



City of San Marino

Staff Report

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TO: Chair and Members of the Planning Commission
FROM: Isidro Figueroa, Community Development Director
BY: Camillia Martinez, Associate Planner
DATE: January 28, 2025

SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL FOR CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT CASE NO. CUP 24-03 TO CONSTRUCT 33 RESIDENTIAL UNITS WITHIN 7, 2-STORY BUILDINGS, A 3,312 SQUARE-FOOT CLUBHOUSE, A 6'-8" VEHICLE ENTRANCE GATE, AND ASSOCIATED PARKING AREA CONSISTING OF 98 SPACES AND 3 CARPORTS AT 1151 OXFORD ROAD. (THE HUNTINGTON LIBRARY)

STRATEGIC PLAN CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

Engaged and Connected Residents
Well-Maintained Infrastructure
Beautiful, Preserved, Single-Family Neighborhoods

BACKGROUND

The applicant proposes to construct 33 residential units within seven two-story buildings consisting of 34,724 square feet (sq ft), a 3,312 sq ft clubhouse, a 6 foot - 8 inch vehicle entrance gate, and 98 parking spaces.

The project is located at 1151 Oxford Road on a 4.79-acre project area within the 207-acre Huntington Library campus in the Historical and Cultural (H&C) zone.

Pursuant to San Marino Municipal Code (SMMC) section 23.05.01(B), the project requires the following:

- **CUP 24-03 (New Buildings and Parking Areas)**

- *No use, building, parking area, access or other structure shall be established, constructed, enlarged or modified in the H&C zone without the prior application for and grant of a conditional use permit pursuant to the provisions of article 07 of this chapter*

PROJECT BACKGROUND

General Plan: Historical and Cultural

Zoning: H&C

A.I.N.: 5328-012-001

Location: The subject property is located at 1151 Oxford Road between Oxford Road and Avondale Road.

Existing Use: The 4.79-acre project area on the Huntington Library Campus is located near an existing avocado grove.

Surrounding Uses: The Huntington Library is surrounded by one and two-story single-family homes. The properties in the north-east are in Area District II, in the south-east Area District III, in the south-west in Area District I, in the west side Area District IE, and to the north-west the City of Pasadena.

TREE PRESERVATION

According to Appendix B-1 of the CEQA Categorical Exemption, the project boundary has a total of 698 trees, and the project proposes to relocate 3 trees onsite, relocate 92 trees offsite, and remove 201 trees. The project proposes to install new trees that will complement the project and compensate for the loss of the removed trees.

The Historical and Cultural zone is not subject to the City's Tree Preservation Ordinance SMMC section 23.19.01. Therefore, this project does not require approval from the Planning Commission to remove trees.

HISTORICAL PRESERVATION

The subject property is not identified on the Citywide Historic Resources Survey Report as a potential historic resource.

According to Appendix I of the CEQA Categorical Exemption, Dudek's cultural resources inventory for the Huntington Library Scholar's Grove Housing Project identified four resources within the API that would be directly and physically affected by the proposed Project. These resources are contributing landscape features of the Huntington property's designed historic landscape and include North Palm Drive, the allée of Guadalupe Island Palm trees lining North Palm Drive, North Drive, and Mausoleum Drive. Based on the analyses presented in this report and in Appendix E, implementation of the Project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of any of these four historical resources.

DISCUSSION

PROJECT ANALYSIS

CUP 24-03 (New Buildings and Parking Areas)

The applicant proposes to construct 33 residential units within seven buildings consisting of 34,724 square feet (sq ft), a 3,312 sq ft clubhouse, a 6'-8" vehicle entrance gate, and 98 parking spaces.

The 33 residential units will be contained within seven, two-story buildings with the following configurations:

- Building Type 1: 3 buildings with each one containing 6 attached units
- Building Type 2: 1 building containing 4 attached units
- Building Type 3: 2 buildings with each one containing 3 attached units
- Building Type 4: 1 building with one unit

Each dwelling unit on the site includes 1 parking space on the proposed parking lot, with an additional 1 parking space per five units for guest parking.

The four parking areas closest to Orlando Road contain 43 parking spaces. Within those parking areas, there will be three solar carports covering 14 parking spaces. The remaining 48 parking spaces are provided behind all the residential structures which are not visible from the street.

Site Design

Architecture

The site will be developed with seven two-story multi-family buildings. The four different floor plans (Type 1, 2, 3, and 4) are designed with a Spanish architectural style. The buildings are finished with smooth troweled stucco, precast concrete trim, metal railings, metal grille, decorative ceramic tile, wood trellis, wood rafter tails, aluminum-clad wood Jeld-Wen Sitaline EX

windows, and missions clay tile 2-piece barrel in red color. Color schemes include Snowbound and Toque.

Air conditioning condensers for all dwellings are at the ground level. The condensers are all located at the rear elevation of the buildings.

The common open space "Wendy Munger Commons" near the center of the site is proposed to be 3,312 square feet in area with amenities including a patio, community room, community kitchen, media lounge, mail room, conference room, and lobby.

Walls/Fences, Lighting, and Landscaping

An existing 6-foot tall fence along with private driveway access to the northern property line will be replaced with a larger driveway entrance improved with 6-foot-8-inch tall pilasters and a solid or perforated metal 27-foot- 2.5-inch wide driveway gate. The proposed changes will serve as the main point of entry for the project. Gate and fence details are found on sheet A23a of attachment #1.

The project proposes a variety of new trees listed on sheet L3. The new trees will border Orlando Road and will surround internal streets, pedestrian walkways, and the project. Additionally, a variety of shrubs and ground covers will also be planted. Approval of a final landscape and irrigation plan is required consistent with the City's Zoning Ordinance and the project's conditions of approval such as the ones listed below:

- *Native plants. New plant material in landscaped areas shall include at least 25 percent native plant species selected from those listed by the California Native Plant Society in the Calscape website specific to the Western San Gabriel Valley. Existing plant material, if preserved, shall not be subject to this requirement.*
- *Drought tolerant plants. Notwithstanding section 23.16, at least 50 percent of new plant material in landscaped areas shall be low-water use plants. Plant selection shall reflect water conservation through the use and grouping of plants that are well adapted to the particular site and require similar water needs (same hydrozones), and climatic, geological and topographical conditions. Existing plant material, if preserved, shall not be subject to this requirement.*
- *Trees, shrubs and groundcover. New trees shall consist of both evergreen and deciduous varieties, the distribution of which shall be the applicant's choice providing that no more than 50 percent of trees shall be deciduous. Existing trees, if preserved, shall not be subject to this*

requirement. At least five different species of shrubs and groundcover shall be used in planter areas.

- *Water Efficient Landscaping.* New irrigation systems outlined in landscape and irrigation plans subject to the California State Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance shall conform to the requirements of such ordinance and section 23.16 to achieve water efficient landscaping.
- *Dry landscaping.* No more than 20 percent of any landscaped area shall contain dry landscaping of decomposed granite, bark, or decorative pebbles, rocks, and boulders.

Parking

The objective design standards for multi-family housing within the H&C zone requires one stall per unit, plus guest parking of one stall per five units. All proposed parking spaces will be provided within the open parking areas. Within those parking areas, there will be three solar carports covering 14 parking spaces. The four parking areas closest to Orlando Road contain 43 parking spaces, and the remaining 48 parking spaces are provided behind all the residential structures which are not visible from the street.

CONFORMANCE WITH THE OBJECTIVE DESIGN STANDARDS FOR MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

The proposed Project is located in the Historical and Cultural zone. The project is consistent with the required development and objective design standards identified in SMMC 23.05.03, as shown below.

Objective Design Standards	Requirement	Proposed	Complies?
Density	20 dwelling units per acre	6.9 dwelling units per acre	Yes
Height	Maximum 35 feet and no more than two stories	30 feet	Yes
Lot Coverage	Maximum 60 percent	13.3%	Yes
Site Design			
Site Planning and Orientation	architectural monumentation framing the entry to include at least one of the following:	Front driveway gate	Yes

	trellis columns, archway, gate, or wall		
	a clearly identifiable pedestrian path of entry to the site from the public right-of-way	Side pedestrian gate near S Bound Drive	Yes
Entryway design. Building and unit entryways shall provide all of the following	Unit number identification	Located on the unit entrances	Yes
	Landing area of at least four feet by four feet in size;	Landing areas 4'-2" or larger	Yes
Circulation, Vehicular, and Pedestrian	Principal vehicular access into residential developments shall be through an entry drive rather than a parking aisle.	Proposed entry drive	Yes
	All structures, facilities, parking areas, amenities, common areas and open space areas within a development shall be internally connected by pedestrian pathways	Internally connected by pedestrian pathways	Yes
Parking	Parking shall be provided on-site in on-grade or underground structures, parking lots, or attached garages. Carports may be used if sufficiently shielded from view from the public right-of-way.	Carports shielded from the public right-of-way	Yes
	Multi-family residential projects shall provide residential vehicle parking of at least one stall per unit, plus guest parking of	98 parking spaces provided	Yes

	one stall per five units.		
Open Space and Common Areas	Projects of more than 10 units shall feature a gathering space with a structure that permits group activities such as shared meals with reasonable amenities provided such as a kitchen, patio, or BBQ area, in addition to an outdoor passive recreation amenity which may include a community garden, outdoor seating area, or multipurpose lawn.	The 3,312 sq ft clubhouse has a kitchen and patio	Yes
Building Design			
Roof Treatment	Roof materials, colors and applications. Projects shall comply with all applicable objective standards in the Pre-Approved Roof Materials, Colors, and Application list	Mission Clay Tile in 2-piece barrel in red color	Yes
Building Facades	Unit types. There shall be a mix of at least two different unit types with varied façade features within the same residential unit cluster.	4 different building types	Yes
	End units shall include a minimum of 15 percent fenestration area on their side elevations.	End units have 15.3% fenestration	Yes
Windows Doors and Balconies	Window materials shall comply with all applicable objective standards of the City's Pre-Approved	Jeld-Wen Sitrine EX or Andersen E-Series or Marvin Ultimate	Yes

	Window Material List.		
Materials	Exterior façade materials. At least two materials shall be used on any building façade, in addition to glazing, railings and trim.	Materials: Plaster & Wood	Yes
Colors	The number of colors appearing on the entire building exterior, excluding the roof, shall be a minimum of two and a maximum of four colors (or tones of the same color), including trim and accent colors	Colors: Snowbound & Toque	Yes
Site Details			
Landscaping	The maximum area permitted for lawn shall be 60 percent of the total landscaped area on site.	Proposed 15% turf area	Yes
Pavement	The first 20 feet of a vehicular driveway entry shall be composed of at least one of the following treatments and shall be provided for the full width of the driveway: pavers, stamped or scored concrete, stone, brick, exposed aggregate.	The proposed driveway entry is precast pavers	Yes
Refuse Collection Areas	Screening. Trash, green waste, organic waste, and recycling collection areas shall be screened from public view.	Trash screened from public view	Yes
Utility and Mechanical Equipment	Ground-mounted mechanical, electrical, and utility equipment shall be screened or hidden	All equipment is hidden from public view	Yes

	from view of the public street.		
Mail Box Locations	Mailboxes shall be placed either at an on-site location adjacent to or incorporated into a common area for all residents, or at individual units.	Mailboxes located in the Wendy Munger Commons	Yes
Exterior Lighting	All pedestrian pathways, vehicle parking areas, bicycle parking areas, structure entries, trash enclosures, and landscaped areas, and common open space areas shall be illuminated for safety and security.	Illuminated pathways provided	Yes

Other Objective Design Standards - SMMC 23.05.03

The objective design standards identified in SMMC 23.05.03, include the requirements concerning site design, building design, and site details. The project meets the requirements as elaborated below.

Site Design

- Residential common building entrances and individual residential unit entrances oriented to a public right-of-way shall have transitions from the street consisting of stoops, porches, or other covered front entries.
 - The building designs include stoops and porches for all the unit entrances.
- The front yard setbacks of street-facing residential ground floor units shall include a minimum four-foot width landscaped area.
 - The street-facing residential ground floor units have a landscape area width ranging from 4'-8" to 5'-5" at minimum.
- Driveways shall be at least nine feet in width and may be located in side yard setbacks, but shall not be less than two feet from the side yard property line.
 - All the proposed interior drive lanes are at least 20 feet wide or larger. The drive lane is not located within the side area setbacks.
- Parking areas shall be internally connected for vehicular purposes and shall use shared driveways within the development.
 - All the parking areas are internally connected.

- Parking facilities shall be located within 500 feet of building entrances. Parking is prohibited in front and side yard setback areas and between the building frontage and a public sidewalk
 - All the parking areas are located closer than 500 feet to all building entrances and are not located within the front or side yard setbacks.

Building Design

- Overhangs shall not exceed 24 inches into the yard setbacks.
 - The proposed roof overhangs are 1.5 feet and do not encroach on the required setbacks.
- Roof height shall be varied with a minimum of a two-foot to maximum four-foot vertical difference between a minimum 30 feet and a maximum 50 feet horizontally.
 - The roof height of the buildings varies, starting at 2.6 feet and not exceeding 4 feet.
- Floor variation. Buildings of two or more stories and wider than 30 feet shall be designed to differentiate the ground floor and upper floor(s) through at least one of the following techniques:
 - At least two sizes, proportions or patterns of fenestration;
 - The buildings are designed with two patterns of fenestration with the window designs.
- Window and door trim. Windows and doors shall either be trimmed or recessed. When trimmed, the trim material shall not be less than three and one-half inches in width by three-quarter inch in depth when protruding from the wall. Foam trim is prohibited on the ground floor. When recessed, the building primary siding material shall cover the recessed edge faces and wrap toward the interior face of the window or door glazing by at least three inches in depth.
 - The windows are proposed as recessed with stucco covering the recessed edges continuing from the primary facade.

Site Details

- Refuse Collection Areas. Design. Enclosures shall be designed with the same primary wall materials and colors as the nearest building within the development. Enclosures shall be either opaque fencing or walls, and include an opaque gate. Corrugated metal, plastic, and chain link fencing with or without wooden/plastic slats, is prohibited. Enclosure dimensions shall conform to solid waste provider dimensions.
 - The trash enclosure design matches the design of the main buildings with smooth troweled stucco, clay tile roof, and painted door doors.
- Proximity to residences. Enclosures shall not be located within 20 feet of any adjacent property zoned for or occupied with residential use, and

from any pedestrian path or vehicle driveway. Enclosures shall be located no more than 100 feet from a residential unit.

- The trash enclosure is located approximately 60 feet away from the closest residential building.
- Utility and mechanical equipment shall not be located within any required open space area.
 - None of the utility or mechanical equipment are located within any required open space.

Community Outreach

The Huntington Library sent a project information letter to 310 neighboring properties. Additionally, the Huntington Library created a project website that can be accessed through the following link: <https://huntington.org/scholars-grove-housing-huntington>

On April 23, 2024, staff provided a general overview of the Scholar's Grove project during the 6th Cycle Housing Element community conversation that took place at the San Marino Community Center. Since the project site is identified in the Housing Element as an anticipated site to be developed with 33 housing units, the project was highlighted during the Housing Element public hearings that took place for both the City Council and Planning Commission on the following dates:

- October 23, 2024 Planning Commission
- November 13, 2024 City Council

Staff proactively created a project website to provide project details and public hearing information. The project website is available through the following link: www.SanMarinoCA.gov/ScholarsGrove

6TH CYCLE HOUSING ELEMENT (2021-2029)

The project is identified in the City's adopted 6th Cycle (2021-2029) Housing Element (Housing Element) as a site within the 207-acre Huntington Library Campus anticipated to be developed with 33 housing units to assist in accommodating the City's Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) during the planning period.

ENVIRONMENTAL FINDING

The project is for the construction of 33 residential units within seven buildings consisting of 34,724 square feet (sq ft), a clubhouse of 3,312 sq ft, a new 6 foot - 8 inch vehicle entrance gate, and 98 parking spaces. Pursuant to Section

21084 of the California Public Resource Code, the proposed project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines, Article 19, Section 15332, Class 32 (Infill Development Projects), and there is no substantial evidence demonstrating that an exception to a categorical exemption pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, Section 15300.2 applies.

CUP 24-03 (New Buildings and Parking Areas)

Pursuant to SMMC Section 23.06.05(B)(3), the Commission shall approve the application if it finds all of the following to be true:

- 1. That the establishment, maintenance or operation of the use or building applied for will not, under the circumstances of the particular case, be detrimental to the health, safety, peace, morals, comfort or general welfare of persons residing in or working in the area of such proposed use nor be detrimental or injurious to property or improvements in the neighborhood or to the general welfare of the City; and**

The proposed project will not be detrimental to the health, safety, peace, morals, comfort, or general welfare of persons residing in the area as noise levels, air quality standards, emissions thresholds, wastewater generation, and water demand as outlined in the CEQA Exemption analysis included as attachment 4; the project would not have a significant effect on the environment as defined by CEQA.

The project is proposed within a 4.79-acre area within the 207-acre Huntington Library campus, which provides a substantial land area to accommodate the residential project and amenities without being detrimental to the safety, peace, and general welfare of the campus and surrounding community.

The project is designed in accordance with the adopted objective design standards for multifamily residential within the H&C zone. Additionally, the project is consistent with the City's adopted General Plan and Housing Element, which identifies the project site as anticipated to be developed with 33 housing units to assist in accommodating the City's RHNA during the planning period.

As such, this project meets this finding.

- 2. That the site for the proposed conditional use is adequate in size and shape to accommodate the yards, walls and fences, parking and loading, landscaping and other development features prescribed in this Chapter or required by the Commission in**

order to integrate said conditional use with the land and uses in the neighborhood; and

The 4.79-acre project area is adequate in size and shape to accommodate the residential project, inclusive of all the proposed yards, walls, fences, associated parking, and other amenities within the 207-acre Huntington Library campus. The proposed parking areas will be screened by heavy integrated landscaping that will provide a transition between the surrounding single-family homes along Orlando Road to the project.

The proposed landscape offers a variety of new trees listed on sheet L3. The new trees will border Orlando Road and will surround internal streets, pedestrian walkways, and all of the buildings. A variety of shrubs and ground covers will also be planted, as identified in L3.01.

Therefore, this project meets this finding.

3. That proposed conditional use will not have a detrimental effect upon the nature, condition and development of nearby uses and buildings; and

The proposed project will not have a detrimental effect on the nature and existing use of the Huntington Library and the surrounding single-family neighborhoods. The proposed units will house scholars from the Huntington Library, which offers an integrated living environment separate and local from the other single-family living environments.

As such, this project meets this finding.

4. That the site for the proposed conditional use will relate to streets and highways adequate in width and pavement to carry the kind and quantity of traffic such use would generate.

The project would not generate any new trips and would not result in operational deficiencies to the surrounding streets of Orlando Road, South Allen Avenue, South Sierra Bonita Avenue, Oxford Road, and San Marino Avenue. The proposal is located within a Low Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) area and qualifies as a local-serving project.

In 2020, the City Council adopted, under Resolution R-20-18, a new VMT methodology and threshold for identifying transportation-related impacts pursuant to the requirements of SB 743.

Therefore, this project meets this finding.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the information submitted to the record, staff recommends that the Planning Commission:

1. Determine that based on the whole of the administrative record, the proposed project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15332, Class 32 (Infill Development Projects), and that there is no substantial evidence demonstrating an exception to the categorical exemption pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 applies;
2. Find that the proposed project meets the required findings; and
3. Approve the project with the attached conditions of approval.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Architectural Plans
2. Landscape Plans
3. CUP 24-03, 300' Radius Map
4. Categorical Exemption
5. Categorical Exemption Appendices
6. Topo Survey
7. Draft PCR 25-02 with Conditions of Approval