



## **Staff Report**

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CONSIDERATION OF PRELIMINARY DESIGN REVIEW FOR A PLANNED DEVELOPMENT REZONING, AND TWO LOT SUBDIVISION FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF TWO SINGLE FAMILY HOMES AT 802 MIRAMAR TERRACE; APN(S): 044-211-090 & 145-140-410; APPLICATION. NO.: 2010-0043

Honorable Mayor and Council Members:

### **Summary**

The City has received a Preliminary Design Review application for a Planned Development Rezoning, two-lot Subdivision and Single family Design Review for the construction of two single family homes at 802 Miramar Terrace. The project would occur in two phases: phase one would include the Planned Development Rezoning and Subdivision; phase two would include Single Family Design Review for the construction of two new single family homes.

Preliminary Design Review provides an opportunity for early identification of issues and alternatives that should be considered by the applicant before submitting a formal development review plan for the project. Preliminary Design Review is not intended to require the City Council to provide specific direction regarding an application since the Council has not received public comment.

Preliminary Design Review involves minimal staff review: Staff does not check plans for completeness, analyze compliance with zoning standards, or examine environmental impacts. Comments and suggestions made during Preliminary Design Review are completely non-binding on the City Council. Staff will work with the applicant to incorporate and address all of the Council's comments in future submittals.

After the Preliminary Design Review, the first phase of the subject project would require formal review by the Planning Commission for a recommendation for the proposed Rezoning and Subdivision. The City Council would subsequently approve or deny the proposed project. As the project site planning (i.e., lot design, layout, setbacks, etc.) is dependent upon the Rezoning, the applicant is asking for the Council's comments on the project prior to deciding whether to prepare plans for a formal submittal.

### **Site Conditions**

The subject two-acre property is located in a single-family neighborhood between the side (east) property line of Notre Dame de Namur University (NDNU), and the rear (west) property lines of a row of developed single family properties on Miramar Terrace. The property is vacant, rectangular

in shape and has an approximate average slope range of 28-35% from east to west. The property is vegetated with native grasses and mature trees.

## **Discussion**

### **Project Description**

The applicant proposes to rezone the site to a Planned Development District, subdivide the property into two lots and construct two new single-family homes. The proposed new lots would be rectangular in shape, and approximately one-acre in gross land area. Lot One would be accessed from a privately owned portion of Miramar Terrace. Lot Two would be accessed via a shared driveway access easement across Lot One. Detailed home plans have not been submitted. However, it appears that each lot would have a two story home built into the slope near the west side property line (adjacent to NDNU). Lot One would also include a sport court or pool. It appears that six trees would need to be removed to allow construction of the homes and other site improvements.

The applicant proposes to rezone the lot to Planned Development due to the practical difficulties of subdivision under the current R1-E zoning classification. For example, the property is located along the curve of a private road, and could not provide standard roadway frontage for two lots. The project would also not be capable of providing a net lot area of one acre per lot, because the roadway for Lot Two would be subtracted from the total area of Lot One. The Planned Development rezone would allow modifications to development criteria such as the frontage requirements and net lot area standards of the site provided that the project remains consistent with the General Plan. In addition, rezoning to Planned Development would allow subdivision of the property without making exceptions to the City of Belmont Subdivision Ordinance.

### **Project Analysis**

As noted above, Preliminary Design Review involves minimal staff review and staff does not check plans for completeness, analyze compliance with zoning standards, or examine environmental impacts. However, in order to assist the Council in its evaluation of the proposed project and to facilitate more meaningful direction to the applicant, staff provides the following:

### **Rezone to Planned Development (PD) - Conceptual and Detailed Development Plans**

As discussed above, the project entails the establishment of a Planned Development District for the subject site; approval is subject to the review provisions of Section 12 (Planned Unit Development or “PD” District) of the Belmont Zoning Ordinance. Unlike properties in other zoning districts, properties seeking a PD designation are governed by a two-step review process: First, general issues of land use, site plans and circulation plans are reviewed by way of an application for a Conceptual Development Plan (CDP). After approval, more detailed issues – such as building architecture, landscaping, parking layout, and lighting – are evaluated by way of an application for a Detailed Development Plan (DDP).

## **Preliminary Design Review Assessment**

In evaluating the project at this preliminary stage of the development review process, the focus of discussion should be on three questions:

1. Is the proposed land use appropriate for the site?
2. Is the proposed intensity of land uses appropriate for the site?
3. Is the arrangement or distribution of proposed land uses appropriate for the site?

### **1. Is the proposed land use appropriate for the site?**

The proposed single-family residential use is permitted in the R1-E Zoning District and appropriate for the site.

### **2. Is the proposed intensity of land uses appropriate for the site?**

The subject property's RL (Low Density Residential) General Plan Designation permits from one to seven units per acre. The project would include one dwelling unit per acre, consistent with this designation. The subject site would be rezoned to Planned Development, so as to allow flexibility in the standards for net lot area, roadway frontage, and setbacks, but the applicant intends to conform to the maximum height (28 feet) and total floor area (4,500 sq. ft.) requirements of the R1-E Zoning District. Additional investigations (geotechnical, tree assessment, grading and drainage) will be required to assess actual impacts to the subject property.

### **3. Is the arrangement or distribution of proposed land uses appropriate for the site?**

The applicant consulted with the Belmont-San Carlos Fire Department regarding emergency access, prior to submitting the project site plan. The applicant's approach to the site layout is to lower the proposed home into the hill at the east side of the site in order to respect existing private views from properties on Miramar Terrace, and reduce tree removal impacts. Staff believes that there is a significant amount of hardscape proposed for Lot One, and that this is partially a function of the width of the access road/driveway, and the inclusion of a large sport court/pool for this property. Staff would recommend that the applicant consider removing the sport court from Lot One and narrowing the access road/driveway to meet the minimum standards prescribed by the Belmont-San Carlos Fire Department. In addition, pervious materials should be used on access ways/driveways and walkways to the maximum extent feasible.

## **General Plan / Vision Statement**

Review of this matter is consistent with the General Plan and Vision Statement.

## **Fiscal Impact**

None at this time; a fee was collected in order to cover the cost of staff time for the preparation of this report.

**Public Contact**

No notice was required for this matter other than the posting of the agenda.

**Recommendation**

The expressed purpose of Preliminary Design Review is to, “inform the decision makers about the project and its general features...” Council members are under no obligation to provide comment; however, your views may be helpful to the applicant in preparing a formal application. Staff recommends that any comments offered by Council members be directed only at the three issues raised in this memo.

**Attachments**

A. Conceptual Plans

Respectfully submitted,

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Damon DiDonato  
Senior Planner

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Carlos de Melo  
Community Development Director

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Greg D. Scoles  
City Manager

**Staff Contacts:**

Damon DiDonato  
(650) 637-2908  
[ddidonato@belmont.gov](mailto:ddidonato@belmont.gov)

Carlos de Melo  
(650) 595-7440  
[cdemelo@belmont.gov](mailto:cdemelo@belmont.gov)