



City of Santa Barbara California

PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

REPORT DATE: August 5, 2010
AGENDA DATE: August 12, 2010
PROJECT ADDRESS: 320 W Pueblo Street (MST2003-00152)
 Santa Barbara Cottage Hospital (SBCH) Modernization Plan
TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Planning Division, (805) 564-5470
 Danny Kato, Senior Planner *DK*
 Suzanne Riegle, Assistant Planner *SR*

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

On March 24, 2005, the Santa Barbara Cottage Hospital (SBCH) Modernization Plan was approved by the Planning Commission, and is currently under construction. Recent changes in both state and federal law require the hospital to maintain sufficient provisions and medical supplies to operate for 96 hours in the event of an emergency. Because of these changes, the hospital is requesting a Substantial Conformance Determination to allow the expansion of the approved basement floor area by 10,600 square feet (s.f.) to accommodate the storage of such provisions. The proposal does not increase the building's footprint or height. The request would require City Council to approve an allocation of 10,600 s.f. of new non-residential square footage under SBMC§28.87.300 under the dual designation of Community Priority and Economic Development.

II. REQUIRED APPLICATIONS

The discretionary applications required for this project are:

1. A Substantial Conformance Determination that the additional construction of 10,600 square feet of nonresidential development is consistent with the previously approved the Development Plan Approval. (SBMC §28.87.300 & 28.94.050)
2. Recommendation to City Council to allocation 10,600 s.f. of additional non-residential square footage to the project under Economic Development with a dual designation as a Community Priority.

III. RECOMMENDATION

Staff requests the Planning Commission to: 1) Provide staff with comments regarding the supportability of a Substantial Conformance Determination (SCD); and 2) Recommend that City Council approve the Economic Development and Community Priority square footage allocation.

IV. SUBSTANTIAL CONFORMANCE

The Community Development Department staff is responsible for making substantial conformance determinations, and depending on the scope of the request, this can occur with or without Planning Commission's input. The applicant requested a Level 4 Substantial Conformance Determination, which requires formal input from the Planning Commission because although Staff is inclined to grant this request, we feel that the Planning Commission's input is necessary in order to make the determination.

	Permitted	Proposed
Main Hospital	745,480 net s.f.	10,600 net s.f. addition (1.4%)
Parking Spaces	1,372 spaces	1,372 spaces *

The proposed project revision would meet the General Acute Care Hospital Facility land use requirements specified in SP-8 Hospital Zone (SBMC§28.49) and the General Plan.

The proposed project is an approximately 1.4% increase in square footage over the previously approved and permitted project. The project area is located in Land Use Area A, which is identified as the General Acute Care Hospital Facility and is located between Oak Park Lane on the west, Junipero Street on the north, Bath Street on the east and Pueblo Street on the south.

SBCH proposes additional basement storage area for the purposes of storing the increased emergency provisions that are now required under national and state regulations, to enable the hospital to sustain operations for 96 hours in the event of a disaster. A memorandum from SBCH Facilities Management Department dated January 2010 is included as an attachment to Exhibit C. The memorandum documents the space allocation requirements for each identified supply and/or equipment required to meet both state and federal requirements.

Although the SCD request is for the additional construction of 10,600 square feet in the basement, the only real change is a reduction in the amount of grading. The approved project included over excavation in the area of the proposed basement, which was required as part of the foundation of the building, with the subsequent filling of the area with dirt so that the area was not useable. The proposed basement addition would simply eliminate the 5,500 cubic yards of imported fill that was approved as part of the previous project, thus reducing the short-term construction impacts by reducing the total number of required truck trips that would have been required for imported soil. Staff requests the Commission's input on whether the proposal substantially conforms to the approved project.

V. ISSUES

A. DESIGN REVIEW

This proposed basement expansion project would not require review by the Architectural Board of Review because the improvements are subterranean. The proposed project does not affect the approved elevations of the project or site planning. The proposal will not increase the

finished height of the building, change the building footprint or increase the approved buildings mass, bulk and scale.

B. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

A Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) identified significant but mitigable impacts and a significant unavoidable impact related to long-term transportation and circulation impacts created by the approved project. Pursuant to CEQA, the Planning Commission adopted the EIR for this project on March 24, 2005. Each of the adopted required mitigation measures outlined in the EIR were incorporated into the proposed conditions of project approval in PC Resolution No. 020-05 attached as Exhibit A. Each mitigation is being implemented as outlined in the adopted mitigation monitoring and report program that was attached to the final EIR to ensure their compliance during project implementation (PRC Sec.21081.6).

Traffic & Parking

The approved project traffic impacts were analyzed in the adopted EIR. The proposed basement expansion has been reviewed by the Transportation Division Staff and who has determined that the project does not contribute to any additional traffic and circulation impacts.

The parking ordinance requires one parking space per sleeping unit for hospital uses. During the review of the permitted project, a parking demand study was prepared and incorporated into the EIR in order to determine the actual parking demand. The parking demand determined that based on the number of patients, number of employees, and types of services provided the parking would be greater than the number of beds proposed for the hospital. Based on the additional square footage use as storage only, Transportation Staff determined that no additional parking would be required.

Grading & Archaeological

The location of the proposed basement expansion is an area that has been previously disturbed by the approved construction. No additional cut would be required, however; there will be a decrease of required fill by approximately 5,500 cubic yard. The decrease in required fill will reduce the number of required truck trips needed to transport imported fill from an off-site location. Although discovery of archaeological artifacts is not anticipated, the MMRP has outlined mitigations measures that were incorporated into the resolution as conditions of approval. Conditions for unanticipated discovery of artifacts during grading activities are identified in Resolution No. 020-05.

An addendum to the EIR has been prepared to document that the project revisions will not cause additional impacts and reduces grading impacts.

C. DEVELOPMENT PLAN APPROVAL/SQUARE FOOTAGE ALLOCATION

On May 20, 2003, the City Council granted the SBCH project a dual designation of Community Priority and Economic Development, with a preliminary allocation of 140,000 s.f. from the Economic Development category.

Although, the SBCH upgrade and modernization project clearly met the definition of both a Community Priority and Economic Development project, due to the shortage of Community Priority square footage, City Council allocated the Development Plan Approval square footage from the Economic Development category. In 2005, the SBCH project requested an increase to the preliminarily approved allocation by 42,541 s.f., primarily in association with a previous request to expand the basement to accommodate the Hospital's storage requirements. Council approved an allocation of 182,541 s.f. from the Economic Development category on March 24, 2005.

If the Substantial Conformance Determination were to be granted, Staff would recommend that the allocation of 10,600 s.f. for the basement storage area be made from the Economic Development category under a dual designation as Economic Development and a Community Priority, due to the limited amount of Community Priority square footage available. The resulting total allocation will be for the approved SBCH project and SCD project would be 193,141 s.f. (182,541 s.f. + 10,600 s.f.) from the Economic Development category under a dual designation as Economic Development and Community Priority.

This seems like a large amount of square footage for a single development. However, it is important to note that SBCH agreed to transfer approximately 158,862 s.f. of Existing Commercial Development Rights square footage back into the Economic Development category bank as part of the approval of the St. Francis residential project. Additionally, a previous St. Francis Medical Center project had 30,000 s.f. allocation of Community Priority square footage that was returned to the City because of the expiration of the approval for the project. One could argue that overall, SBCH is only requesting a little over 4,000 s.f. from the City.

VI. NEXT STEPS

Staff will make the decision to approve or deny the substantial conformance, using the input provided by the Planning Commission. If approved, the project will be scheduled on a City Council agenda for preliminary and final square footage allocation of square footage with a dual designation as a Community Priority and Economic Development.

Exhibits:

- A. PC Resolution Number 020-05
- B. Existing and proposed Basement Plan (under separate cover)
- C. Applicant's Substantial Conformance Determination request letter, dated April 8, 2010
- D. Addendum to Final EIR (under separate cover)