

DATE ISSUED: February 16, 2005 **REPORT NO. PC-05-034**

ATTENTION: **Planning Commission, Agenda of February 24, 2005**

SUBJECT: SAMUEL FOX BUILDING TENTATIVE MAP.
PROJECT NO. 36122. PROCESS 4

OWNER/APPLICANT: CHAMPION SAM FOX, LTD. (Attachment 8)

SUMMARY

Issue(s): Should the Planning Commission approve a Tentative Map to allow the conversion of 21 residential units, three commercial units and one commercial parking unit, in a building located on the southwest corner of Broadway and 6th Avenue, in the Centre City Community Planning Area, into condominiums?

Staff Recommendation: APPROVE Tentative Map No. 103972.

Community Planning Group Recommendation: Per Bill Keller - Gaslamp Business Representative for the Centre City Advisory Committee (CCAC) - the CCAC has no objection to the condominium conversion and recommends approval.

Environmental Review: This project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act per Article 19, Section 15301(k), Existing Facilities.

Fiscal Impact: None, as Champion Sam Fox, LTD. is responsible for all processing costs for this project.

Code Enforcement Impact: There are no Code Enforcement violations associated with this project.

Housing Impact Statement: With the proposed conversion of 21 existing living units, three commercial units and one commercial parking unit into condominiums, there would be a loss of 25 rentals units and a gain of 25 for-sale units. This Tentative Map request was deemed complete subject to inclusionary affordable housing and relocation requirements.

BACKGROUND

The 0.213-acre site is located at 531 Broadway, on the southwest corner of Broadway and 6th Avenue, and lies within the Gaslamp Quarter Planned District of the Centre City Community Plan. The Samuel I. Fox Building (HRB# 127-079) was designated to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) on May 23, 1980 as a contributor to the Gaslamp Quarter Historic District. The District and the contributing buildings were designated locally on March 23, 1983.

The building was designed by William Templeton Johnson, a recognized local architect, in 1929 for Samuel I. Fox who utilized the building for the Lion Clothing Company. The Lion Clothing Company remained the sole occupant from 1929-1984. The building's design is influenced by the Mission Revival and Mediterranean styles, and includes cast iron decorative grills, terra-cotta sculptured spandrels between the third and fourth floors, heraldic lions in full relief, and an overhanging tile roof. Interior features include sixteen foot ceilings, antique oak paneling, and walnut window frames.

In 1984, the building underwent a Certified Rehabilitation according to the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. On February 27, 1998, building permit B200628-98 was issued to convert the upper three floors to residential lofts. There are no new architectural changes are proposed with the Tentative Map.

DISCUSSION:

Project Description: Presently the site consists of two lots, which sit at the southwest corner of Broadway and 6th Avenue and is surrounded by commercial office and retail development. The project proposes a Tentative Map to consolidate the two lots into one lot for the conversion of 21 existing residential rental units into 21 residential condominiums, three existing commercial rental units and one existing commercial parking garage and into four commercial condominium units (Attachment 5.) No construction is required for compliance with this Tentative Map.

Section 125.0410 of the San Diego Municipal Code requires that a Tentative Map be processed for the subdivision of land. According to San Diego Municipal Code Section 144.0444, Findings for Tentative Maps for Condominium Conversion, the decision maker may approve a Tentative Map for the purposes of the conversion of residential property into a condominium project if the decision maker finds that the proposed conversion complies with the requirements of the Subdivision Map Act and the San Diego Municipal Code. Development Services and CCDC Staff have reviewed the proposed condominium conversion, and determined that it complies with both the Subdivision Map Act and the Municipal Code.

Utilities: All utilities are currently underground.

Environmental Analysis: This project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act per Article 19, Section 15301(k), Existing Facilities

Conclusion: The Development Services Department staff has reviewed the request for a Tentative Map for the conversion of the 21 residential units, three commercial units and one commercial parking garage into condominiums. Staff has found the project to be in conformance with the applicable sections of the San Diego Municipal Code regulating Tentative Maps. Furthermore, Center City Development Corporation staff have determined that the proposed conversion is consistent with the Gaslamp Quarter Planned District and believe the required findings can be supported. Therefore, Development Services staff recommends that the Planning Commission acknowledge the Environmental Exemption and approve the project as proposed.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Approve Tentative Map 103972, with modifications.
2. Deny Tentative Map 103972 if the findings required to approve the project cannot be affirmed.

Respectfully submitted,

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Development Services Department

Peter Lynch
Development Project Manager
Development Services Department

ESCOBAR-ECK /PRL

Attachments:

1. Aerial Photo
2. Project Location Map
3. Community Plan Land Use Map
4. Project Data Sheet
5. Tentative Map Exhibit
6. 60 Day Notice of Filing Tentative Map for Conversion
7. Draft Tentative Map Resolution, with Findings and Conditions
8. Ownership Disclosure Statement
9. Project Chronology
10. Photo Survey