located on the west side of the property needs to be adjusted so that it would be located outside the 10-foot sideyard setback area. The second trash enclosure located on the south side of the property needs to be relocated so that it would adhere to the rear yard setback requirement of 25-feet. Staff has added a condition of approval to address this, and the applicant has agreed to this condition of approval.

The proposed project meets the development standards and wishes to adhere to the allowed and conditionally allowed uses per the zoning, therefore a planned unit development is not being processed.

Traffic Considerations

The purpose of a traffic study is to evaluate what impacts a specific project may have on the street system and what, if any, additional improvements ought to be provided to mitigate a development. A traffic study was done in December 2006 for the Chess Commercial Center; which included approximately 140,000 square-feet on two lots (530 and 3700 Boulder Court). The traffic study found that based on the development for the entire square-footage, the level of service was not changed at any intersections, however, some intersections that are already at a level of service E or F received additional traffic. The study also recommended improvements to the left turn lane at Valley at Boulder. Since the study was prepared, two separate projects have been proposed. The project at 530 Boulder Court was recently approved by the Planning Commission for the construction of an approximately 35,000 square-feet. This proposal is for combined 70,575 square-feet. The overall square-footage has decreased since the traffic study was completed. Given that the square-footage of the two projects has decreased, the traffic engineer determined that a new traffic study is not required. However, improvements to the Valley Avenue at Boulder Street left turn pocket will still be required along with traffic impact fees that will be paid by the developer to help with future improvements at the LOS E and F intersections. Staff has added a condition of approval to address this, and the applicant has agreed to this condition of approval.

Although it is not reflected on the site plan, the existing driveway abutting the west property line would be relocated easterly approximately 150 feet. This relocation considers the adjacent use (the Quarry Lane School). It would then provide an adequate sight distance between this driveway and that of the Quarry Lane School's, thus, avoiding vehicles mingling with children. Staff has added a condition of approval to address this, and the applicant has agreed to this condition of approval.

Parking

The new driveways and the parking lot would be constructed subject to City standards. Any loading and unloading would occur on site (not on Boulder Street or Boulder Court). A total of 240 parking spaces are proposed, which is equivalent to once space per 294 square feet of building area, exceeding the required one space per 300 square feet of the building area. Therefore, the proposed parking exceeds the minimum number of parking spaces required for this project by five parking spaces.

Staff is satisfied with the proposed parking since it would exceed the expected demand for future tenants, whether permitted or conditionally permitted uses.

Noise

All uses on the lot would be required to meet the City's Noise Ordinance and General Plan noise policies.

Site Design

The site is well laid out and provides screening to the on-site parking while providing appropriate building setbacks. Landscaped areas border the site and are incorporated along the building driveway entrance and along the parking islands.

With the relocation of the existing driveway on Boulder Street, the proposed development would not only provide the desired access and circulation for the business park, and it would also provide a safe ingress and egress solution for other businesses on the same street.

Building Design

As proposed, the buildings would be concrete tilt-up buildings which would be compatible to the existing architectural style on Boulder Court. . The building facade is significantly articulated to reduce and vary the buildings form and volume. Staff believes that the applicant has designed buildings that are functional yet attractive. The building colors would be beige earth tones with fabric awnings and paint bands as accent features. Staff believes the design and the colors would be appropriate and would blend in well with the existing buildings on Boulder Court.

Grading

As noted, the site is generally flat and would require that some grading would be performed. The project engineer has calculated that approximately 87,560 cubic feet of cut and approximately 92,614 cubic feet of fill would be needed for project. This calculation would bring in approximately 5,000 cubic feet of fill material to the site. To ensure that the

construction of the project would have minimal impacts to the adjacent businesses, staff recommends that no hauling trucks be allowed to travel through Valley Business Park.

A condition of approval is included to address this condition and the applicant has agreed to this condition of approval.

Landscaping

The conceptual landscape plan illustrates the design concepts for the landscape treatments for the site. A variety of trees and shrubs are proposed, consisting of 15-gallon size trees and 5-gallon size shrubs. The landscape plan includes native plantings with flowering trees that assist in softening the appearance of the structure and promotes maintaining an attractive street façade and site entrances. Staff believes that the proposed landscaping plan is appropriate for the area and the project location.

Lighting

The project developer will be required to submit a final lighting plan for the exterior of the building and for the parking lot for the review and approval by the Planning Director prior to issuance of building permits. The lighting plan shall be consistent with Section 20.36.110, “Commercial Buildings—Lighting,” of the Pleasanton Municipal Code. Staff has added a condition to address this issue.

Signage

No signage currently proposed. If the applicant wishes to add signage, the proposal would be processed through the standard City procedures for sign design review. A condition has been added that the applicant will submit for a sign program prior to installation of any signs.

Urban Stormwater Runoff Measures

The project engineer has been in contact with the Engineering/Public Works Department regarding the stormwater runoff requirements. The proposed grading and drainage plan appears to meet those requirements based on a preliminary review of the conceptual plans. To ensure that the bio-swales would function adequately for the site, a condition of approval has been added requiring that the applicant submit a final storm drainage plan, subject to the review and approval by the City Engineer, prior to the issuance of a building permit.

Green Building

The City’s Green Building Ordinance requires projects containing 20,000 square-feet or more of conditioned floor area to meet a LEED™ “certified” level, which is equal to a score of 26-32 credit points on the LEED Green Building Checklist. Since the project has a combined building area of 70,575 square-feet, it is required to meet a “certified” rating. The applicants have

provided staff with a LEED checklist that indicates that the project will incorporate green building measures that would qualify for 26 credit points; which meets the Cities LEED “Certified” rating as required by the City’s Green Building Ordinance.

Building and Fire Code Compliance

The project would be required to comply with all current Building and Fire Code requirements. Per these requirements, the applicant would be required to fire sprinkler the building. The applicant has also agreed to provide one fire hydrant on the southwest and one on the east side of the building. The site has also been designed to provide adequate turnaround for fire trucks along each corner of the building. All of the buildings will be required to be sprinklered.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice of this application was sent to surrounding property owners and tenants within 1,000-feet of the site. At the time this report was prepared, staff had not received any comments or concerns.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

In-fill development projects on sites of five acres or less are categorically exempt (In-fill Development: 15332(32)(a-e)) from CEQA. Considerations for this classification is that a site would not have habitat for endangered, rare, or threatened species, that the development can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services, that the site is consistent with the General Plan and zoning regulations, and that the development would have no significant effects on traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality. Staff believes that the project meets the conditions of the Class 32 exemptions and therefore, no environmental document accompanies this report

CONCLUSION

The project, as conditioned, would be consistent with the General Plan, Zoning and design review criteria and provide an attractive design compatible in appearance to the existing light industrial buildings on Boulder Court as well as other buildings in the surrounding area. The development of this site completes the building within this area and will provide a unique product type that is in high demand.

Therefore, staff believes that the proposed development would be an attractive addition to the community and merits a favorable recommendation from the Planning Commission.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission approve PDR-645, subject to the conditions in Exhibit “B”.

Staff Planner: Jenny Soo, Associate Planner, 925.931.5615, or email at: jsoo@ci.pleasanton.ca.us