

Attachment 1

**Planning Commission Staff Report
(June 2, 2010)**

PPD No. 10-78 Time Extension

June 1, 2011

Staff Report

City of Loma Linda

From the Community Development Department

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING OF JUNE 2, 2010

TO: PLANNING COMMISSION
FROM: DEBORAH WOLDRUFF, AICP, DIRECTOR
SUBJECT: PRECISE PLAN OF DESIGN (PPD) NO. 10-78

SUMMARY

The Corporation for Better Housing (CBH) is requesting approval to construct 152 affordable senior apartment units in two, three-story buildings on 5.46 acres located on the west side of Poplar Street (see Attachment 1, Site Vicinity Map). The project plans (revised) are available in Attachment 2.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission recommend to the City Council the approval of PPD No. 10-78 based on the Findings, and subject to the Conditions of Approval (Attachment 3).

PERTINENT DATA

Owner/Applicant: Loma Linda Redevelopment Agency/CBH

General Plan/Zoning: High Density Residential (0-20 du/acre)/
Multiple Residence (R-3)
(also, Loma Linda Redevelopment Project Area)

Site/Special Features: 5.46-acre site/17 lots/existing residential structure/

Topography: Relatively flat

Vegetation: Sparse trees and grasses

BACKGROUND AND EXISTING SETTING

Background

On May 3, 2010, the applicant submitted an application for a Preliminary Development Review (PDR). The Administrative Review Committee (ARC) reviewed and commented on the project at their meeting on May 6, 2010 [see Attachment 4-D, Planning Commission Staff Report (May 19, 2010)].

The applicant submitted the PPD application (PPD No. 10-78) to the City on May 17, 2010 and staff determined that the application was complete and ready for processing on May 25, 2010. PPD No. 10-78 was reviewed by the ARC on May 27, 2010 and forwarded to the Planning Commission with staff's recommendation for approval.

On May 19, 2010, the Planning Commission reviewed PDR No. 10-70 and provided detailed comments and suggestions (see Attachment 5, PDR No. 10-70, Summary of Planning Commission Comments).

Existing Setting

The 5.46-acre project site is comprised of 17 residential lots of varying sizes and shapes and one lot contains an existing single-family residence that is proposed for demolition. Existing vegetation on the site includes pepper and palm trees and some native grasses and weeds. As indicated the site is relatively flat.

To the north and south of the site are older, existing single- and multi-family residential developments. To the east and across Poplar Street are the recently completed Poplar Street Apartments (44 units) and under construction is the Loma Linda Commons Apartments (120 units). To the west is land owned by Loma Linda University that currently is being farmed.

The project site is located in an area of Loma Linda that is commonly referred to as the North Central Neighborhood (NCN), roughly located south of Redlands Boulevard, north of the San Timoteo Creek, east of Anderson Street, and west of Mountain View Avenue. The North Central Neighborhood contains a mix of single-family and multi-family residential developments and neighborhoods that to a large extent predate the City's incorporation in the early 1970s. Many of the neighborhoods are economically challenged and for this reason, the NCN is a focus of the Loma Linda Redevelopment Agency's (RDA) programs and housing efforts.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) STATUS

The Precise Plan of Design for the project is not subject to the provisions of CEQA as per state law. The California Government Code § 65583.2(i) defines "use by right" in relation to affordable housing, and states "the phrase 'use by right' shall mean that the local government's review of the owner-occupied or multifamily residential use may not require a conditional use permit, planned unit development permit, or other discretionary

local government review or approval that would constitute a 'project' for purposes of Division 13 (commencing with § 21000, CEQA) of the Public Resources Code. Any subdivision of the site shall be subject to all laws, including, but not limited to, the local government ordinance implementing the Subdivision Map Act. California Government Code § 65583.2(i) goes on to state that a local ordinance may provide that 'use by right' does not exempt the use from design review. However, that design review shall not constitute a 'project' for purposes of Division 13 (commencing with § 21000) of the Public Resources Code. Use by right for all rental multifamily residential housing shall be provided in accordance with subdivision (f) of § 65589.5.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

During the Planning Commission's review of PDR No. 10-70, Mr. Robert Stewart provided public comments regarding his concerns about additional traffic on Poplar Street, the need to widen the street from Van Leuven Street to Redlands Boulevard (including the bridge over San Timoteo Creek Channel). He was also concerned that the project appears to be under-parked and that future tenants would need a safe route to local bus services on Redlands Boulevard. On Friday, May 21, 2010, Mr. Stewart followed up with an email to staff reiterating his concerns. His comments are addressed in the Analysis section of this Report.

ANALYSIS

Project Description

The project proposes to construct 152 affordable senior housing units on a 5.46-acre site located on the west side of Poplar Street. A detailed description is available in Attachment 6. As noted, copies of the project plans are available in Attachment 2.

Site Analysis

The Loma Linda Municipal Code (LLMC) requires a minimum 20 foot front-yard setback, five foot side-yard setback with an additional five feet for each story above the first floor and 15 foot rear-yard setback for the R-3 zone. The site plan for the proposed development shows a front yard building setback at just over 112 feet along Poplar Street. The side-yard setbacks are shown at just over 70 feet from the north property line and at just over 93 feet and 51 feet (further west near the rear property line) from the south property line. The rear yard setback is just over 75 feet at the closest point. Based on the preceding, the project meets the minimum setback requirements.

The site plan indicates two points of ingress and egress from Poplar Street. The access points will direct vehicular traffic to the parking area located around the development along the north, west and south perimeters of the site.

Open space is provided at the center of the property. As noted on the site plan, the project will provide approximately 127,201 square feet of common usable open space to

meet the minimum open space requirement of 700 square feet for two-bedroom units and 800 square feet for three or more-bedroom units for a total of 109,400 square feet. In addition, the open space will provide walking paths (with Gym Stations), six community garden raised planters and a covered work area and tool maintenance shed, barbeque area with picnic tables, outdoor pavilion, and a site entrance water feature. Based on the preceding, the project meets and exceeds the minimum common open space and amenities requirements.

The project site is comprised of 16 lots of record and the applicant is required to process a Parcel Map to consolidate the lots into one parcel. To address this issue, staff has included the requirement for a Parcel Map as Condition of Approval No. 44 (see Attachment 3).

Traffic

The concerns about traffic generated by the project combined with the two affordable projects located on the east side of Poplar Street were addressed in the General Plan (May 26, 2009) and General Plan Final Program Environmental Impact Report (FEIR). Concerns regarding roadway widening and related improvements (i.e., sidewalk, curb, and gutter; bridge widening) from the northern edge of the project to Redlands Boulevard will be addressed in the form of improvements that will be provided by the City at a later date. The applicant is not required to complete off-site improvements beyond the frontage of the project site. However, the RDA and City are partners with the applicant in that the RDA is providing the land and other incentives. As such, the improvements to Poplar Street and the Poplar Street Bridge will be added to the City's Capital Improvements Plan.

The intersection at Redlands Boulevard and Poplar Street is scheduled for signalization in FY 2010/2011 Capital Improvement Program (CIP). Once installed, the intersection will operate at a LOS of C or better. The roadway currently is able to handle the capacity of the existing traffic and traffic volumes added by the three affordable projects.

On-Site Parking

On-site parking totals 152 open and uncovered parking spaces with 6 accessible spaces of which, one is a van accessible space. The LLMC requires 1.5 parking spaces per one-bedroom unit plus 0.5 parking spaces per each additional bedroom, and 0.25 parking spaces per bedroom for guest parking for a total of 289 parking spaces. However, the applicant is working with the RDA to provide senior affordable housing and the number of parking spaces can be reduced based on California Government Code Section 65915(p)(1-3) requirements. Therefore, the proposed project meets the City's minimum parking requirements pending approval of the PPD by the City Council and a Disposition and Development Agreement (DDA) by the RDA Commission.

Architecture Analysis

The proposed architecture for the project is very similar to that of the CBH projects on the east side of Poplar Street as indicated by the color elevations included in

Attachment 2, Project Plans (revised). A color board will be available at the Commission meeting on June 2, 2010.

The architectural style of the surrounding neighborhood is a mix of traditional residential architecture with some structures dating back to the early 1930's and 1940's. The project proposes 152 units divided into two, three-story Mediterranean style buildings.

The following is a breakdown of the project units.

No. of Units	Bedrooms	Bathrooms	SQ FT
122	1	1	600
30	2	1	802

Apartment units will range from 600 to 802 square feet in size. Stucco and pop-out features will be utilized to break up the vertical walls and provide some wall plane variation. Awnings on some of the upper story windows provide an additional decorative feature on the front and rear elevations. Warm earth tones and a darker colored clay concrete tile roof will compliment the style of the structure.

Landscape Plan

The landscape plan indicates the use of limited turf, drought tolerant ground covers and trees throughout the project (i.e., liquid amber, African Sumac, Fern Pine, and London Plane Tree). All of the tree species are proposed throughout the development and particularly along the interior site perimeters. No shrubs are indicated and the landscaping proposed along the front entry along with a large water feature and drop off point does provide an attractive entry statement. Staff will work with the applicant to beef up the final landscape plan to include more trees on the south sides of buildings, as indicated in Condition of Approval No. 10 (Attachment 3).

The site and landscape plans show that the site will have a six foot perimeter fence of black wrought iron. In addition, the tenant parking areas will have controlled entries with black wrought iron gates and key code pads. The Fire Department requires that the site provide them with 24-hour access to the site by means approved by the Fire Marshal (see Condition of Approval No. 38).

Affordable Housing Project Incentives

California Government Code contains provisions for the granting of density bonuses and incentives and concessions for affordable housing projects. The project applicant is seeking a density bonus and is requesting certain incentives and/or concessions, inherent in the design of the project that will assist in keeping down project costs.

Specifically, California Government Code §§ 65915(d)(3), (l), and (p)(1 -3) identify the types of incentives and concessions that may be granted in an effort to keep affordable housing projects affordable. Incentives and concessions identified include a reduction in site development standards, zoning code requirements, or architectural design requirements that exceed the minimum building standards approved by the California

Building Standards Commission (as per Part 2.5, commencing with Section 18901 of Division 13 of the Health and Safety Code). Reductions in standards and requirements include, but are not limited to a reduction in setback and square footage requirements, and the ratio and type of vehicular parking spaces (tandem or uncovered parking).

The incentives and concessions proposed for this project are listed below and will be included in the Disposition and Development Agreement that will be considered by the RDA Commission.

1. *A reduction of the side and rear landscape setbacks to allow the placement of required parking eight feet from property lines. LLMC § 17.38.080 Interior Side Yards and § 17.38.090 Rear Yards require a minimum five foot setback from interior side and rear property lines and an additional five feet for each story above the first floor. For this project, the setback requirement would be 15 feet maintained free and clear of parking and drive aisles.*

The placement of the tenant and guest parking along the perimeter of the site does allow for much more open space than would normally be provided. The eight foot planter area will be landscaped with drought tolerant materials and plenty of trees along the fence line. However, staff has included a Condition of Approval for heavier landscape screening with bushes and shrubs along the property lines to eliminate potential glare from vehicle headlights onto adjacent properties. The parking layout will provide something of a buffer for the project.

2. *A reduction of the minimum unit size requirement. LLMC § 17.38.160 Minimum Unit Floor Space requires that bachelor and one bedroom units maintain a minimum floor area of 675 square feet and two bedroom units maintain a minimum floor area of 850 square feet. The project proposes a floor area of 600 square feet for one bedroom units and a floor area of 802 square feet.*

The smaller sized units are typical of affordable senior housing units and the reduction for each type of unit is minimal and less than 100 square feet.

3. *A reduction of the ratio and type of parking spaces required for the project. LLMC § 17.24.060(B)(1 - 3) requires 289 parking spaces of which some would be covered and enclosed (garage) spaces and others covered and uncovered. The project proposes 152 spaces of which six spaces are accessible including one van accessible space.*

Affordable senior housing developments generally have reduced parking requirements because few of the tenants can afford to own, operate, or maintain personal vehicles. The applicant has found that the ratio of one parking space per unit works well for their other affordable senior housing developments.

Disposition and Development Agreement (DDA)

The proposed project is located in the City's Redevelopment Project Area. As a result, the developer is required to provide a minimum fifteen percent of the units (23 units) as

affordable. However, the entire project is designated as a low-income project and a DDA between the applicant and RDA is required prior to issuance of any building or construction permits (see Condition of Approval No. 5). Therefore, the proposed project more than meets the requirements for affordable housing.

Administrative Review Committee (ARC) Comments

The ARC reviewed the PPD project at their meeting on May 27, 2010 and their comments are reflected in the Conditions of Approval (Attachment 3). A copy of the May 19, 2010 ARC comments is available in Attachment 4-D.

Planning Commission Review of PDR No. 10-70

The Planning Commission reviewed the PDR on May 19, 2010 and provided the following comments to the applicant:

- Sidewalks to be utilized as walking trails that incorporate exercise activities
- Landscaping to be more attractive
- Entryway to be more appealing
- Outdoor seating and rest areas
- More trees on the South end of the units
- Use a different color flooring in the entry ways

Planning staff and the ARC reviewed the revised Project Plans and found that Gym Stations had been added to the walking trails and the landscaping and entry way have been revised to include a water feature, drop off and pick up point, and more drought tolerant landscaping materials. A quick survey of the site plan did not reveal any additional outdoor seating and rest areas, or more trees on the south end of the units. However, the landscape plan has been revised significantly in other ways. The use of different color flooring in the building entry ways was taken under advisement by the applicant for future consideration.

FINDINGS

Precise Plan of Design Findings

According to LLMC Section 17.30.290, Precise Plan of Design (PPD), Application Procedure, PPD applications shall be processed using the procedure for a variance (as outlined in LLMC Section 17.30.030 through 17.30.060) but excluding the grounds (or findings). As such, no specific findings are required. However, LLMC Section 17.30.280, states the following:

“If a PPD would substantially depreciate property values in the vicinity or would unreasonably interfere with the use or enjoyment of property in the vicinity by the occupants thereof for lawful purposes or would adversely affect the public peace, health, safety or general welfare to a degree greater than that generally permitted by this title, such plan shall be

rejected or shall be so modified or conditioned before adoption as to remove the said objections.”

In an effort to ensure that the foregoing project is consistent with the General Plan, compliant with the zoning and other City requirements, compatible with the surrounding area, and appropriate for the site, staff and the City Attorney have opted to apply the Conditional Use Permit Findings in LLMC §17.30.210 to this project, as follows:”

1. *That the use applied for at the location set forth in the application is properly one for which a precise plan of design is authorized by this title.*

The proposed use is a permitted use within the Multi-Family Residence (R-3) zone and in fact, the R-3 zone is intended for multi-family residential development. Additionally, the property east and across Poplar Street is developed with a 44-unit affordable apartment project and a 122-unit affordable apartment project is under construction by the same developer on the south end of that property. There are single and multi-family residential structures developed adjacent and around the project site. The proposed use also meets Goal No. 2 in the General Plan Housing Element to provide housing that is affordable to all economic segments of the community. Therefore, the proposed use is a proper one for the area.

2. *That the said use is necessary or desirable for the development of the community, is in harmony with the various elements and objectives of the general plan, and is not detrimental to existing uses specifically permitted in the zone in which the proposed use is to be located.*

The project meets General Plan Goal 1 (to provide a diversity of housing opportunities to enhance the City’s living environment and to satisfy the housing and shelter needs of Loma Linda residents) and Goal 2 (to assist and cooperate with nonprofit, private, and public entities to maximize opportunities to develop affordable housing). The proposed project is designed as a senior affordable housing development and intended to provide affordable housing to the extremely low, very low, and low income levels of the senior population and to improve the blighted and vacant areas with housing opportunities to enhance the City’s living environment. Additionally, the surrounding area is a mixture of single and multi-family residential developments, none of which would appear to conflict with the proposed use.

3. *That the site for the intended use is adequate in size and shape to accommodate said use and all of the yards, setbacks, walls, or fences, landscaping and other features required in order to adjust said use to those existing or permitted future uses on land in the neighborhood.*

The project site is adequate in size and shape to accommodate the proposed use. The maximum lot coverage is 50 percent; however, the applicant is proposing approximately 22.5 percent. The buildings comply with the minimum setbacks required of the R-3 zone. The project site will accommodate the proposed use and be compatible with the existing land uses on Poplar Street and in the surrounding area.

4. *That the site or the proposed use related to streets and highways is properly designed and improved to carry the type and quantity of traffic generated or that will be generated by the proposed use.*

The project site has access from Poplar Street, which can accommodate the type and quantity of traffic generated by the use. The City has plans to widen and improve Poplar Street (and the bridge) from the north edge of the project site all the way north to Redlands Boulevard. The FY 2010/2011 Capital Improvement Plan includes the installation of a traffic signal at the intersection of Redlands Boulevard and Poplar Street. Currently the roadway can accommodate the existing volume of traffic and the future traffic from the proposed senior affordable housing development.

Off-site improvements in the vicinity of the project site will include roadway widening, installation of sidewalk, curb, and gutter, and two driveway approaches. A total of 152 parking spaces are provided to accommodate the parking requirements of a 152-unit senior apartment development. Additionally, the perimeter drive aisle provides emergency vehicle access all around the development. The proposed project and related on- and off-site improvements will not conflict with other uses immediately adjacent to the project site.

5. *That the conditions set forth in the permit and shown on the approved site plan are deemed necessary to protect the public health, safety and general welfare.*

The public health, safety and general welfare will be protected through the implementation of the Conditions of Approval for PPD No. 10-78 to insure compatibility with the neighborhood.

LLMC Chapter 19.16 requires that traffic levels of service (LOS) be maintained at level C or better. The intersection at Redlands Boulevard and Poplar Street is scheduled for signalization in FY 2010/2011 Capital Improvement Program (CIP). Once installed, the intersection will operate at a LOS of C or better. The roadway currently is able to handle the capacity of the existing traffic and traffic volumes added by the three affordable projects. Therefore, the project is in compliance with the LOS requirement.

The building and site meet the requirements of §19.16.020 *Substantive General Plan Amendment*, Section I (A) Principal One and Section 1(C) Principal Three, which require that new developments be planned and constructed in a manner that preserves natural scenic vistas and protects against intrusion on view shed areas. Please refer to the Architectural Analysis section of this report, which provides a description of the proposed apartment complex and the Project Plans found in Attachment 2. The architectural design of the buildings is compatible with other residential structures near the project site. The height of the building does not exceed 35 feet and the massing is appropriate to the site and surrounding area. The buildings will preserve the scenic vistas and will not result in intrusions into the view shed of the South Hills.

As outlined in §19.16.020 *Substantive General Plan Amendment*, Section I (A)(3), the project includes a condition that requires the applicant to pay all required development

impact fees to cover 100 percent of the pro rata share of the estimated cost of public infrastructure, facilities, and services.

CONCLUSION

All elements of the project are consistent with the General Plan (May 26, 2009). The project is also in compliance with the LLMC Chapter 19.16, Title 17 Zoning Code and the proposed incentives and concessions are consistent with state law. The required Findings have been made to support staff's recommendation for approval. The applicant has worked closely with staff and has made every effort possible to provide the most appropriate layout, design, and architecture for this project. The senior affordable housing use is compatible with the existing and future uses in the surrounding area and provides housing opportunities that are much needed by the senior segment of Loma Linda's population. The "use by right" project is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to California Government Code § 65583.2(i).

ATTACHMENTS

1. Site Location Map
2. Project Plans (revised)
3. Conditions of Approval
4. PDR No. 10-70: Planning Commission Staff Report (May 19, 2010)
Attachments:
 - A. Site Location Map (Not included – See Attachment 1 above)
 - B. Detailed Project Description (Not included – See Attachment 5 below)
 - C. Project Plans (Not included – See Attachment 2 above)
 - D. ARC Comments (May 6, 2010)
5. PDR No. 10-70: Summary of Planning Commission Comments
6. Detailed Project Description (revised)