

**DATE ISSUED:** July 14, 2005 **REPORT NO.** PC-05-231

**ATTENTION:** Planning Commission, Agenda of July 21, 2005

**SUBJECT:** SORRENTO PUBLIC STORAGE - PROJECT NO. 37118. PROCESS 4

**OWNER/  
APPLICANT:** Public Storage, Inc./Pacific Planning Group, Inc. (Attachment 10)

### **SUMMARY**

Issue(s) - Should the Planning Commission approve the Sorrento Public Storage project to demolish four storage buildings; remodel one existing storage and office building; construct a three-story storage building; parking and landscaping on a 2.43 acre site located at 11303 Sorrento Valley Road within the Torrey Pines Community Plan area?

#### Staff Recommendation -

1. CERTIFY Mitigated Negative Declaration No. 37118 and ADOPT Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program; and
2. APPROVE for Coastal Development Permit No. 107026 and Planned Development Permit No. 221881.

Community Planning Group Recommendation - The Torrey Pines Community Planning Board voted, 11:0:0, unanimously to approve the project with conditions at their April 14, 2005 meeting. The community planning group's recommended conditions are discussed further in this report.

Environmental Review - A Mitigated Negative Declaration No. 37118 has been prepared for the project in accordance with State of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines. A Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Program will be implemented to reduce to a level below significance any potential impacts identified in the environmental review process.

Fiscal Impact Statement - All cost associated with the processing of this project are recovered by a deposit account maintained by the applicant.

Code Enforcement Impact - None with this action.

Housing Impact Statement - None with this action.

## **BACKGROUND**

The 2.43 acre site is located within the Torrey Pines Community Plan area in the IL-3-1 zone. The Torrey Pines Community Plan designates the site for industrial development (Attachment 1). The subject site is located west of Interstate 5 and east of Sorrento Valley Road at 11303 Sorrento Valley Road (Attachment 2). The adjoining lot to the south has three, one-story buildings with commercial and light industrial uses. Integrated Microwave and Air Trak are located north of the project in a two-story building. Several two-story office buildings are located to the west. Interstate 5 borders the project site to the east. The project site is presently developed as a self-storage facility (Attachment 3).

The east property line of the subject site abuts the Interstate 5. CalTrans acquired 1.43 acres in the rear portion of the project site in 2000 for the I-5/I-805 widening project. Prior to the acquisition, the property was 3.86 acres. Currently, CalTrans is constructing the expansion of Interstate 5 Freeway lanes.

## **DISCUSSION**

### Project Description

The proposed project includes the demolition of four self-storage buildings; remodel of a one-story building to an 8,751 square-foot storage and office building; construct a 94,344 square-foot, three-story storage building with parking and landscaping on a 2.43 acre site (Attachment 4). The total building square-footage of the site will be 103,095 square-feet.

The approvals required for this project are a Coastal Development Permit and Planned Development Permit. The project is located in the City of San Diego's Coastal Overlay Zone, non appealable area one, which requires a Coastal Development Permit. A Planned Development Permit is required to allow the project to deviate from the required 104 parking spaces and instead provide 35 parking spaces. The project conforms to all other requirements of the Municipal Code.

The existing one-story structure fronting Sorrento Valley Road will remain and be remodeled with an 1,475 square-foot addition to the existing storage building and new customer service office. A three-story storage building is proposed to be parallel to the east of one-story building. Both existing and proposed buildings are below the maximum thirty-foot height limit of the

Coastal Height Limit Overlay Zone. The proposed design and architectural style is contemporary. The three-story building elevations provide simple architectural projections and window insets that protrude and recess from the building façade, providing architectural relief and reducing the appearance of the overall mass (Attachment 5). The project adheres to all setback requirements and is less than the maximum floor area allowed by the zone.

The project proposes to maintain and improve the landscaping at the site. Existing mature trees will remain along Sorrento Valley Road. The project proposes additional trees, shrubs, and groundcover of ornamental and California native species. The area in front of the building facing Sorrento Valley Road will contain the greatest amount of planting. Planting areas also border the property lines. Large specimen evergreen trees are located throughout the perimeter of the property. Extensive landscaping encompasses the project site (Attachment 6).

### Community Plan Analysis

The proposal, which includes a new self-storage building and remodel of an existing building, is a compatible use within the Industrial designation and supportive of other industrial uses in the area. Self-storage facilities are permitted by the existing zone.

The goals of the Industrial Element of the Torrey Pines Community Plan recommend industrial development be well designed and aesthetically pleasing, minimize traffic impacts and protect environmental resources.

The storage buildings were designed to minimize the visual impact of the building scale when viewed from adjacent public rights-of-way. The primary east and west facing facades of the structure are enhanced by simple architectural details to minimize the perceived bulk and scale. A significant elevation change exists between Interstate 5 and the site so that the bulk of the structure is not visible from the freeway. The creation of a landscape buffer around the property conforms to the community plan objective for industrial development to screen buildings from the roadway. The proposed design retains many mature trees throughout the site and will incorporate extensive new landscaping to provide a visual buffer from Sorrento Valley Road. Native plants naturally occurring in the area are also proposed within the perimeter of the property to blend into the natural environment of the Torrey Pines Community. The proposed project is consistent with the policy goals of the Torrey Pines Community Plan.

### Environmental Analysis

A Mitigated Negative Declaration was prepared for the proposed project in accordance with the State of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines. The areas determined to be of potential significance include Historical Resources (Archaeology), Geology and Hydrology/Water Quality. These resources were evaluated by City staff and a Mitigated Negative Declaration No. 37118 was prepared. A Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program (MMRP) will be implemented for historical resources (archaeology) to reduce potential impacts to a level below significant.

A geotechnical report was prepared by Giles Engineering Associates, Inc. The study concluded no active fault, potentially active fault, or significant geological hazards exist.

A Water Quality Technical Report and On-Site Drainage Study were prepared for the project to address temporary Best Management Practices (BMP's), permanent BMP's and on-site drainage. Drainage discharge points and drainage flows would remain the same as currently existing on the site. Drainage will be directed by cross gutters and curbs into proposed catch basins and the storm drain system. The project would install catch basin fossil filters to treat stormwater runoff and reduce water pollution.

Cultural and historical resource sensitivity is high within the project area, including two archaeological sites within a half mile. The project site may contain undisturbed soils and mitigation monitoring is required during site grading. The Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Program is required to reduce potentially adverse impacts to historical resources (archaeology). No other mitigation is required for this proposed project.

#### Proposed Deviations

The project proposes a deviation from the parking requirements of the Municipal Code by providing 35 parking spaces where 104 spaces would be required. Land Development Code Table 142-05F specifies minimum parking requirement rate of one space per 1,000 square feet for all wholesale, distribution and storage uses. The San Diego Municipal Code does not differentiate the parking requirement for self-storage facilities from other storage uses. Staff has analyzed the data compiled for similar self storage facilities and typically require one parking space per 10,000 square feet of building space. Ten parking spaces would be required for the project at this rate. Public Storage implemented the one parking space per 10,000 square feet ratio in their site design and discovered available area to provide additional parking. To provide greater customer convenience, Public Storage incorporated 25 additional parking spaces into the site plan to provide a total of 35 parking spaces. Thirty-five spaces at this site represent a rate of one space per 2,946 square feet, where one space per 1,000 square-feet is required. Staff supports the request and no other deviations are proposed.

#### Community Planning Group Recommendation

The Torrey Pines Community Planning Board, April 14, 2005, recommend to unanimously approve the project (Attachment 7) with conditions. The four conditions are as follows:

1. That warm earth tones be used for building and roof.
2. That corporate color palette consisting of bright colors be held to a minimum.
3. That tall screening shrubs, consisting of native plant materials (Rhus, Toyon, etc.) be included to provided mid level screening in areas currently void of screening plant material along Sorrento Valley Road, i.e. along southwest wall facing SVR as well as other additional pockets currently open to viewed toward blank façade.

4. That tall screening shrubs, consisting of native plant materials (Rhus, Toyon, etc.) be included to provided mid level screening in areas currently void of screening plant material along Sorrento Valley Road, i.e. along southwest wall facing SVR as well as other additional pockets currently open to viewed toward blank façade.

Staff has evaluated these recommendations and has the following response.

1. That warm earth tones be used for building and roof.
2. That corporate color palette consisting of bright colors be held to a minimum.

Staff response:

Staff has included condition 50 in the draft permit (Attachment 8) requiring the roof and building colors be warm, earth tones with a minimum of bright, corporate colors. In working with the community, Public Storage agreed to use warm earth tone colors for the buildings and roof. The applicant worked with community's proposal and revised their plans. The trademark "Public Storage Orange" banding around all the buildings has been removed. Only the roll-up storage doors and the proposed signs will be "Public Storage Orange." The roll-up storage doors will not be visible from Sorrento Valley Road. The color of the roof would be sand. Casa blanca, orco white, and sand are the colors for the existing and proposed buildings. The proposed building has cobblestone-colored doors and automatic aluminum glass sliding doors. The customer service office will have a glass front on three elevations. The proposed building will also have glass window insets. Overall, the project would utilize warm, earth tone colors with a minimum amount of bright corporate colors.

3. That tall screening shrubs, consisting of native plant materials (Rhus, Toyon, etc.) be included to provided mid level screening in areas currently void of screening plant material along Sorrento Valley Road, i.e. along southwest wall facing SVR as well as other additional pockets currently open to viewed toward blank façade.

Staff response:

The applicant has accommodated the community planning group by providing California native plant species. Rhus integrifolia/Lemonade Berry and Heteromeles arbutifolia/Toyon are proposed as tall screening shrubs for areas fronting the building along Sorrento Valley Road. Baccharis pilularis/Dwarf Coyote Brush or Salvia sonomensis/Creeping Sage would be used as groundcover. In addition, large specimen trees, such as Pinus canariensis/Canary Island Pine and Liriodendron tulipifera/Tulip Tree, will be planted between the building and existing trees on site. Deciduous trees and shrubs will accent the entrance and customer service office. Furthermore, the applicant incorporated perimeter landscaping with large tree species to minimize the visual impact of the building as viewed from adjacent public rights-of-way.

4. That Liquidambar or other appropriate deciduous tree be the primary street tree so as to not shade out primary landscape screening to the east along project wall.

Staff response:

The Torrey Pines Community Plan does not provide a master street tree list for the community. The Liquidambar has been de-listed from the City of San Diego's Street Tree Selection Guide because the tree's fruit pods cause safety hazards in the public right-of-way in the way of tripping and falling, tree roots lift sidewalks, and the Xyllia disease is attacking the trees fruit pods. The applicant is maintaining all existing mature trees, except one, along the building fronting Sorrento Valley Road. City staff recommends the Canary Island Pine as the project's street tree for design continuity since the majority of the existing trees fronting Sorrento Valley Road are Canary Island Pine.

### Critical Project Features to Consider During Substantial Conformance Review

The proposed project has several design features which should not altered through a substantial conformance review process. The landscape design and colors of the buildings and roof should not be altered.

The project proposes to incorporate additional landscape areas and also maintain some mature landscaping. Existing Canary Island Pine trees are to be retained along Sorrento Valley Road with additional trees, shrubs, and groundcover. Trees around the perimeter of the project site provide screening, shade and diminish the scale of the existing and proposed buildings. The proposed trees and shrubs to be planted and maintained on site create a visual background to soften the building façade. Sorrento Public Storage's landscape design incorporates both native California and ornamental plant species. These design features should not be altered.

The color palette of the project's buildings and roof is to be warm, earth-tone colors, such as sand and casa blanca. The bright corporate colors should be kept to a minimum. Public Storage Orange, a color protected by trademark, will only be on the roll-up storage doors and proposed signs. The dominant building color will be warm, earth tones. Earth-tone colors create a serene compatibility with the existing developments and surroundings and should not be altered.

### CONCLUSION

The Sorrento Public Storage project conforms to the land use designation and design guidelines of the Torrey Pines Community Plan and the regulations of the Land Development Code, as allowed by a Planned Development Permit. The project as proposed is also compatible with the surrounding developments. Staff supports the requested parking deviation due to operation parameters unique to self-storage facilities. Draft conditions of approval have been prepared for the project (Attachment 8). Findings required to approve the project are included in draft resolutions (Attachment 9).

### ALTERNATIVES

1. Approve Coastal Development Permit No. 107026 and Planned Development Permit No. 22188, with modifications.

2. Deny Coastal Development Permit No. 107026 and Planned Development Permit No. 22188, if the findings required to approve the project cannot be affirmed.

Respectfully submitted,

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Marcela Escobar-Eck  
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HALBERT/CTC

Attachments:

1. Community Plan Land Use Map
2. Project Location Map
3. Aerial Photograph
4. Project Site Plan
5. Elevations
6. Landscape Development Plan
7. Torrey Pines Community Planning Group Recommendation
8. Draft Permit with Conditions
9. Draft Resolution with Findings
10. Ownership Disclosure Statement
11. Project Data Sheet
12. Project Chronology
13. Other Project Plans