



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Planning Commission Resolution 18662

General Plan Amendments

HEARING DATE: JULY 12, 2012

Date: July 5, 2012
Case No.: 2008.0762EMZC
Project Address: 835-845 JACKSON STREET
Zoning: Chinatown Residential Neighborhood Commercial District
65-N Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 0192/041
Project Sponsor: Linda Schumacher
Chinese Hospital Association
835-845 Jackson Street
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RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDING THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AMEND "POLICY 1.2 AND MAP 1 OF THE CHINATOWN AREA PLAN OF THE GENERAL PLAN TO FACILITATE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHINESE HOSPITAL REPLACEMENT AT 835-845 JACKSON STREET, BLOCK 0192, LOT 041, ADOPTING FINDINGS OF CONSISTENCY WITH THE GENERAL PLAN AND THE EIGHT PRIORITY POLICIES OF SECTION 101.1(B) OF THE PLANNING CODE.

RECITALS

1. **WHEREAS**, Section 4.105 of the Charter of the City and County of San Francisco mandates that the Planning Commission shall periodically recommend to the Board of Supervisors for approval or rejection proposed amendments to the General Plan.
2. **WHEREAS**, the Chinese Hospital campus (835-845 Jackson Street) currently consists of the Chinese Hospital at 845 Jackson Street, built in 1979; the Medical Administration Building at 835 Jackson Street (the original Chinese Hospital, built in 1924); and the Chinese Hospital Parking Garage, located directly behind the 1924 Medical Administration Building. The Chinese Hospital Association, (the "Project Sponsor") proposes to demolish the Medical Administration Building and the parking garage, construct a new, modern hospital building in their place, and remodel and refurbish the existing hospital building (the "project"). The proposed new hospital would be an acute care hospital with 54 acute care beds (the same number of licensed acute-care beds as in the existing Chinese Hospital) and a new skilled nursing facility with 22 beds.
3. **WHEREAS**, the Project Sponsor applied for environmental review on June 24, 2008. The San Francisco Planning Department (the "Department") determined that an Environmental Impact Report

was required and provided public notice of the preparation of such report on May 18, 2011. The Department published a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) on April 16, 2012. The Commission held a public hearing to solicit testimony on the DEIR on May 17, 2012. The Department received written comments on the DEIR from April 17 to May 31, 2012. The Department published the Comments and Responses on June 28, 2012. The DEIR, together with the Comments and Responses constitute the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR). The Commission certified the FEIR on July 12, 2012 in Motion No. 18660.

4. **WHEREAS**, in order for the project to proceed, "Policy 1.2 of the Chinatown Area Plan of the General Plan, which states "Promote a building form that harmonizes with the scale of existing buildings and width of Chinatown's streets" would need to be amended to exclude the area within the Chinese Hospital Special Use District to facilitate development of the project.
5. **WHEREAS**, in order for the project to proceed, the amendment of "Map 1 - Generalized Height Plan" of the Chinatown Area Plan to reference a height limit of 110 feet for the property at 835-845 Jackson Street, Block 0192, Lot 041 would be required.
6. **WHEREAS**, the General Plan consists of goals, policies and programs for the future physical development of the City and County of San Francisco that take into consideration social, economic and environmental factors.
7. **WHEREAS**, the General Plan shall be periodically amended in response to changing physical, social, economic, environmental or legislative conditions.
8. **WHEREAS**, Section 340 of the Planning Code of the City and County of San Francisco provides that an amendment to the General Plan may be initiated by the Planning Commission upon an application by one or more property owners, residents or commercial lessees, or their authorized agents.
9. **WHEREAS**, on May 8, 2012, at a meeting of the Board of Supervisors (the "Board"), Supervisor Chiu introduced amendments to the San Francisco Planning Code to (1) add Section 249.69 to create the Chinese Hospital Special Use District and (2) amend the San Francisco Zoning Map Sectional Maps ZN01, HT01, and SU01 to show the Chinese Hospital Special Use District and reflect a change in Height and Bulk classification from 65-N to 110-G.
10. **WHEREAS**, on May 8, 2012, Supervisor Chiu introduced a resolution before the Board urging the Commission to initiate and consider amendments to the General Plan concerning the Chinese Hospital Special Use District and replacement project. Accompanying that introduction was a Proposed Ordinance making the necessary amendments to the General Plan to implement the project. The Office of the City Attorney has approved the Proposed Ordinance as to form and it is attached hereto as Exhibit A.
11. **WHEREAS**, On May 30, 2012, the Project Sponsor submitted a request to amend "Policy 1.2 Promote a building form that harmonizes with the scale of existing buildings and width of Chinatown's streets" within the Chinatown Area Plan to add the language, "other than construction within the

Chinese Hospital Special Use District” to the second paragraph of the Policy, and to amend “Map 1 - Generalized Height Plan” of the Chinatown Area Plan to reference a height limit of 110 feet for the property at 835-845 Jackson Street, Block 0192, Lot 041.

12. **WHEREAS**, the Proposed Ordinance would amend the San Francisco General Plan by (1) amending “Policy 1.2 Promote a building form that harmonizes with the scale of existing buildings and width of Chinatown’s streets” within the Chinatown Area Plan to add the language, “other than construction within the Chinese Hospital Special Use District” to the second paragraph of the Policy and (2) amending of “Map 1 - Generalized Height Plan” of the Chinatown Area Plan to reference a height limit of 110 feet for the property at 835-845 Jackson Street, Block 0192, Lot 041 (collectively, the “General Plan Amendments”).
13. **WHEREAS**, on May 15, 2012, the Board approved the resolution urging the Commission to initiate and consider the General Plan Amendments.
14. **WHEREAS**, on June 7, 2012, the Commission adopted a resolution of intention to initiate the General Plan Amendments, by Motion No. 18642.
15. **WHEREAS**, on July 12, 2012, the Commission conducted a duly noticed public hearing at a regularly scheduled meeting to consider the General Plan Amendments.
16. **WHEREAS**, Section 4.105 of the City Charter and Section 340 of the Planning Code, require that the Commission consider any proposed amendments to the City’s General Plan and make a recommendation for approval or rejection to the Board of Supervisors before the Board of Supervisors acts on the proposed amendments.
17. **WHEREAS**, the General Plan Amendments are necessary for development of the project, which would promote the public necessity, convenience, and general welfare in that it would create a state-of-the-art hospital that is crucial for the continued operation and success of the Chinese Hospital and the Chinatown community that it supports. The project also serves to bring the Chinese Hospital into compliance with current laws and regulations, such as the Americans with Disabilities Act and SB 1953 (the Alfred E. Alquist Hospital Seismic Safety Act of 1983). Upon completion, the project would be well suited for modern healthcare practices and procedures that require more spacious facilities for new medical equipment leading to improved healthcare quality and safety for patients, and a safe and accessible work environment for hospital staff. The project would allow the Chinese Hospital to replace its two, three, and four-bed patient rooms with single patient rooms that utilize modern medical equipment. It would also create a new 22-bed skilled nursing facility that would improve the transition of patients from the acute care setting. By providing these essential healthcare services to the Chinatown area and the community residents, the project would promote the preservation of the Chinatown community, and thereby conserve and protect the existing cultural and economic diversity of the Chinatown neighborhood.
18. **WHEREAS**, the General Plan Amendments are consistent with and will promote the following relevant objectives and policies of the General Plan.

COMMUNITY SAFETY ELEMENT

Objectives and Policies

OBJECTIVE 1:

REDUCE STRUCTURAL AND NON-STRUCTURAL HAZARDS TO LIFE SAFETY AND MINIMIZE PROPERTY DAMAGE RESULTING FROM FUTURE DISASTERS.

Policy 1.3:

Assure that new construction meets current structural and life safety standards.

Policy 1.25:

Prepare for medical emergencies and pandemics.

The General Plan Amendments are necessary for the project, which would create a new, seismically secure hospital that would be in compliance with current laws and regulations, such as SB 1953 (the Alfred E. Alquist Hospital Seismic Safety Act of 1983) and Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD) requirements. The project would increase the availability of healthcare services and of medical professionals in Chinatown, which would better prepare the Chinatown neighborhood for emergencies and pandemics.

OBJECTIVE 2:

BE PREPARED FOR THE ONSET OF DISASTER BY PROVIDING PUBLIC EDUCATION AND TRAINING ABOUT EARTHQUAKES AND OTHER NATURAL AND MAN-MADE DISASTERS, BY READYING CITY INFRASTRUCTURE, AND BY ENSURING THE NECESSARY COORDINATION IS IN PLACE FOR A READY RESPONSE.

Policy 2.5:

Maintain a comprehensive, current Emergency Response Plan, in compliance with applicable state and federal regulations, to guide the response to disasters.

Policy 2.17:

Ensure the City's plan for medical response is coordinated with its privately owned hospitals.

The project would bring the Chinese Hospital into compliance with applicable seismic requirements and help ensure that the Chinese Hospital continues to operate at full capacity in the event of an emergency. The Chinese Hospital helps provide medical care and is part of the City's medical response in the event of a disaster.

URBAN DESIGN ELEMENT

Objectives and Policies

OBJECTIVE 1:

EMPHASIS OF THE CHARACTERISTIC PATTERN WHICH GIVES TO THE CITY AND ITS NEIGHBORHOODS AN IMAGE, A SENSE OF PURPOSE, AND A MEANS OF ORIENTATION.

Policy 1.3:

Recognize that buildings, when seen together, produce a total effect that characterizes the city and its districts.

Policy 1.5:

Emphasize the special nature of each district through distinctive landscaping and other features.

The project would include landscaping and street furniture that relate to the cultural character of the neighborhood. The theme of the plaza on Jefferson Street, and a mural proposed along Stone Street will include features complimenting the cultural heritage of Chinatown. The Chinese Hospital Association would also create a variety of features in the new building that would pay tribute to the historical relevance of the Medical Administration Building, such as photos, plaques, and explanations of the history of the Project Site.

OBJECTIVE 2:

CONSERVATION OF RESOURCES WHICH PROVIDE A SENSE OF NATURE, CONTINUITY WITH THE PAST, AND FREEDOM FROM OVERCROWDING.

Policy 2.6:

Respect the character of older development nearby in the design of new buildings.

Policy 2.8:

Maintain a strong presumption against the giving up of street areas for private ownership or use, or for construction of public buildings.

The project would be consistent with and respect the character of the architectural and historical context of the Chinatown neighborhood and surrounding buildings. Due to the unique massing and volume requirements for medical facilities, almost all hospital buildings require special considerations for bulk, and the proposed height and bulk are consistent with precedent from other hospital approvals. No street areas would be given up for private ownership.

OBJECTIVE 3:

MODERATION OF MAJOR NEW DEVELOPMENT TO COMPLEMENT THE CITY PATTERN, THE RESOURCES TO BE CONSERVED, AND THE NEIGHBORHOOD ENVIRONMENT.

Policy 3.1:

Promote harmony in the visual relationships and transitions between new and older buildings.

Policy 3.2:

Avoid extreme contrasts in color, shape and other characteristics which will cause new buildings to stand out in excess of their public importance.

Policy 3.4:

Promote building forms that will respect and improve the integrity of open spaces and other public areas.

Policy 3.5:

Relate the height of buildings to important attributes of the city pattern and to the height and character of existing development.

Policy 3.9:

Encourage a continuing awareness of the long-term effects of growth upon the physical form of the city.

The design of the project would respect the architectural context of the surrounding buildings. Similar to other buildings in the Chinatown neighborhood, the project would incorporate the horizontal design features of the existing structure. The new hospital would blend in with surrounding buildings and create a new open space along the Jackson Street frontage. The height of the new project would be similar to that of the retained structure and both buildings are compatible with the existing scale of the Chinatown neighborhood and reflect the importance of the Chinese Hospital to the community.

OBJECTIVE 4:

IMPROVEMENT OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD ENVIRONMENT TO INCREASE PERSONAL SAFETY, COMFORT, PRIDE AND OPPORTUNITY.

Policy 4.6:

Emphasize the importance of local centers providing commercial and government services.

Policy 4.12:

Install, promote and maintain landscaping in public and private areas.

Policy 4.13:

Improve pedestrian areas by providing human scale and interest.

The Chinese Hospital is a local center providing healthcare services to Chinatown residents. The new project would create an approximately 890 square foot landscaped seating area along Jackson Street that would provide an important rest point and open space for Chinatown residents. These landscaping and open space improvements would also wrap around and continue along James Alley adjacent to the Project Site.

CHINATOWN AREA PLAN

Objectives and Policies

OBJECTIVE 1:

PRESERVE THE DISTINCTIVE URBAN CHARACTER, PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURAL HERITAGE OF CHINATOWN.

Policy 1.2:

Promote a building form that harmonizes with the scale of existing buildings and width of Chinatown's streets.

Policy 1.4:

Protect the historic and aesthetic resources of Chinatown.

The General Plan Amendments would allow for development of a new hospital that would harmonize with the existing buildings in the Chinatown neighborhood. By providing healthcare services to the Chinatown area and community residents, the project would preserve the Chinatown community and thereby protect the existing historic and aesthetic resources of Chinatown. The project would also provide additional employment and business opportunities for Chinatown residents, which would further protect the cultural character of the neighborhood. The project would preserve the buildings' aesthetic contributions to Chinatown.

OBJECTIVE 2:

RETAIN AND REINFORCE CHINATOWN'S MUTUALLY SUPPORTIVE FUNCTIONS AS NEIGHBORHOOD, CAPITAL CITY AND VISITOR ATTRACTION.

The General Plan Amendments would allow the Chinese Hospital to continue operating at a high level and providing valuable healthcare services for Chinatown residents, which would preserve the urban role of Chinatown as a residential neighborhood. The project would also provide additional jobs that would support Chinatown's function as a capital city.

OBJECTIVE 4:

PRESERVE THE URBAN ROLE OF CHINATOWN AS A RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD.

Policy 4.1:

Protect and enhance neighborhood-serving character of commercial uses in predominantly residential areas.

Policy 4.2:

Control proliferation of uses that tend to crowd out the needed neighborhood services.

Policy 4.4:

Expand open space opportunities.

The General Plan Amendments would preserve and improve healthcare services for residents of the Chinatown neighborhood, which would preserve the urban role of Chinatown as a residential neighborhood. By providing healthcare services to the Chinatown area and community residents, the Chinese Hospital would protect and enhance the neighborhood serving character of Chinatown. Moreover, hospital and

medical center use is an important neighborhood service that would complement and not crowd out other neighborhood services. The project would also create new open space on Jackson Street and James Alley.

OBJECTIVE 6:

RETAIN CHINATOWN'S ROLE AS A CAPITAL CITY.

Policy 6.1:

Provide incentives for location and expansion of institutions and cultural facilities.

The General Plan Amendments would allow for the expansion of the Chinese Hospital, which has been a Chinatown institution since 1924. The project would also provide healthcare services for the Chinatown community, providing incentives for businesses to locate and expand in Chinatown.

19. **WHEREAS**, the General Plan Amendments meet the priority policies of Planning Code Section 101.1(b) for the following reasons.

A. That existing neighborhood-serving retail uses be preserved and enhanced and future opportunities for resident employment in and ownership of such businesses be enhanced.

The General Plan Amendments are necessary for development of the project and the project would not cause the reduction or loss of any neighborhood-serving retail use. While the project is under construction, there would be opportunities for local residents and businesses to perform the work and provide other services related to the project. Upon completion of the project, it would provide employment opportunities for residents of the Chinatown community. The project would also provide ancillary retail, employment, and ownership opportunities by helping to preserve and maintain the Chinatown neighborhood through the provision of much-needed and important healthcare services. Moreover, through the continued provision of important medical care to Chinatown residents, the project would develop and foster a rich community environmental that would produce economic growth and stability in Chinatown.

B. That existing housing and neighborhood character be conserved and protected in order to preserve the cultural and economic diversity of our neighborhoods.

The project would have no effect on existing housing. The project would preserve the Chinatown community, thereby conserve, and protect the existing cultural and economic diversity of the Chinatown neighborhood by providing healthcare services to the Chinatown area and community residents. Healthcare is crucial to the long-term stability and prosperity of any neighborhood and this is especially true of Chinatown, which contains both residential and commercial uses. Moreover, the project would not introduce any new use to Chinatown, the hospital and medical center use has co-existed with residential, commercial, educational, and religious uses in Chinatown for over 100 years..

C. That the City's supply of affordable housing be preserved and enhanced,

There is not any housing on the site and the project would not reduce the amount of affordable housing in the Chinatown neighborhood.

- D. That commuter traffic not impede MUNI transit service or overburden our streets or neighborhood parking.

The Project Site is accessed via Stockton and Powell Streets, which are important transportation corridors. The project would be well served by public transit, as there are several Muni lines in the immediate vicinity of the project. The Powell-Hyde and Powell-Mason cable car lines are also a short walk from the project and provide access to downtown BART stations. Upon completion, the project would provide care primarily to residents of the neighborhood and many of the visitors and patient family members would come from within walking distance. Overall, traffic patterns upon completion of the project would be substantially similar to current traffic patterns.

- E. That a diverse economic base be maintained by protecting our industrial and service sectors from displacement due to commercial office development, and that future opportunities for resident employment and ownership in these sectors be enhanced.

The General Plan Amendments and the project would not displace any industrial or service sectors. Demolition of the Medical Administration Building and the parking garage and development of the project would provide extensive economic opportunities for Chinatown residents. The Chinese Hospital would ultimately employ more people than were employed before the alterations, which would provide new opportunities for resident employment. In addition, by providing healthcare services to the Chinatown area and community residents, the project would preserve the Chinatown community and thereby enhance future employment and ownership opportunities for residents of the Chinatown neighborhood. Healthcare is crucial to the long-term stability and prosperity of any neighborhood and this is especially true of Chinatown, which contains both residential and commercial uses. Without the project, it is unclear what healthcare services would be available in Chinatown and the future prospects of the neighborhood could decline.

- F. That the City achieve the greatest possible preparedness to protect against injury and loss of life in an earthquake.

The project would have a significant positive impact on the preparedness of the Chinatown neighborhood in the event of an earthquake. One of the main purposes of the project is to improve the seismic safety of the hospital and the project would be fully compliant with all laws regarding seismic safety. In the event of an earthquake, the Chinese Hospital would provide valuable, timely, and critical aid that would protect against injury and loss of life.

- G. That landmarks and historic buildings be preserved.

Although the 1924 Medical Administration Building, which would be demolished under the project, is not a designated historic landmark, it is a historic resource, eligible for listing under the California Register of Historic Resources both individually and as a contributor to a potential historic district.

Demolition this building is necessary to construct the project and bring the Chinese Hospital into compliance with state structural performance guidelines. The Chinese Hospital Association would create a variety of features in the new building that would pay tribute to the historical relevance of the Medical Administration Building, such as photos, plaques, and explanations of the history of the Project Site. Moreover, the project would provide much needed healthcare services to the Chinatown community. By providing these community services to Chinatown and its residents, the project would foster the preservation of the Chinatown neighborhood community, and thereby support and encourage the continuity of the existing Chinatown neighborhood and its features.

- H. That our parks and open space and their access to sunlight and vistas be protected from development.

The exterior of the project would perpetuate, enhance, and expand the existing tradition of providing an exterior gathering place. Currently, there is a small open space area in the front setback area of the Chinese Hospital on Jackson Street, which is used by hospital visitors and community members as a gathering and meeting place and provides a rest point for Chinatown residents walking up Jackson Street. The project proposes to expand this open space and would provide an approximately 890 square foot landscaped seating area along the Jackson Street frontage created by a setback of 17 feet from the property line along Jackson Street at the ground and first floors, which would be landscaped and hardscaped. This area would wrap around the side of the building along James Alley, where the entire building would also be set back 5 feet from the east property line. The Project Sponsor also is in discussions to purchase and/or obtain easement rights over the other half of James Alley, which Project Sponsor currently does not own, upon which Project Sponsor intends to expand the landscaping and open space improvements along James Alley and possibly create a landscaped open seating area or other usable open space within James Alley for the public to enjoy. Overall, the project would maintain and improve the existing open space on the Project Site.

20. **WHEREAS**, On July 12, 2012, at a duly noticed public hearing, the Commission adopted approval findings under CEQA, including findings rejecting alternatives and adopting a statement of overriding considerations (“CEQA Findings”) by Motion No. 18661, Attached as Exhibit A to Motion No. 18661 is the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (“MMRP”). The Commission hereby adopts and incorporates by reference as though fully set forth herein the CEQA Findings including rejecting alternatives and the statement of overriding considerations, found in Motion No. 18661 and the MMRP attached thereto as Exhibit A.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Planning Commission hereby **ADOPTS** and **RECOMMENDS** that the Board of Supervisors approve the following amendments to the General Plan: (1) amendment of "Policy 1.2 Promote a building form that harmonizes with the scale of existing buildings and width of Chinatown's streets" within the Chinatown Area Plan to add the language, "other than construction within the Chinese Hospital Special Use District" to the second paragraph of the Policy and (2) amendment of "Map 1 - Generalized Height Plan" of the Chinatown Area Plan to reference a height limit of 110 feet for the property at 835-845 Jackson Street, Block 0192, Lot 041.

I hereby certify that the Planning Commission **ADOPTED** the foregoing Resolution on July 12, 2012.

Linda D. Avery
Commission Secretary

AYES: Antonini, Bordon, Miguel, Moore, Sugaya, Wu

NAYS: none

ABSENT: Fong

ADOPTED: July 12, 2012