



Meeting Date: June 19, 2019

File: PLN2018-13128 and CEQ2018-01049

Location: 1150 Walsh Avenue, a 3.32-acre parcel on the south side of Walsh Avenue approximately 1,055 feet east of Scott Boulevard, APN: 224-58-003; property is zoned Heavy Industrial (MH).

Proposal: **Adoption of a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND); and Architectural Review** for the demolition of three, one-story industrial buildings totaling 37,443 square feet to construct a four-story, 160,450 square foot data center building, with back-up diesel generators, electrical substation, and site-improvements. *Project includes a Zoning Administrator Modification to increase maximum building height.*

CEQA Determination: Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND)

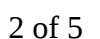
Project Planner: Debby Fernandez, Associate Planner

Staff Recommendation: **Approve** subject to conditions

Points for consideration for the Architectural Committee

1. A Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) has been prepared for the project in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The MND and Notice of Availability were posted on the City's website at www.santaclaraca.gov/ceqa and circulated for 30-day review on March 6, 2019 and closed on April 5, 2019, in accordance with CEQA requirements.
2. The MND identified potentially significant quality, cultural resources, tribal resources, biological resources, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous material, and noise impacts with project development that with implementation of mitigation measures identified in the MND and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) would reduce the potentially significant impacts to less than significant.
3. The Planning Department received agency and public comment letters in response to the MND from the Native American Heritage Commission, Valley Water, Better Neighborhoods, Adams Broadwell Joseph & Cardozo, and Robert Sarvey and Rob Simpson. Responses to comments received on the MND have been prepared.
4. The MND, Responses to Comments received on the MND, and MMRP are posted on the City's website at: <http://santaclaraca.gov/Home/Components/BusinessDirectory/BusinessDirectory/295/3649>.
5. The project site is currently designated Heavy Industrial in the City of Santa Clara 2010-2035 General Plan (General Plan) and is zoned Heavy Industrial (MH). The proposed use is consistent with the General Plan and zoning designations for the property.
6. The project site is bounded by Walsh Avenue to the north, a one-story office building to the east, one-story office and warehouse building to the west and one-story warehouse building to the south. A General Plan Map and Zoning Map are provided below illustrating the surrounding land use classifications.
7. The site is currently developed with three single-story industrial buildings that are currently unoccupied, surface parking area and minimal site landscaping that are proposed for demolition. The project would remove eight trees and plant 17 24-inch box replacement trees on-site; in excess of the 2:1 mitigation requirement.
8. The project includes public improvements along the frontage to connect neighboring properties with the construction of a complete street section consisting of a four-foot landscape strip and five-foot sidewalk. The project site is currently absent a contiguous sidewalk connecting adjacent properties. Tree planting

- ## Site Map



Zoning Map



Findings

- 1) *That any off-street parking area, screening strips and other facilities and improvements necessary to secure the purpose and intent of the Zoning Ordinance and the General Plan of the City are a part of the proposed development, in that:*
 - The project provides 40 on-site parking spaces consistent with the 1:4,000 parking requirement for data center uses. The project includes off-site public improvements along the public right-of-way fronting the project site and on-site landscape improvements in the parking areas. A four-foot clear landscape strip adjacent to the curb with a five-foot sidewalk behind are proposed to link adjacent properties and provide pedestrian access to the site consistent with complete streets design. The project also includes landscaping within the front building setback and parking areas in conformance with the development standards for the MH zoning district. At grade outdoor equipment would be screened from the public right-of-way behind the proposed building and adjacent building on the property to the west. Roof mounted equipment would be screened from view along the public-right-of-way by roof panels atop the new building.
- 2) *That the design and location of the proposed development and its relation to neighboring developments and traffic is such that it will not impair the desirability of investment or occupation in the neighborhood, will not unreasonably interfere with the use and enjoyment of neighboring developments, and will not create traffic congestion or hazard, in that:*
 - The project invests in the development of a Class A building structure and site improvements that will enhance the streetscape and increase property values by replacing derelict buildings, asphalt surface parking areas, and minimal landscaping on-the site and provide a

catalyst for future investment for enhancement and development opportunities in the project area.

- The project site is located within the MH zoning district. Data centers generate few employees and relatively infrequent delivery of materials; consequently, the Project is not anticipated to produce many vehicle trips. Moreover, a data center is a permitted use within the MH zoning district. Sufficient parking is provided to accommodate employee parking demands on-site and prevent spillover parking onto the public right-of-way. Ingress and egress are provided with the replacement of an existing driveway at the southeast corner of the site and construction of a new driveway at the southwest corner of the site to improve traffic flow along the street and site circulation on the property.

3) *That the design and location of the proposed development is such that it is in keeping with the character of the neighborhood and is such as not to be detrimental to the harmonious development contemplated by the Zoning Ordinance and the General Plan of the City, in that:*

- The project site is developed with three industrial buildings that are currently vacant and previously occupied by an auto body shop and warehouse uses. The project site is bordered by one-story commercial office and industrial warehouse uses and neighboring two-story office and industrial buildings. Data centers are a permitted use in the MH zoning district.
- The proposal is to redevelop and improve the project site with construction of a four-story, 160,450 square foot data center in a Class A structure with a strong, contemporary urban design that would improve the visual character of the zone. The project would include an electrical substation to serve the project and ancillary equipment (backup generators and above ground fuel storage tanks), loading dock, circulation and parking, and landscape improvements in conformance with the MH zoning district development standards and consistent with the development of data centers throughout the City. The project includes Zoning Administrator approval of a Modification to increase maximum building height from 70 feet to 71'4" to achieve the interior ceiling heights necessary to accommodate server operations within the building.

4) *That the granting of such approval will not, under the circumstances of the particular case, materially affect adversely the health, comfort or general welfare of persons residing or working in the neighborhood of said development, and will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injuries to property or improvements in said neighborhood, in that:*

- The project site is currently in poor condition and is an attractive nuisance for graffiti, trespassing, and dumping of materials. The proposal is to invest in the redevelopment of the site and improve the property with construction of a data center and associated improvements, that includes on-site security and gated entries. The project includes conditions of approval and would be subject to the City Code and the mitigation measures set forth in the Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program with project development to minimize impacts of development on neighboring properties.

5) *That the proposed development, as set forth in the plans and drawings, is consistent with the set of more detailed policies and criteria for architectural review as approved and updated from time to time by the City Council, which set shall be maintained in the planning division office, in that:*

The project supports high quality design in keeping with adopted design guidelines for industrial development and the City's architectural review process consistent with General Land Use Plan Policy 5.3.1-P3 as follows:

- The building design avoids the orientation of loading, service areas, and large expanses of blank walls facing toward the street.
- The bulk, scale and height of the building is appropriate for the industrial sector and approved data centers within the City.
- Façade elements and treatments are incorporated in the exterior building design to enrich the building appearance.
- Driveway entrances are appropriate in number and location and are emphasized by landscaping to provide a suitable focus and identification.
- A landscape planting plan for the site and public-right-of-way is proposed that includes a minimum 2:1 tree replacement ratio.
- The parking layout is designed for maximum efficiency and incorporates landscaping to minimize hardscape, provide shading to minimize heat absorption and reflection, and enhance the visual attraction of the property.
- The project provides pedestrian connections to neighboring development with the construction of a complete street section (4' landscape strip and 5' sidewalk) along the project frontage.
- Screening of ground mounted and rooftop equipment from view along the public right-of-way are integrated into the site and building design.
- The trash enclosure is incorporated within the building footprint so as not to be visible from the public right-of-way and is accessible for service pick up.
- Overhead utilities along the project frontage will be undergrounded in a public utility easement.
- Lighting of parking areas and building entrances are incorporated into the site and building design and will be directed downward so as not to reflect into the night sky, adjacent properties nor the public right-of-way.
- The site is design incorporates water conservation features that include permeable pavers, recycled water for landscape irrigation, LED lighting, cool roof system, and louvered curtain wall system to reduce solar heat gain.