



CITY OF MONTCLAIR
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
REGULAR ADJOURNED MEETING
August 24, 2020
VIA ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING PLATFORM

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Rowley called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Rowley led those virtually present in the salute to the flag.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Rowley, Vice Chair Martinez, Commissioners Eaton, Sahagun, and Sanchez, Community Development Director Diaz, Deputy Director of Economic and Community Development Caldwell, Deputy City Attorney Holdaway, and IT Specialist Garcia

MINUTES

None.

ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

None.

AGENDA ITEMS

- a. PUBLIC HEARING – CASE NUMBER 2017-20
(continued from August 10, 2020 meeting)
- Project Address: North side of Arrow Highway and Fremont Street
Project Applicant: Village Partners Ventures LLC on behalf of the
Miriam A. Kendall Trust
- Project Planner: Michael Diaz
Request: Tentative Tract Map No. 20273 and Precise Plan of
Design to allow a five building mixed-use
development, a parking structure, a 0.22-acre public
park, and associated roadway and site
improvements

Community Development Director Diaz reviewed the staff report. He commented that what is being presented represents two to three years of hard work by a number of individuals to ensure that this project met the standards of the Specific Plan. Many people participating in the meeting now are those people who worked on this project. The project is in the North Montclair Downtown Specific Plan and will eventually require final review and approval for all entitlements by the City Council. The Planning Commission has been requested to review the project proposal and then forward its recommendation(s) to the City Council for its consideration. Staff has prepared Resolution No. 20-1942 for that purpose for the Commission's consideration.

The developer, Village Partners Ventures, is proposed to subdivide the 6.68-acre site at the top of the intersection of Arrow Highway and Fremont Avenue. As such they propose Tract Map No. 20273 that would create the framework for building the City's first true mixed-use development to be named The Village at Montclair. Overall, this project includes the development of approximately 373,660 square feet of new residential and commercial space and does not include about 150,000 square feet that would be added as part of the parking garage for this structure, which would be a private garage. The project also includes commercial ground floor lease space of approximately 25,000 square feet in area and the residential component includes a maximum of 360 dwelling units which would include 330 permanent apartment units and 30 additional flex units. The project also features a multi-level private parking structure, dedication of a 0.2-acre park in the middle and a pedestrian easement that will link this project to both the Arrow Highway development to the immediate west and then the Montclair Transit Center to the north. This will be a major breakthrough in terms of literally and figuratively connecting the two sites of the planning area on either side of the tracks. The Commissioner packets also contained a copy of the Parking Management Plan that will be eventually taken to City Council for review.

As mentioned earlier, the subject site is located within the boundaries of the North Montclair Downtown Specific Plan, the Station District, in particular, and this is the zone with the highest intensity can be achieved. Staff believes this project is very well done, meets the goals and standards of the NMDSP and is consistent with the General Plan for the area.

Director Diaz introduced Mr. Don Henry, Mr. Michael Morris and Kaitlin Morris of Village Partners, the developer for this project, who each auditorily presented slides of the PowerPoint via Zoom.

Mr. Henry introduced the project by stating that Village Partners is focused on urban in-fill mixed use projects within or adjacent to existing pedestrian districts with retail amenities, usually in close proximity to transit. They acknowledged the forward thinking and effective policy making of the Montclair City Commissions, Councils and staff in implementing the North Montclair Downtown Specific Plan, a state-of-the-art form-based Code. The Village at Montclair is part of the North Montclair Downtown Specific Plan. This neighborhood is a true transit village that maximizes its relationship to the existing Montclair Transit station and the Metro Goldline, currently under construction to north Pomona and will ultimately be extended east to Montclair with a terminus at Ontario Airport. The Village at Montclair is a 360-unit project, 30 of which are flex units. These flex units are designed to accommodate either commercial, retail or residential uses and provide the flexibility to convert between uses as market demand evolves. The completion of the flex units allow The Village at Montclair to be a resilient project that can adapt with the times, which, more importantly, considering the change in retail in the last few years and the disruption of Covid-19. It is a walkable, pedestrian-friendly district and its block structure establishes two internal openly public spaces, Village Green in the center of the project, and the Station Promenade, near the Transit Center. Both internal spaces connect the neighborhood in direct ways to establish the linkages and vision in the specific plan. These connections allow the project to link outwardly to the Montclair station to the west and to Arrow Highway to the south with architecture that is as beautiful on the outside as the internal design around the square or the park and the station promenade.

Ms. Kaitlin Morris spoke in further detail about the architecture of the plan.

Commissioner Sanchez asked how many spaces are designated for disabled-accessible and also is there any designated spaces for electric or plug-in cars? Ms. Morris replied that she did not have the exact number of disabled-accessible spaces but that is being planned according to Code and with regards to electric vehicles, they are considering looking at that on the first floor of the garage but it has not been incorporated into the plan yet, but it is under discussion and seems like a good idea.

Commissioner Martinez asked the developers if they are also working on a project at the transit center in the City of Claremont and if you are, how that is moving along. Ms. Morris replied yes, they are in fact, also working on a project in Claremont, it is called the Claremont South Village, the city is still working on their specific plan and they are tracking closely behind that. As mentioned in the presentation, their focus with Village Partners is transit-oriented development and walkable spaces so that is what they really target with their projects. Commissioner Martinez commented that he guessed we were either a step ahead or a baby step with our specific plan already developed then. Ms. Morris said definitely.

Commissioner Sahagun commented that this is quite an undertaking and it's beautiful and then asked what is the closest project to Montclair that they have completed that they could see. Mr. Henry replied that they entitled a project in Brea called La Floresta. The project was sold

to another developer so they did not execute on that. Most of their experiences in the west side of Los Angeles, Marina del Rey, Santa Monica, and Westwood and projects in downtown Los Angeles, working for previous owners for other companies. Commissioner Sahagun asked if they intend to entitle and then market it and sell it or do they intend to build it out themselves. Mr. Henry replied they intend to build it out themselves. They are part way into construction documents as we speak. Commissioner Sahagun commented that the project could still be sold at a later time. Mr. Henry commented that even though that is true, their intention is to build it out.

Chair Rowley commented there was some discussion about the northeast corner of the property, there was discussion about the parking structure, whether it was going to be private owned or a city project, because that would certainly be an important element of this project having adequate parking spaces. Director Diaz replied the northeast corner of the site is reserved for a future parking structure so the tract map reflects that as a separate lot and its only purpose at this moment is for parking. In the plan right now, it shows 27 parking spaces for the project and this would be the interim step before a parking structure is ultimately built on site. Whether who does it or not is not part of this project. What you are previewing is a service parking lot with 27 parking spaces because of the dog park on the north corner of that which will serve this project until something else has been developed at a later time. Chair Rowley asked if that is something we, the city, would undertake and it would be our parking structure. Director Diaz replied the details are yet to be worked out, but is not part of this project.

Commissioner Sanchez asked with regard to that parking area, he understood that those spaces might be public and he gets that staff might be still working on that, but the spaces are to be public spaces, right? Director Diaz stated the intent for those parking spaces is to support visitors and commercial uses that are in that area that is intended to be short-term parking to benefit the eventual commercial uses of that site. That will be a large of what a perm structure would be for that location. Those spaces will be for use by the project visitors and customers. Commissioner Sanchez asked about Building 1 there is parking as well and are those the same for the public or for the actual apartments within that building. Director Diaz replied that those parking spaces at Building 1 will be for the residents in that building. Commissioner Sanchez asked about all other Buildings, Building 2, 3 and 4, would be within the garage.

Chair Rowley opened the public hearing.

Bruce Culp, resident of Paseos, commented he was concerned about the northeast property and it looked like there was a park there with reserved parking. He was not too concerned about the number of parking spaces, it is built right next to a transcenter, with multi-modes of transportation to get to that location as well as to leave that location. Parking is obviously an issue everywhere but in this place we should be heavily promoting residents living there should know that this is a transit-oriented district. He, himself, does not even own a car so the future is people not owning cars and should be using public transit and should be limiting those parking spaces and getting people out of their cars and into public transportation. He commented the last slide showed the rooftops showing solar panels and he asked is there

going to be solar panels at the top of all the buildings and his request to the city is that the city make that a requirement. With regard to electric charging stations, he sure would like to see the Planning Commission or City Council make that a requirement. State of California has a big initiative to get clean energy and zero greenhouse gas usage and any involvement going on from here on out really needs to start setting that example, the City of Montclair needs to do their part, using clean energy and solar panels. His second question went along with someone else's comment about the availability of electric charging stations, Level 2 sounds like there is an idea by the developers but he would like to see the Planning Commission or City Council make that a requirement. Community Development Director Diaz replied that the solar panels on the roof are actually part of their project, he believed there are new state laws that require multi-family to incorporate solar panels to affect energy costs and impacts. Those things on the roof are intentional and will be there. With respect to the electric charging stations, you have already heard from the developer that they are considering using those for their parking structure and he believed there are some state requirements now for the minimum number of spaces to be included in projects of this size and nature. We are planning for that and so is the developer for these projects. Mr. Henry stated they are on early stages of looking into that but certainly car charging ready stations will be available, the quantity has not yet been determined.

Michael Gather, a resident of the Arrow Station community, adjacent to the proposed project area, wondered if there will be a connection between Birch Street and this new development. Director Diaz replied yes to the pedestrian connection between the two projects. *[Ms. Morris further showed a site plan that showed the approximate location via Zoom.]* Commissioner Sahagun commented that as he passed through Arrow Station, he saw a big sign saying that it will connect to the new development. So, he was glad to see that. Is the block wall being removed? Director Diaz commented it was not possible as originally envisioned so the provision was made for a pedestrian access point in between Building 4. What it does is it leads from the Birch Street endpoint at Arrow Station, cuts through the building and leaves you at the north side of Birch Street at the other side right at the Station Promenade so that you can either go to the station or you can go to other points within the project area or maybe even down Fremont to the mall. Mr. Gather asked if the walkway was underneath or on the surface. Director Diaz stated that it is within the building, not underneath. Mr. Gather asked when the access would be started. Mr. Henry replied apologized and stated that he did not have the construction schedule in front of him but they were looking to start it in the first quarter 2021 and it's about a 24-month construction process, the garage will be one of the first buildings built and then the other buildings around it will be done and will take about one and one-half year to have it complete enough to have access through there.

Director Diaz commented that the solar panels on the roof are actually part of their project, he believed there are new state laws that new multi-family development and other projects of this size incorporate solar panels to save in energy costs and impacts.

earing no requests to comment, Chair Rowley closed the public hearing.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Chair Rowley adjourned the meeting at 7:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Laura Embree". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Laura Embree
Recording Secretary