



Legislation Details (With Text)

File #: 23-289 **Version:** 1 **Name:**
Type: Public Hearing Item **Status:** Agenda Ready
File created: 3/20/2023 **In control:** Planning Commission
On agenda: 4/5/2023 **Final action:**
Title: SUBJECT: General Plan Amendment #22-05, Fahrens Creek Specific Plan Amendment #5, Zone Change #432, Establishment of Residential Planned Development (RP-D) #78, and Vesting Tentative Subdivision Map #1326 initiated by ISEA International, property owner, for an approximately 10.76 acre parcel generally located on the south side of Cardella Road, between El Redondo Drive and Horizons Avenue (1250 Cardella Road). The General Plan Amendment would change the General Plan land use designation from Office Commercial (CO)/Neighborhood Commercial (CN) to Low Density Residential (LD). The Fahrens Creek Specific Plan Amendment would change the land use designation for the Specific Plan from Office Commercial/Neighborhood Commercial to Low Density Residential. The Zone Change would change the Zoning designation from Planned Development (P-D) #50 to Residential Planned Development (RP-D) #78. The Vesting Tentative Subdivision Map would subdivide the parcel into 53 single-family lots, ranging in size from 5,000 square feet to 6,718 square feet, *PUBLIC HEARING*

ACTION PLANNING COMMISSION:

Recommendation to City Council

- 1) Environmental Review #22-50 (Negative Declaration)
- 2) General Plan Amendment #22-05
- 3) Fahrens Creek Specific Plan Amendment #5
- 4) Zone Change #432
- 5) Residential Planed Development (RP-D) #78

Approve/Disapprove/Modify:

- 1) Environmental Review #22-50 (Negative Declaration)
- 2) Tentative Subdivision Map #1326

(subject to City Council approval of General Plan Amendment #22-05, Fahrens Creek Specific Plan Amendment #5, Zone Change #432, and Establishment of Residential Planned Development (RP-D) #78)

CITY COUNCIL:

Approve/Disapprove/Modify:

- 1) Environmental Review #22-50 (Negative Declaration)
- 2) General Plan Amendment #22-05
- 3) Fahrens Creek Specific Plan Amendment #5
- 4) Zone Change #432
- 5) Establishment of Residential Planned Development (RP-D) #78

SUMMARY

The subject site is an undeveloped 10.76-acre lot located in Northwest Merced at 1250 Cardella Road. The subject site is generally located on the south side of Cardella Road, between El Redondo Drive and Horizons Avenue (Location Map at Attachment C). The General Plan Amendment would change the General Plan land use designation from Office Commercial (CO)/Neighborhood Commercial (CN) to Low Density Residential (LD). The Fahrens Creek Specific Plan Amendment would change the Specific Plan land use designation from Office Commercial/Neighborhood Commercial to Low Density Residential. The Zone Change would change the Zoning designation from Planned Development (P-D) #50 to Residential Planned Development (RP-D) #78. The Tentative Subdivision Map would subdivide the parcel into 53 single-family lots, ranging in size from 5,000 square feet to 6,718 square feet. The proposed density of the subdivision would be approximately

4.93 dwelling units per acre. This density would comply with the proposed General Plan designation of Low Density (LD) Residential, which allows between 2 to 6 dwelling units per acre.

RECOMMENDATION

Planning staff is neutral with this proposal and is not recommending approval or denial. The Planning Commission may recommend approval or denial of Environmental Review #22-50 [Negative Declaration], General Plan Amendment #22-05, Fahrens Creek Specific Plan Amendment #5, Zone Change #432, and Establishment of Residential Planned Development #78; and approve or deny Tentative Subdivision Map #1326 (subject to City Council adopting the General Plan Amendment, Fahrens Creek Specific Plan Amendment, Zone Change, and Establishment of Residential Planned Development #78) including the adoption of the Draft Resolutions at Attachments A and B of Staff Report #23-289, subject to the conditions in Exhibit A and the findings/considerations in Exhibit B of each attachment.

Sponsors:

Indexes:

Code sections:

Attachments: 1. Attachment A- PC Resolution for GPA FCSPA ZC RPD Establishment.pdf, 2. Attachment B - PC Resolution TSM.pdf, 3. Attachment C - Location Map.pdf, 4. Attachment D - Land Use Map.pdf, 5. Attachment E - Site Map.pdf, 6. Attachment F - Residential Land Use Table.pdf, 7. Attachment G - Residential Zone Development Standards.pdf, 8. Attachment H - Residential Design Standards.pdf, 9. Attachment I - TSM Findings.pdf, 10. Attachment J - Urban Design.pdf, 11. Attachment K - Initial Study.pdf, 12. Attachment L - Presentation.pdf

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
4/5/2023	1	Planning Commission	recommended for denial	Pass

Planning Commission Staff Report

Report Prepared by: Francisco Mendoza-Gonzalez, Associate Planner, Development Services Department

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PUBLIC HEARING

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DISCUSSION

Project Description

The proposed project is located in Northwest Merced on the south side of Cardella Road, between El Redondo Drive and Horizons Avenue (1250 Cardella Road) (Location Map at Attachment C). The project consists of a General Plan Amendment, Specific Plan Amendment, Zone Change, and the Establishment of Residential Planned Development (RP-D) #78. The General Plan Amendment would change the General Plan land use designation from Neighborhood Commercial (CN)/Commercial Office (CO) to Low Density Residential. The Specific Plan Amendment would change the land use designation of the Fahrens Creek Specific Plan from Neighborhood Commercial/Commercial Office to Low Density Residential. The Zone Change would change the Zoning designation from Planned Development (P-D) #50 to Residential Planned Development (RP-D) #78. The Establishment of Residential Planned Development (RP-D) #78 would establish a Site Utilization Plan for approximately 10.76 acres with a land use designation of Low Density (LD) Residential. Refer to the Map at Attachment D for the proposed land use changes.

In addition to the applications above, the applicant is proposing to subdivide the approximately 10.76 acres into a residential subdivision with 53 single-family homes. The proposed subdivision does not include the creation of any courts or cul-de-sacs, but it will require creating three new streets, expanding two streets with frontage improvements (Gaucho Drive, and Cardella Road) and extending two roads (El Redondo Drive and Horizons Avenue) up to Cardella Road as shown on the map at Attachment D. Given that the proposed subdivision is under 60 units, the development would not be subject to the City’s recently adopted Regional Housing Needs Allocation Unit Production Plan.

The applicant has not proposed any elevations or sample site plans. The applicant is proposing that the development be subject to the development standards of the R-1-5 Zone found in the Zoning Ordinance under Table 20.08-2 Development Standards for Single-Family Residential Zoning Districts. The development standards include requirements for minimum lot sizes, lot dimensions, maximum lot coverage, minimum building setbacks, maximum building height, etc. (Attachment F). These standards would be adopted as the standards for Residential Planned Development (RP-D) #78. Even though the applicant does not have proposed elevations, the exterior design would be required to comply with the City’s standard design requirements for single-family homes as shown under Merced Municipal Code Section 20.46.020 - Design Standards for Single-Family Dwellings and Mobile Homes (Attachment G). These standards cover different design elements such as roof pitch, roofing material, exterior materials, window treatment, etc. These standards would also be adopted as standards for RP-D #78.

Surrounding uses as noted in Attachment C.

Surrounding Land	Existing Use of Land	City Zoning Designation	City General Plan Land Use Designation
North	Agriculture (across Cardella Road)	County Jurisdiction	Office Commercial (CO)
South	Undeveloped Land (pending residential subdivision)	Planned Development (P-D) #50	Village Residential (VR)

East	Undeveloped Land	Planned Development (P-D) #50	Village Residential (VR)
West	Undeveloped Land	Planned Development (P-D) #57	Village Residential (VR)

Background on the Urban Village Concept

The subject site is currently part of a planned urban village residential neighborhood. The Urban Village Concept goes back to 1990 with the Merced 2030 - How Should We Grow?, a process which analyzed the various growth and expansion options available to the City. As a result of this study, it was determined that Merced’s growth pattern for new growth areas should be based on mixed-use, pedestrian friendly, and transit-friendly design principles, known as the Urban Village Concept. As a follow-up to this planning process, the City commissioned an urban design study for an 8,000-acre portion of Northern Merced which resulted in the publication of the North Merced Conceptual Land Use Plan and Merced Villages Design Guidelines in late 1991. This established the basic “urban design” policy direction used in preparation of the *Merced Vision 2015 General Plan* published in 1997, and the *Merced Vision 2030 General Plan* (Chapter 6 Urban Design Concepts is provided at Attachment J).

Approval of this proposal would prevent the creation of the Urban Village Residential Neighborhood that was originally intended for this neighborhood when it was annexed into the City in 2003. The urban village neighborhood concept is intended to create a high-density neighborhood (through multi-family, town houses, small single-family lots, etc.) that surround a regional commercial center (minimum of 10 acres) as is currently reserved for this site. The high-density residential surrounding the commercial is called an Inner Village. These Inner Villages allow a density between 10-36 dwelling units per acre. Surrounding the Inner Village is the Outer Village which has a reduced density between 4-12 dwelling units per acre. The commercial land is the central part of the Urban Village Residential concept which is intended to be sustained by the surrounding high density residential units because it creates a neighborhood where residents can easily walk to work, commercial amenities (retail/restaurants), and entertainment opportunities. This is similar to the mixed-use developments found in Downtown Merced. This land use development concept is intended to promote active/walkable neighborhoods with accessible amenities that would not be car-dependent resulting in less pollution and more environmentally friendly development. The approval of this land use change would eliminate the commercial uses that are needed for the Urban Village Residential concept to function. With the loss of commercial land there would also be a loss in job creation and amenities to the community, but an increase in housing.

The property owner has indicated that there has been minimal interest from commercial developers to develop this land. They noted a challenge for commercial developers is the subject site being located on the edge of the City limits in a part of town that is mostly undeveloped with low traffic counts. Due to these challenges, the property owner is requesting a land use change to low density residential for a single-family home subdivision to fulfill a high housing demand in Merced having vacancy rates under 1% over the past few years.

Surrounding Projects

The subject site (approximately 10.7 acres) was annexed into the City in 2003, as part of the Fahrens Creek North Annexation which incorporated approximately 152.19 acres into the City limits. This annexation followed the annexation of the Fahrens Creek II annexation, approved earlier in 2003. Both annexations were approved with a land use policy that would support the Urban Village concept with 10-acres of commercial surrounded by an inner village residential (minimum 10 dwelling units per acres) and subsequently surrounded by outer village residential with densities between 2 and 6 dwelling acres.

Surrounding the project site are some recently approved entitlements, many of which have not been constructed yet. To the east is the Sage Creek Apartment Complex (248 units on 13.5 acres), to the south is Sage Creek subdivision (103 single-family homes on 16 acres), and to the west is the Royal Woods Estates (113 single-family lots on 16 acres with 3.60 acres reserved for future multifamily). Building permits have not been submitted for any of the surrounding projects. A final map has been approved for the Sage Creek subdivision and grading work/construction is in progress. Approving this subdivision would connect the surrounding sites up to an arterial road in Cardella Road via extension of two collector roads (El Redondo Drive and Horizons Avenue), further developing the street network in the area - along with extending utilities such as sewer and water main lines to other parts of north Merced.

Findings/Considerations

Please refer to Exhibits B of the Draft Planning Commission Resolutions at Attachment A and Attachment B of Staff Report #23-289.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Draft Planning Commission Resolution - General Plan Amendment/Fahrens Creek Specific Plan Amendment/Zone Change/Establishment of Residential Planned Development (RP-D) #78
- B. Draft Planning Commission Resolution - Tentative Subdivision Map
- C. Location Map
- D. Land Use Map
- E. VTSM #1326 Layout
- F. Table 20.08 - 1 Permitted Land Uses in the Residential Zoning Districts
- G. Land Use Table 20.08-2- Development Standards for Single-Family Residential Zoning Districts
- H. Section MMC 20.46.020 - Design Standards for Single-Family Dwelling and Mobile Home
- I. MMC 18.16.080 - Information Required (for Tentative Subdivision Maps)
- J. Urban Design (Portion of Chapter 6 from General Plan)
- K. Initial Study (Negative Declaration)
- L. Presentation