



Planning Commission Staff Report

January 10, 2007
Staff Report
Item 6.a.

SUBJECT: PUD-56

APPLICANTS/

PROPERTY OWNERS: Michael Aminian and Mohsen Sadri

PURPOSE: Application for PUD development plan approval to allow three new single-family homes on an approximately 2.45-acre parcel.

SPECIFIC PLAN: Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan, Lot #6

ZONING: PUD-LDR/OS (Planned Unit Development-Low Density Residential/Open Space) District

LOCATION: 865 Clara Lane

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Location Map
2. Exhibit A, Dated "Received June 28, 2006", Including Site Plan, Topographic Plan, Grading and Drainage Plan, Landscaping Plan, Floor Plans, Elevation Drawings, Color and Material Board, Photo Simulation, and Green Points Scorecard and Tree Report by HortScience Dated "Received May 18, 2006", Open Space Ownership and Maintenance Plan, and Geotechnical Peer Review Reports by Alan Kropp and Associates Dated "Received September 29, 2006" and "November 22, 2006", and Geotechnical Reports by Korbmacher Engineering Inc. Dated "Received June 28, 2006" and "Received October 23, 2006"
3. Exhibit B, Draft Conditions of Approval
4. Exhibit C, Photographs of the Subject Property and Clara Lane
5. Exhibit D, Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan Land Use Map and Residential Development Standards
6. Exhibit E, Copy of the Approved Site Plan for "Hatsushi Estates", Copy of the One-Story Home Requirement, and Copy of the Approved Tract Map for Beratlis, Including the One-Story Home Requirement

7. Exhibit F, Road Improvement Plan for Clara Lane
8. Exhibit G, Public Comments

BACKGROUND

The proposed project is within the 384-acre Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan area located in the eastern portion of Pleasanton. The Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan is intended to facilitate a smooth transition between the urban edge of Pleasanton to the west and the Ruby Hill development to the south.

The Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan divides the plan area into three subareas based on land use, topography, and environmental characteristics. This parcel is located in Subarea 1, on the western portion of the plan area, adjacent to several existing single-family residential neighborhoods—Victoria Meadows, Vintage Heights II, Vista Diablo, and Foxbrough Estates. This gently to moderately sloped area is zoned for low-density residential development, several small open space areas, and a community park. The architecture of the new homes is to match the traditional architecture styles of the homes in the nearby neighborhoods. This subarea contains 78 acres (20 percent of the plan area) and consists of residential lots in varying stages of development ranging in size from 0.9 acres to 20 acres. Some of the parcels in the subarea area have already been subdivided and developed with new low density residential homes, such as the “Clara Lane” development by Delco Builders located at the intersection of Clara Lane and Vineyard Avenue. A PUD development plan for 13 new residential units on the Hatsushi property, immediately to the west of the subject property, was approved by the City Council in June 2006.

Subject Property

The subject property is a 2.45-acre site. There is an existing one-story home on the southern portion of the lot, and various accessory structures, such as stables, which are proposed to be removed as part of this development. Near the eastern property line, there is an existing concrete driveway and a groundwater well. The lot has a moderate slope, sloping downward from south to north, and a moderate cross slope, sloping downward from east to west. There is some domestic landscaping and trees near the existing residence at the rear of the property.

Surrounding Area

New and existing residential developments surrounding the property are shown in the aerial photograph and described in Table 1, both on the following page.

Table 1: Surrounding Uses

Direction	Development
North	Jardin property consisting of one single-family home on 2.66 acres, 2 additional new homes allowed per the Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan
East	Nespor property consisting of one single-family home on 2.49 acres, 1 additional new home allowed per the Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan
West	“Hatsushi Estates” consisting of 13 new single-family homes on 20,000 to 35,000 square foot lots
South	“Foxbrough Estates” consisting of single-family homes on 16,000 square foot to 2.74 acre lots

Figure 1: New/Existing Developments Surrounding the Aminian-Sadri Property



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The property owners Mr. Aminian and Mr. Sadri desire to receive PUD development plan approval to subdivide one 2.45 acre parcel into three lots and to construct three new two-story single-family detached homes ranging from approximately 5,060 to 5,500 square feet in size with 3-4 car attached garages, and related site improvements. Each home will have a different design and will have stucco siding. The house on Lot 3 will include some stone detailing.

The proposed lots will vary in size from approximately 27,700 square feet to 44,240 square feet. On the northernmost lot (Lot 3), a conservation open space easement will be recorded over the area designated as “Open Space”, per the Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan.

The existing groundwater well will be relocated onto Lot 3. The well water will be used for irrigation purposes only. As required by the City, each lot using the well water will need a backflow prevention device.

ANALYSIS

The new homes have been designed in substantial conformance to those specified in the Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan.

Table 2: Site Development Standards

Standard	Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan	Proposed Project
Minimum Lot Size	20,000 sq. ft. min.	approx. 27,000 sq. ft. min.
Front Yard Setback ¹	30 ft. min.	30 ft. ²
Side Yard Setback	15 ft. min.	15 ft.
Rear Yard Setback	30 ft. min.	30 ft.
Height	30 ft. max.	30 ft.
Floor Area Ratio	No set standard	13-18%
Number of Parking Spaces	No set standard	3-4 garage spaces at each home

- (1) Per the Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan, accessory structures must be set back a minimum of 10 feet from the rear and side property lines, and no accessory structures are permitted within the required front yard. To provide a better separation between the lots and to minimize future grading, staff has added a recommended condition of approval that accessory structures adhere to the same minimum setbacks as the principal structures. The applicants have agreed to this condition of approval.
- (2) The front yard setback on Lot 3 is proposed to be 25 feet; however, staff has added a recommended condition of approval that the front yard set back be 30 feet, consistent with the Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan, and the applicants have agreed to this condition.

Lots 1 and 2 have driveway access to Clara Lane, but are both located behind Lot 3. Because Lots 1 and 2 are not and will not be adjacent to a public road, the applicants have delineated the “yards”, front yard, side yard, and rear yard slightly differently, to better locate the usable yard

areas, while, still maintaining adequate separation from neighboring properties. Staff believes this yard proposal is acceptable and has added a condition of approval that all new structures not shown on Exhibit A, including new accessory structures, adhere to the minimum proposed setbacks shown on Exhibit A, with the following exceptions:

- The proposed house and any new addition or accessory structure on Lot 3 shall be located at least 30 feet from the southern back of curb of Clara Lane
- The proposed groundwater well structure on Lot 3 shall be relocated to be consistent with the minimum setbacks
- Structures for agricultural purposes may be constructed in the open space area on Lot 3 (this is allowed per the Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan)
- No modifications shall be made to the driveway leading to Lot 1 or to the “Y” hammerhead on Lot 1, since the driveway is needed for emergency ingress and egress.

Although not clearly shown on the plans, the owner of Lot 3 will own the land behind the southern back of curb of Clara Lane once this is extended. Thus, as proposed, the house shown on Exhibit A will be setback a minimum of 25 feet from the southern back of curb of Clara Lane. As noted above, staff recommends that the house be set back an additional 5 feet from Clara Lane, in order to substantially comply with the intent of the Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan. To accommodate the additional 5 foot setback by Clara Lane, staff believes that the garage on Lot 3 could be slightly relocated to the south and reduced in width by approximately 3 feet.

Except as modified above, staff recommends that additions and accessory structures on Lot 1 adhere to the R-1-40,000 Zoning District site development standards, the City’s standard regulations for lots 40,000 square feet and greater in size, and that additions on Lots 2 and 3 adhere to the R-1-20,000 Zoning District site development standards, the City’s standard regulations for lots 20,000 square feet and greater in size.

With the exception of the setback and height “requirements”, the architecture, grading, and landscaping “requirements” staff mentions in this report are “guidelines” listed in the Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan, and thus there is some flexibility in their applicability. For the Planning Commission’s information, staff has attached the residential standards and guidelines of the Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan (see Exhibit D).

Building Architecture

The Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan requires homes on parcels zoned Low-Density Residential District to have traditional style architecture with porches, bay windows, balconies, etc., on the front of the home to provide an interesting streetscape and encourage neighborhood interaction. Interesting architectural detailing is also recommended on the doors, windows, and eaves of the proposed homes.

Two of the homes will be light brown and one will be a peach color. The proposed trim colors are white and off-white. As proposed, the two light brown homes on Lots 2 and 3 will have brown tile roofs and the peach colored home on Lot 1 will have a red tile roof. The exterior of the homes are required to be medium to dark earth tones in order to blend in with the surrounding natural setting. White, tan, light gray, blue, and yellow colors are not deemed appropriate for the main color of the residences.

The applicants are proposing to build three different house plans on the three different lots. The three house designs range in size from approximately 5,066 to 5,549 square feet (not including the garages). While the homes will adhere to some of the guidelines, for example, the house on Lot 2 will be a medium shade of brown with a brown roof and a front porch, staff believes that several changes should be made to the homes to bring them into greater conformance with the Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan and generally more aesthetically pleasing. Staff has added a condition of approval requiring that the applicants modify the house plans as follows:

Lot 1

- The house and roof color shall be changed to a medium or dark brown or gray color, to be consistent with the Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan
- Reduce the grade under the house and within approximately 10 feet of the rear of the house by at least 5 feet, to reduce the visual impact of the house, when viewed from Gray Fox Circle

Lot 2

- A deck with railings shall be provided above the first floor entry (an entry exceeding 1.5 stories is prohibited per the Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan)
- The entire first floor shall be stone
- The chimneys shall be stone
- An additional window shall be provided on the western elevation of the office, to help break up the mass of the western wall
- The front porch on the first floor shall be a minimum of 8 feet in depth
- The driveway shall be reduced in size and shall not exceed 12 feet in width, not including the 25' back-up area behind the garage and not including the driveway to Lot 1

Lot 3

- A deck with railings shall be provided above the first floor entry (an entry exceeding 1.5 stories is prohibited per the Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan)
- The house color shall be changed to a medium or dark brown or gray color, to be consistent with the Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan
- The second floor shall be setback a minimum of two feet from the first floor, as encouraged by the Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan
- On the front elevation, additional windows shall be provided on the second floor such that the windows appear balanced, as encouraged in the Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan
- Outside the den, a wrap-around trellis (which wraps around the rear and side wall) shall be provided and French doors leading to the covered area shall be provided
- French doors shall be provided from the kitchen to the deck
- The driveway shall be reduced in size and shall not exceed 12 feet in width, not including the 25' back-up area behind the garage and not including the driveway to Lot 1

The applicants have agreed to the above-mentioned changes.

Visual Analysis

The Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan requires that a visual analysis of future homes in this area be conducted during the PUD development plan review process and that all practical efforts be made to completely screen the view of improvements proposed in areas above the 475 foot elevation when viewed from off-site. All three of the homes are above the 475 foot elevation. The applicants have prepared a photomontage for the project which shows views of the finished development from two locations. The views include landscaping; however, the number and location of the trees do not match the landscaping plan. For this reason, staff has added a recommended condition of approval that the landscaping plan, page LA1, in the plan set be the proposed landscaping plan, and that on each lot the applicants provide a minimum of five additional Coast Live Oak trees near the western property line to better screen the site, as required per the Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan. Staff believes the 19 proposed trees by the eastern side of the property will provide some screening during summer months; however, the proposed trees are deciduous and in some cases, water needy. For this reason, on this side of the property staff recommends that at least five native non-deciduous trees which are known to have some draught tolerance be planted on each lot. Presently, the rear of the lot is fairly well screened with existing landscaping; however, staff recommends that 10 additional

Italian Stone Pine trees be planted between the house and the property line to the south, to help fill in the gaps in the landscaping. Staff has conditioned the project to provide this species or as reviewed and approved by the Planning Director.

The neighboring property owners at 850, 862, and 874 Gray Fox Circle in the Foxbrough Estates neighborhood expressed concerns about the visibility of the proposed two-story house on Lot 1 and requested that story poles be installed. The existing one-story home on the site is partially visible from these lots and the proposed home would be taller than the existing home. Photographs of the existing home with story poles is shown in Exhibit C. The top of the orange mesh is at the height of the proposed roof gutter.

New homes in the Beratlis Place and Hatsushi subdivisions which abut the existing homes in Foxbrough Estates are restricted as follow:

- Beratlis Place—One-story maximum (24' height max.)
- Hatsushi—One-story maximum (25' height max.)

The house pads on Hatsushi property are approximately 12-20 feet lower than the top of ridge separating this subdivision from Foxbrough Estates.

In the Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan, the house on Lot 1 is not required to be one-story. However, due to the neighbors concerns staff has added a recommended condition of approval that the area under the house on Lot 1 be graded down at least 5 feet, to reduce the height of the house as viewed from Foxbrough Estates, and that a 5 foot tall retaining wall (or 2 low walls 2-3 feet in height) be installed approximately 10 feet to the rear of the house. With this requirement, the house would appear to be approximately 25 feet in height, when viewed from Gray Fox Circle. As noted above, there is substantial landscape screening to the rear of the house and staff has added a condition that additional evergreen landscape screening be installed.

Open Space Area

This parcel contains an area which is designated as Open Space in the Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan. This is one of six parcels in Subarea 1 with land designated as Open Space. The purpose of these open space areas is to preserve the natural features of the hillside areas south of Vineyard Avenue. While no homes are permitted in these areas, the Specific Plan allows fencing and agricultural structures. Dog runs, play structures, and roads shall specifically not be permitted within this area.

The open space land on this parcel is in the northwest corner of Lot 3. The applicants show the area as being 1,063 square feet in size; however the City has determined that the Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan shows 1,575 square feet of open space on this parcel. Staff has added a condition of approval that an open space area of 1,575 square feet be entirely on Lot 3.

The Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan requires that a site-specific management plan be prepared for the open space area. The purpose of the plan is to address the long-term maintenance requirements of these areas, including fire prevention measures. The developer plans to use a plan similar to the management plan for the “Clara Lane” development by Vineyard Avenue. This plan requires the entire area to be mowed annually and a 30 foot wide irrigated strip of native plant material to be planted between the open space area and domestic landscaping.

Tree Report

A tree report by HortScience dated “Received May 18, 2006” has been prepared for the project. Of the 27 trees on the project site, 2 Monterey Pines are classified as being heritage trees according to the standards established by the City’s heritage tree ordinance. All of the trees are on Lot 1 and were planted as domestic landscaping around the existing home. None of the trees on site—Italian Stone Pine, Yucca, Coast Redwood, Monterey Pine, Cypress, Fruitless Mulberry, Callery Pear, Evergreen Pear, and Raywood Ash—are native species.

The arborist conducted a visual assessment of the site and found that 11 of the trees were in poor condition, 8 of the trees were in fair condition, and 8 of the trees were in good condition. Nine trees are proposed to be removed as part of the project. In regard to the existing trees, staff has added two recommended conditions of approval: first, that to the extent feasible both heritage trees shall be retained; and second, that to the extent feasible all existing trees between the proposed home on Lot 1 and the southern property line be retained. The applicants have agreed to these conditions of approval. Staff notes that the trees may need to be removed, if upon further geotechnical study it is determined that additional existing fill on Lot 1 needs to be removed and compacted to make the lot safe from a geotechnical perspective. If this is the case, staff has added a recommended condition of approval that all trees removed, which were originally required to be preserved, shall be replaced with at least two 24” box native non-deciduous species, and that the applicant pay the value of the removed tree, minus the cost of the replacement trees, to the City’s Urban Forestry Fund.

Landscaping

The Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan includes specific guidelines for new landscaping in the plan area. The guidelines include the following requirements: street tree plantings along the new streets are to be informal, with randomly-spread clusters to establish a visually pleasing transition to the natural surroundings; and dense natural groupings of medium and large sized deciduous and evergreen trees should be planted along local streets; and the use of exotic (non-native) plant materials should be compatible with the natural setting and confined to the close proximity of the homes.

The applicants are proposing non-native deciduous trees. Staff has added a recommended condition of approval that the street landscaping plan match that of the “Clara Lane” project by

Vineyard Avenue. This landscaping scheme includes Oak and Sycamore trees and native shrubs. Two pictures of this landscaping scheme are attached for the Planning Commission's information (see Exhibit C). As conditioned, a maintenance association (or a maintenance agreement) will be created to ensure that the street landscaping is maintained. Staff has also added a recommended condition of approval that all proposed trees and shrubs within 20 feet of the projects' property line be changed to native species, with the exception of those in the rear of Lot 1. As conditioned, the street landscaping plan will be submitted with the minor subdivision application, and the final landscaping proposals for the lots will be submitted when the applicants apply for building permits.

The applicant has indicated to staff that he may plant additional screen trees in the yard prior to the Planning Commission hearing. The applicant will elaborate on this at the hearing.

Fencing and Retaining Walls

The Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan established the following guidelines for fencing:

- Solid board fencing in moderate to steeply sloping terrain is appropriate only when located in close proximity to a residence.
- Site perimeter and other outlying fencing in these areas should remain visually open (i.e., split rail or wire mesh) in order to minimize the visual "ribbon-like" effect of fencing on the hillsides.
- Chain-link fencing in residential areas shall not be permitted, except for use around tennis courts.

The applicants are proposing to adhere to these fencing requirements and only construct open fencing on the property lines in order to preserve the rural character of the area. A condition of approval has been added requiring all fencing along Clara Lane to be set back a minimum of 10 feet from the back of curb. As conditioned, this 10 foot wide area will be a public service and landscape easement in which trees, shrubs, and groundcover will be planted. This landscaping area will be consistent with the other 10 foot wide landscaping areas along Clara Lane. Staff has also added a recommended condition of approval that all solid fencing only be allowed if it adheres to the following: (1) the grade where the fence is proposed is 10% or less; and (2) the fence meets the minimum setbacks established for the principal structure.

The Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan states that stone materials should be used on all publicly visible retaining walls. Staff has added a recommended condition of approval that all publicly visible retaining walls be faced with stone and that all other retaining walls be faced with stone, or wood, or match the existing key stone retaining walls in the "Clara Lane" development by Vineyard Avenue. To soften the appearance of retaining walls, staff has also added a recommended condition of approval that retaining walls up to 5 feet in height are allowed, and that parallel walls may be used if a minimum of 3 feet of landscaping is planted between walls.

Noise

The Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan identifies two potential noise sources, Vineyard Avenue and RMC Lonestar quarrying operations, that may produce noise exceeding the General Plan acceptable levels on several of the properties within the specific plan area. The proposed project is not in one of those locations. Staff has added the standard conditions of approval related to noise in the Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan area, i.e., deed disclosures about noise, dust, and vibration from the quarries, and a disclosure about potential airplane noise due to the proximity of the Livermore Municipal Airport.

Grading, Drainage, and Utilities

The topography of the property is moderately to steeply sloped. The Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan states that all proposed graded slopes should have a maximum 3:1 grade, states that “rounded form grading” should be utilized, and grading should be compatible with existing topographic contours. Also, residences located on slopes greater than 15 percent are required to be accessible from minimum 16 foot wide driveways (20 feet clear) designed to accommodate fire-fighting equipment. Also any private driveways exceeding 150 feet in length are required to be designed to allow fire truck turn around. The driveway leading to Lot 1 and turnaround area on Lot 1 are required for emergency access reasons. A maintenance association (or maintenance agreement) will be required to ensure the long-term maintenance of these areas.

The overall grading concept for this project will be a more traditional flat pad grading under the home with sloping contours around the homes. The proposed grading consists of cuts up to about 6 feet deep and fills up to about 13 feet thick. The peer reviewer has indicated that the cuts may actually be up to 12 feet deep, in order to remove existing fill on site. Various slopes adjacent to the homes will be created by the grading; these slopes will be up to 25 feet high and have inclinations of about 2:1 (horizontal to vertical). On Lot 1 the house is proposed in the existing generally flat area, thus minimizing the grading of this lot. On Lot 2, the applicants are proposing a two foot step between the garage and the house so that the house will blend in slightly better with the hillside. Staff has added a recommended condition of approval that the area west of the house on Lot 2 be graded to a 3:1 slope to be more consistent with the Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific plan. This would likely require that the applicants install two additional retaining walls less than four feet in height by the western slope. The proposed grades are rounded, as required per the Specific Plan. The fire truck access has been provided, as required. Per the geotechnical report, the site has a low potential for landslides.

Due to the natural topography of the site, the applicants are proposing a bioswale by the western side of the lot and a cross drainage easement between the lots is required. As conditioned, the applicants will work with staff on an appropriate bioswale size, and plant species, prior to minor subdivision approval. A maintenance association (or maintenance agreement) will be required to ensure the long-term maintenance of the bioswale.

There is an existing leach field on the site for the existing house. The applicants have conducted research and have not been able to locate exactly where it is on Lot 1. Staff has added a recommended condition of approval, that if the leach field is discovered during construction, it be removed and disposed of in a landfill. There is an existing septic tank on Lot 2 which will be removed as part of the project.

Prior to the occupancy of the homes, staff has added a recommended condition of approval that the applicants extend the existing water line in Clara Lane to the western terminus of this project. The applicants have agreed to this condition of approval.

The applicants are proposing to connect their sewer line to a sewer line which is proposed to be constructed in the neighboring Hatsushi property to the west. If this project is developed before the Hatsushi project, it is likely that the applicants will need to connect the proposed sewer line to the existing sewer line in the northern part of Clara Lane.

Staff has added a recommended condition of approval that the proposed street light design match that of the existing street lights on Clara Lane by Vineyard Avenue (see attached photographs, Exhibit C). The applicants have agreed to this condition of approval.

Geotechnical Studies

The Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan requires site specific geotechnical studies be completed for new development in the plan area in order to evaluate and necessary geotechnical mitigation measures. Geotechnical studies by Korbmacher Engineering dated “Received June 28, 2006” and “Received October 23, 2006” were prepared for the proposed site and peer review reports were prepared by Alan Kropp and Associates on September 29, 2006 and November 22, 2006. The native soil on the site consists of stiff to very stiff silty clay and gravely clay. The Korbmacher Engineering report includes recommendations about fill compaction and how to reduce the potential for differential settlement among other engineering concerns. As shown in the peer review report, Alan Kropp and Associates concurs with the recommendations outlined by the Korbmacher Engineering report. Staff has added a recommended condition of approval that the project adhere to all of the recommendations of the geotechnical studies.

Clara Lane Extension

Currently, the improved portion of Clara Lane ends shortly before this project site. As part of this project the applicants will dedicate the northern portion of the property for the extension of Clara Lane. As part of the project, the applicants will construct this extension, unless another arrangement is made with the owners of the Hatsushi property, and agreed to by the City. The extension will not include a sidewalk, similar to the other improved sections of Clara Lane. Once the extension is accepted by the City, the Clara Lane extension will be a publicly owned and maintained street.

Inclusionary Housing Requirements

The project has less than 15 units; therefore, the project is not required to provide units affordable to very low and low-income household per the City's Inclusionary Housing Ordinance, Chapter 17.44 of the Pleasanton Municipal Code. Projects on a site with 15 or greater multi-family dwelling units must make at least 15% of the total number of all units affordable to very low and low income households. Projects on a site with 15 or greater single-family dwelling units must make at least 20% of the project's dwelling units affordable to very low, low, and/or moderate income households.

Growth Management

Development of this property will fall under the "First-Come-First-Serve" category of the City's Growth Management program, which has an annual allocation of 100 units. Although past demand for "First-Come-First Serve" units has exceeded supply in the past, that demand has declined since 2000. Staff therefore anticipates that there will be adequate building permit capacity for these lots in the future.

Green Building

The recently adopted Green Building Ordinance will apply to the homes in this project. The Green Building Ordinance requires that each home achieve the minimum required "green points" (currently 50 points) for the home and the minimum number of points required for each category (Energy, Indoor Air Quality/Health, Resources, and Water). The applicants have submitted an initial Green Points Checklist (see Exhibit A), and believe each home will receive 68 points and the minimum amount required for each category.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice of this application was sent to all property owners and tenants living within 1,000 feet of the subject property. At the time this staff report was written, staff had received the following comments:

- A concern from the neighbors residing on three lots south of the development that a two story house on Lot 1 would be too visible from their property.

Staff Comment: Staff has added a condition of approval that the grade under this house be reduced such that the house would not be over 25 feet in height, when viewed from Gray Fox Circle in the Foxbrough Estates subdivision and some landscape screening conditions, as mentioned above.

- A concern from another resident on Gray Fox Circle that the house on lot 1 is too big and long, and should be pushed forward on the lot.

Staff Comment: Same as above.

- Initial concerns about the Clara Lane extension by two adjacent neighbors on Clara Lane

Staff Comment: The City was granted land and easements from the neighboring property owners for the road widening project on Clara Lane. Staff has been and will continue to meet with the neighboring property owners to ensure that all outstanding issues are addressed. A road improvement plan is attached. A preliminary landscaping plan will be generated shortly.

- A request that construction traffic should take Clara Lane.

Staff Comment: Staff agrees and has added a recommended condition of approval to address this.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

An Environmental Impact Report was prepared and certified for the Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan. The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) specifies that individual residential development projects that are prepared pursuant to the requirements of an adopted specific plan, for which an EIR has been prepared and certified, are exempt from additional environmental review. Therefore, no environmental document accompanies this report.

PUD CONSIDERATIONS

The Zoning Ordinance of the Municipal Code sets forth purposes of the Planned Unit Development District and “considerations” to be addressed when reviewing a PUD development plan.

1. Whether the plan is in the best interest of the public health, safety and general welfare:

All on-site infrastructure shall be installed by the project developer with connections to municipal systems in order to serve the site. Adequate storm drain, sanitary sewer, and water service utilities are present near the development and are sufficient to serve the new buildings. Public street access is provided to all structures for police, fire, and other emergency response vehicles. The buildings are designed to meet the requirements of the Building Code and other applicable City codes. The applicants will install ample landscaping as part of the project.

Therefore, as conditioned, staff believes that the proposed plan is in the best interest of the public health, safety, and general welfare, and that this finding can be made.

2. Whether the plan is consistent with the City's General Plan:

The Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan was developed to implement the City's General Plan for the Vineyard Avenue area. The Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan has been found to be consistent with the General Plan policies, including development which respects existing residential neighborhoods, development outside of the 100-year floodplain, and development which does not create impacts beyond acceptable standards. As conditioned, and based on the analysis in this report, the subject development is consistent with both the General Plan and the Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan.

Thus, staff concludes that the proposed development plan, as conditioned by staff, is consistent with the City's General Plan and staff believes this finding can be made.

3. Whether the plan is compatible with previously developed properties in the vicinity and the natural, topographic features of the site:

As conditioned, the proposed project incorporates provisions to provide for an open space area, native landscape screening, and the retention of several existing trees near the Foxbrough Estates subdivision. While portions of the site will be graded to accommodate the homes, the grades at the borders will remain approximately the same as they currently are and staff has added a recommended condition of approval that the proposed slope west of the home on Lot 2 be graded to a 3:1 slope. The grading of the site has been designed to blend in with the site's natural topographic features.

Thus, staff concludes that the proposed development plan, as conditioned by staff is compatible with previously developed properties in the vicinity and the natural, topographic features of the site.

4. Whether the grading takes into account environmental characteristics and is designed in keeping with the best engineering practices to avoid erosion, slides, or flooding to have as minimal an effect upon the environment as possible:

As conditioned, the proposed site grading and building pads will be designed to be consistent with the geotechnical reports and will adhere to the recommendations prepared for the development. The site is not within the Alquist-Priolo earthquake study area or within the FEMA designated 100-floodplain. Staff believes that through the proposed conditions, grading and drainage issues will be adequately addressed.

Therefore, staff concludes that the grading takes into account environmental characteristics and is designed in keeping with the best engineering practices to avoid erosion, slides, or flooding to have as minimal an effect upon the environment as possible.

5. Whether streets and buildings have been designed and located to complement the natural terrain and landscape:

As conditioned, the proposed development of the site has been designed to be consistent with the requirements of the Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan. The building pads are generally graded flat; however, the areas around them have been designed to slope in a manner similar to the existing contours. In addition, the extension of Clara Lane will be designed to complement the natural terrain.

Therefore, staff feels that this PUD finding can be made.

6. Whether adequate public safety measures have been incorporated into the design of the plan:

The project, as conditioned, will be consistent with City safety standards. As conditioned, the homes will be equipped with automatic fire suppression systems (fire sprinklers). The project does include an emergency access driveway and “y”-hammerhead, as required by the Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan. As conditioned, the applicants will be providing a fire hydrant. The project will be required to comply with all building and fire code requirements.

Therefore, staff believes that the plan has been designed and conditioned to incorporate adequate public safety measures.

7. Whether the plan conforms to the purposes of the PUD District:

The proposed PUD development plan conforms to the purposes of the PUD district. One of these purposes is to ensure that the desires of the developer and the community are understood prior to the commencement of construction. Staff believes that the proposed project implements the purposes of the PUD ordinance in this case by providing a high-quality project consistent with the General Plan, Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan, and Municipal Code. The PUD process allows for ample input from the public and for an ultimate decision by the City Council regarding the appropriateness of the proposed uses and development plan.

Therefore, staff believes that this finding can be made.

CONCLUSION

Staff believes that as conditioned, the proposed development will be attractive. The applicants, in staff's opinion, satisfactorily addressed all of the standards and guidelines of the Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan for this area, including architectural and landscape design criteria, grading, geotechnical concerns, etc. Therefore, staff believes this will be an attractive addition to the City's neighborhoods and is consistent with the Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission:

1. Find that there are no new or changed circumstances or information which require additional CEQA review of the project;
2. Find that the proposed PUD development plan is consistent with the General Plan, the Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan, and purposes of the PUD ordinance;
3. Make the PUD findings as listed in the staff report; and,
4. Adopt a resolution recommending approval of Case PUD-56 subject to the conditions of approval as shown in Exhibit B.

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PUD-56 Aminian PC Report*