



City of Santa Clara

1500 Warburton Avenue
Santa Clara, CA 95050
santaclaraca.gov
@SantaClaraCity

Agenda Report

21-956

Agenda Date: 7/28/2021

REPORT TO DEVELOPMENT REVIEW HEARING

SUBJECT

Action on a new data center at 2600 De La Cruz Boulevard

File No.(s): PLN2019-14128 and CEQ2020-01078

Location: 2600 De La Cruz Blvd, a 15-acre site located on the west side of De La Cruz Boulevard, APN: 230-03-105; property is zoned Heavy Industrial (MH).

Applicant: Dale Beverett, Data Center Infrastructures

Owner: C1-Santa Clara LLC, Cyrus One

Request: Architectural Review and Adoption of a Mitigated Negative Declaration to develop a 703,450 square feet four-story data center building, and Minor Modification to increase the building height to 85 feet and reduce the parking space requirements. The site was previously developed with a one story recycled paperboard mill and warehouse. The site is currently vacant and unpaved.

Project Data - See attachment 5 for larger size table

Lot Size: 15 acres	651,056 square feet		
	Existing Floor Area (sq.ft.)	Demolish (sq.ft.)	Proposed (sq.ft.)
Gross Floor Area	-	-	703,450
Lot Coverage	-	-	105,258 / 651,056 =
F.A.R.	-	-	703,450 / 651,056 =
Height	-	-	85'
Parking	-	-	141 spaces
Flood Zone	X		

Points for Consideration

- The Union Pacific Railroad tracks border the west side of the site. De La Cruz Boulevard is a major, six lane roadway bordering the site to the east. The Norman Y. Mineta San Jose International Airport is located directly across De La Cruz Boulevard to the east. A workplace environment design firm, One Workplace, occupies a warehouse space on the adjacent property south of the project site at 2500 De La Cruz Boulevard.
- The approximately 15 acre project site is in an area of the City of Santa Clara (City) that is developed with various industrial and commercial uses. Except for miscellaneous infrastructure, the project site is vacant, with portions paved and unpaved. The site was previously developed with a one story recycled paperboard mill and warehouse.

Zoning and General Plan

- The height of the proposed building at the top of the parapet is approximately 85 feet, which exceeds the 70-foot maximum permissible height in MH zoning district. The project will require a Zoning Administrator Modification to allow the proposed height.
- The project site is designated Heavy Industrial in the City of Santa Clara 2010-2035 General Plan (General Plan) and is zoned Heavy Industrial (MH). The Heavy Industrial General Plan and MH zoning designations allow data center facilities as a permitted use with new development at a maximum floor area ratio (FAR) of 0.45.
- General Plan policy 5.5.1 P9 states: For Data Centers on Light or Heavy Industrial designated properties, allow a 20 percent increase in the maximum allowed non residential square footage, provided that sufficient onsite land area is available to meet the parking requirements for other uses allowed under those designations, and provided that the increased intensity is compatible with planned uses on neighboring properties and consistent with other applicable General Plan policies.
- Proposed FAR is 1.08 and exceeds the maximum 0.65 FAR identified in the General Plan for the Heavy Industrial designation. Data centers are low employee and vehicle trip generating uses unlike office and other industrial uses permitted in the Heavy industrial sector, and therefore meets the intent of the General Plan designation for the site to reduce employment intensity and associated vehicle trips.

Mitigated Negative Declaration

- A Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) was prepared for the project by the California Energy Commission (CEC) as Lead Agency, including supporting documents to determine if the project would result in potentially significant or significant unavoidable impacts to the environment. On the basis of the MND, it has been determined that the proposed project, with the incorporation of mitigation measures, will not have a significant effect on the environment. The MND is attached to this report.
- The MND was prepared and circulated by the CEC for a 30-day period from January 23, 2020 to February 28, 2020, in accordance with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements.
- The CEC adopted the MND and granted a Small Power Plant Exemption (SPPE) for the Sequoia Data Center Project (19-SPPE-03) at a Public Business Meeting on August 12, 2020. The action by CEC to adopt the MND included mitigations that are required to be implemented with project development to reduce the potentially significant environmental impacts of the project to less than significant. The project Conditions of Approval which include the requirement for implantation and conformance with the specified mitigations in Condition C17.
- The MND is posted on the City's CEQA website<
<https://www.santaclaraca.gov/Home/Components/BusinessDirectory/BusinessDirectory/413/3649>>

Building Design

- The proposed data center building is oriented to face De La Cruz Boulevard at 169'-10" front setback and separated by street frontage landscaping and on-site parking. The backup generators would be located in a generation yard along the west and south sides of the building and would not be directly visible from the public right-of-way.
- The building would include 4 stories and would encompass approximately 703,450 square feet of gross area, of which approximately 64,025 square feet would be dedicated for administrative and office uses.
- The building would employ a steel structure and insulated pre cast panel cladding and has been designed to California Building Code (CBC) seismic standards. The building will be supported on a mat

slab foundation.

- The height of the proposed building would be 85' to the top of the roof parapet and in some areas 95' and 105'4" to the top of the metal roof screen and mechanical penthouses. The project includes a Minor Modification consistent with SCCC18.90 to allow a 21 percent increase building height above the 70' maximum permitted in the MH zoning district to 85'. Per SCCC 18.64.010, height of roof equipment screens and mechanical penthouses are exempt from the height restriction.
- The substation is located to the west at the rear of the data center building.
- An eight-foot decorative metal fence is proposed around the perimeter of the site and would include security gate entries across the driveway entrances.

Parking

- A total of 141 parking spaces are proposed. The applicant is requesting a Minor Modification to provide one space per 5,000 square feet of gross floor area while the requirement is one space per 4,000 square feet of gross floor area.

Trees and Landscaping

- The project includes public improvements along the frontage to connect neighboring properties with the construction of a complete street section consisting of a 7'-6" landscape strip and five-foot sidewalk. Tree planting is proposed within the 10-foot landscape setback behind and adjacent to the sidewalk as well.
- Landscaping is also provided along the perimeter of the property and is distributed throughout the parking area consistent with SCCC 18.50.120. Construction of the data center would require the removal of 66 trees on site. A total of 114 replacement trees minimum 36" box trees would be planted on and around the site. New landscaping would be drought tolerant and low maintenance, consisting of native and regionally appropriate trees, shrubs, and groundcover to be installed throughout the SDC site and along the property boundaries in similar hydrozones.
- Final tree removal and landscape plans, including potential off-site replacement, would be subject to review and approval by the Community Development Department with consultation with the City Arborist.

Community Outreach

- A notice of development was posted on the property at least 10 days prior to the scheduled public hearing.
- The notice of public hearing for this item was posted within 300 feet of the site and was mailed to property owners within 1,000 feet of the project site.
- The City has received no comments on the project.

Findings supporting the Staff Recommendation

- 1) *That any off-street parking area, screening strips and other facilitates and improvements necessary to secure the purpose and intent of this title and the general plan of the City are a part of the proposed development, in that;*
 - 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 7'-6" 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. Roof mounted equipment would be screened from view along the public-right-way by roof panels atop the new building.
 - The development proposed a Minor Modification to reduce the on-site parking requirement from the Zoning Code requirement of 1:4000 to 1:5000, resulting in 141 on-site spaces. As data centers are a low intensity employment use, this reduction is reasonable and will not result in spillover parking in the public right-of-way.
- 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.
 - The development is generally consistent with the City's Design Guidelines. Exterior building façade provides a mix of materials and textures to create interest.
 - Sufficient parking is provided to accommodate employee parking demands on-site and prevent spillover parking onto the public right-of-way.
- 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 this title and the general plan of the City, in that;*
- The development proposal is for a new data center, equipment yard, and substation consistent with the scale and character of data centers existing and approved for construction in the industrial sector.
 - The project provides building setbacks and landscaping along the street frontages consistent with surrounding properties.
- 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 vacant. 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, are 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. The policies and criteria so approved shall be fully effective and operative to the same extent as if written into and made*

a part of this title, in that;

- The development is a modern large-scale data center facility that is allowed in the MH Zoning District.
- The proposed development would create an aesthetically attractive building and would provide adequate on-site employee and visitor parking.
- 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-way is proposed.
- The project provides pedestrian connections to neighboring development with the construction of a complete street section (7'-6" 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.
- 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.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

A Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) was prepared for the project by the California Energy Commission (CEC) as Lead Agency, including supporting documents to determine if the project would result in potentially significant or significant unavoidable impacts to the environment. On the basis of the MND, it has been determined that the proposed project, with the incorporation of mitigation measures, will not have a significant effect on the environment. The MND was prepared and circulated by the CEC for a 30-day period from January 23, 2020 to February 28, 2020, in accordance with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements. The CEC adopted the MND and granted a Small Power Plant Exemption (SPPE) for the Sequoia Data Center Project (19-SPPE-03) at a Public Business Meeting on August 12, 2020. The action by CEC to adopt the MND included mitigations that are required to be implemented with project development to reduce the potentially significant environmental impacts of the project to less than significant. As a responsible agency for approving the site and architectural design of the project, the City may adopt the MND and MMRP prepared by the CEC.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no impact to the City for processing the requested application other than administrative staff time and expense typically covered by processing fees paid by the applicant.

PUBLIC CONTACT

On July 15, 2021, a notice of public hearing of this item was posted 300 feet of the project site and mailed to property owners within 1,000 feet of the project site. Planning Staff has not received public comments for this application.

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration prepared by the CEC; and Approve the Architectural Review to develop a 703,450 square foot four-story data center building, and Minor Modification to increase the building height to 85 feet and reduce the parking space requirements.

Prepared by: Tiffany Vien, Assistant Planner, Community Development

Approved by: Gloria Sciara, Development Review Officer, Community Development

ATTACHMENTS

1. Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND)
2. Conditions of Approval
3. Development Plans
4. Renderings
5. Project Data