



CITY OF SANTA MARIA
PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT
NOVEMBER 6, 2024

5.b.

BELLECREST SENIOR RESIDENCES GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT AND REZONE, TENTATIVE TRACT MAP, AND PLANNED DEVELOPMENT PERMIT

Property Location: 1571 East Main Street

Review of a General Plan Land Use and Zoning Map Amendment (GPZ2022-0003), Tentative Tract Map (TR2022-0007), and Planned Development Permit (PD2022-0008) for Coastal Community Builders to rezone a 15.23-gross-acre site (including existing Main Street ROW) FROM Lower Density Residential (LWDR-4) land use designation and Planned Development Single Family Residential (PD/R-1) zoning designation TO Medium Density Residential land use designation and zoning (PD/R-2), 12 units per acre maximum. The project includes a Tentative Tract Map and Planned Development Permit to subdivide the 14.43-net-acre site into 146 lots for the development of 142 age-restricted, senior residential units, and four common lots with landscaping, and a clubhouse with amenities.

Environmental: Environmental Review for this project was completed through the preparation of an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (SCH #2024090050) pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act State Guidelines.

Planner Contact: Carol Ziesenhenne, 805-925-0951 ext. 1607;
cziesenhenne@cityofsantamaria.org

RECOMMENDATION:

1. By resolution, recommend that the City Council adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Monitoring Program prepared for the project;
2. By resolution, recommend that the City Council approve the General Plan Land Use Map Amendment and Zone Change, GPZ2022-0003;
3. By resolution, recommend that the City Council approve the Tentative Tract Map, Tract 6040, TR2022-0007; and
4. By resolution, recommend that the City Council approve the Planned Development Permit, PD2022-0008.

BACKGROUND

The 14.43-acre (net) project site (Assessor's Parcel Numbers [APN] 128-052-014 and 128-052-023) is located at 1571 East Main Street (Attachment A – Vicinity Map). The project site is north of East Main Street, east of Jonathan Place, south of Rowland Drive, and west of Navarra Way. The project site is bounded to the north, east, and west by single-family residential development in PD/R-1 (Planned Development/Single-Family Residential) and PD/R-2 (Planned Development/Medium Density Residential) districts. Pioneer Valley High School is also adjacent to the eastern portion of the project site in a PF (Public Facilities) district. The project site is bounded to the south by East Main Street. Agricultural land is located to the south of the project site, on the other side of East Main Street, and is outside city limits in Santa Barbara County. Marian Medical Center is located approximately 0.32 miles to the west of the project.

Based on aerial imagery records, the project site was historically used for agriculture dating back to the 1950s. Currently, the site is developed with a single-family residence with accessory structures, driveways, a tennis court, and landscaping. These features are located at the northwestern portion of the site. In addition, the project site contains trees (orchard and ornamental trees), bushes, and other vegetation primarily within the northern half of the site.

2022 Public Meetings for the Paradiso Project:

At the October 4, 2022, City Council Meeting, the applicant, Coastal Community Builders (CCB) presented the City Council with a conceptual review for the Paradiso Project. This project included a request to proceed with an application for a General Plan Amendment, Rezone, and Planned Development Permit for a residential project to accommodate 90 two-story duplexes in a proposed R-2 zone, and 150 senior (age restricted to 62 years old) apartments in a proposed R-3 zone. After hearing the presentations from staff and the applicant, the City Council directed the item to the Planning Commission to review the project concept at a Study Session where the public, including neighbors living adjacent to the site, could provide additional comments and the Planning Commission could provide direction to staff and the applicant.

Following the City Council's direction, a study session with the Planning Commission was held on November 3, 2022. At this meeting, the Planning Commission was presented with the proposal for Paradiso Project and heard public comment both in favor and opposed to the concept. The concerns for the project were regarding the potential for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) removing garage parking while increasing parking demand in the new subdivision; increased traffic on Main Street in context of Pioneer Valley High School; height of the proposed two and three-story buildings would be out of character in the existing single-story, single-family residential neighborhood; and concerns on connectivity, or lack thereof, into the existing residential street network on Jonathan Place or Spruce Street. To mitigate these concerns, public commenters mentioned providing additional setbacks between the existing residences and the proposed project, reducing the heights of the buildings, and to make the project only for seniors. Comments in favor of the project were for the provision of senior housing and the proposed location of the senior housing near medical facilities, including Marian Regional Medical Center.

Additional commenters noted that the project could also provide additional housing supply for medical employees for the hospital, and students and faculty at AT Still University.

The Planning Commission echoed concerns regarding on-site parking and directed the applicant to take public comments into consideration regarding the site design and proposed density of development. The applicant was directed to work with staff on the final concept and design and to return for additional study session(s).

Planning Commission Review of Bellecrest Residences

Following the November 3, 2022 study session, the applicant significantly revised the project (now known as “Bellecrest Residences”) and presented it to the Planning Commission for review at the September 7, 2023, study session. The revised project requires the approval of an amendment to the General Plan Land Use and Zoning of the site from PD/R-1 to PD/R-2 to accommodate 142 for sale small-lot residential units that would be age restricted to seniors with common amenity areas, including a clubhouse with on-site recreation areas. The revised project concept was received with a generally positive response, both from the adjacent residential neighborhood and the Planning Commission, and the applicant moved forward with their formal application for the project.

The Planning Commission was presented with the Bellecrest project for a second study session on October 3, 2024, after completing the application review process with city staff. There were some concerns about the small lot sizes and the size of the backyard areas for each of the homes. Commissioners expressed a desire for additional pedestrian amenities along the private streets running east-west, which was followed by a discussion about the project’s traffic safety measures and site access from the surrounding streets. In response to the concern for sufficient backyard space for the individual units, the applicant has provided an exhibit with some backyard furnishing examples.

DISCUSSION

The proposed project includes a General Plan Land Use and Zoning Map Amendment, Tentative Tract Map, and Planned Development Permit to subdivide the 14.43-acre property into 146 medium density (PD/R-2) zoned lots for the construction of 142 single-family residences located on lots ranging in size between 2,040-square-feet and 3,080-square-feet. Four common lots would be developed with a retention basin, private roads, a clubhouse with pool area, a dog-friendly pocket park, and common landscaped areas. The project is a market-rate, for sale product, proposed and conditioned to be deed-restricted for seniors (55-years of age or older).

The residences are designed as single-story and small by design. There are single-family home styles as well as a duplex (single family with shared wall) home styles. The individual single-family floor plans range in size from 714-square-feet to 1,167-square-feet and are typically one or two-bedroom floor plans. The duplex home style has a larger floorplan area range between 1,347-square-feet and 1,528-square-feet, with one and two-bedroom floorplans with den options. Each of the units would be provided with a minimum of two private parking spaces, either in one-car garages with tandem driveway parking,

or in private two-car garages. Additional guest parking (79 spaces) is provided throughout the project site and at the clubhouse, as there is no on-street parking available.

Access would be provided to the project via a driveway to the south on East Main Street and exit only/emergency secondary access (with bollards) would be provided on Spruce Drive on the north to Rowland Drive. Internal vehicular circulation would be provided through ten privately owned and maintained 24-foot-wide streets. Pedestrian circulation would be provided on six of the ten streets, providing north-south circulation from the main entrance, past the clubhouse to the pet-park, and east-west circulation to the clubhouse on the southern side of the project site.

The retention basin and clubhouse are located near the Main Street entrance on the southwestern corner of the project site, and the pet park would be centrally located near the northern end of the project site.

General Plan Land Use and Zoning Map Amendment

Under the current LWDR-4 and PD/R-1 land use and zoning designations, the project site could accommodate up to 57 single-family residential units. The proposed Medium Density Residential (MDR-12) land use designation and corresponding PD/R-2 zoning, would allow up to 12 units per acre (up to 173 units on this site). The project is proposing 142 residential units (9.8 dwelling units per acre) which is below the 12 dwelling units per acre maximum density. At 9.8 units/acre, the proposed project would fit into the Medium Density Residential context of the surrounding development. For example, La Ventana Townhomes, located at the southeast side of the project site also in a PD/R-2 zone, has 57 townhomes at a density of approximately 8.5 units per acre.

The Land Use Element of the General Plan is intended to facilitate orderly growth by establishing the pattern and placement of land uses and specifying the appropriate scales of residential density. These are accomplished through the Land Use Element's goals and policies. Goal L.U.9 of the Land Use Element is to "promote adequate housing supply" and Policy L.U.9. expands upon the goal to "assure that adequate housing is provided for all economic segments of the population through a diversity of housing types, sizes, and density." The Land Use Element defines the purpose of the Medium Density Residential (MDR-12) designation: "To encourage new development while stabilizing existing development. Allows a mixture of unit types, while maintaining the feeling of a single-family neighborhood." The proposed project is consistent with these policies as it provides a new type of housing for seniors to Santa Maria's housing stock through a small lot, small floor plan, deed-restricted for seniors, market-rate single family development.

Tentative Tract Map

The Tentative Tract Map (TR2022-0007) would subdivide the two existing lots into 146 lots containing 142 single-family lots, and four common lots for private roads, utilities and common landscaping/open space amenities. As referenced above, the subdivision would allow for 142 single-family residences located on lots ranging in size between 2,040-square-feet and 3,080-square-feet. Access to the gated community would be provided to the project via a driveway to the south on East Main Street and emergency secondary

access/exit (with bollards) would be provided on Spruce Drive on the north to Rowland Drive. Internal vehicular circulation would be provided through ten privately owned and maintained 24-foot-wide streets. Pedestrian circulation would be provided on six of the ten streets, providing north-south circulation from the main entrance, past the clubhouse to the pet-park, and east-west circulation to the clubhouse on the southern side of the project site.

The R-2 (Medium Density Residential) district requires each interior lot to have a minimum area of 6,000-square-feet and a minimum width of 60 feet, and each corner lot to have a minimum area of 7,000-square-feet and a minimum width of 70 feet. As referenced above, the project proposes lots smaller than the R-2 standard, ranging from 2,040-square-feet to 3,080-square-feet. The smaller lot sizes are proposed with the future senior homeowners in mind, to reduce the area requiring maintenance. Final approval is required by the City Council since the residential lots do not meet the minimum lot size and width requirements of the Municipal Code.

The Tentative Tract Map and map conditions were reviewed by the Subdivision Committee on September 17, 2024. The Subdivision Committee reviewed the Tentative Tract Map and recommended approval of the map and the map conditions, subject to the applicant working with staff for conditioning the placement of private street trees. Staff's recommended condition of approval regarding the private street trees is included in the map conditions (Attachment D).

Architecture and Floor Plans

The residences would be single story and range in size from 714-square-feet to 1,528-square-feet. There are four different plan types: Plans 1 through 3 are single-family detached, and the variations of Plan 4 are for the duplex style floor plan.

Plan 1: The Plan 1 model is a detached one-bedroom with 1.5 bathrooms, and a one-car garage with tandem driveway parking. There is an option to add a bay window, and another option to add a den/office in the front of the house. The height of this model is 17 feet 2 inches.

Plan 2: The Plan 2 model is a detached two-bedroom residence with two bathrooms, and a two-car garage. The height of this model is 20 feet 2 inches.

Plan 3: The Plan 3 model is a detached two-bedroom residence with two bathrooms, and a two-car garage. This plan includes the option to add a den in the rear or include a covered patio. The height of this model is 20 feet 2 inches.

Plan 4: The Plan 4 model is a duplex style with three types of variations and optional add-ons to include optional bedrooms in lieu of a den.

- Plan 4A is a one-bedroom, two-bath with den, two-car garage and maximum height of 22-feet.

- Plan 4B is a two-bedroom, 2.5 bath with two-car garage and maximum height of 22-feet.
- Plan 4C adds a second bedroom to plan 4A in place of a den.

The floor plans come in two different architectural types: Farm Cottage, and Colonial Cottage, and six different color schemes. The farmhouse style proposes vertical board and batten siding with window shutters. The Colonial Cottage proposes horizontal wood-type siding, pitched roof lines with dormers, also with window shutters. Each plan style has a covered front porch.

The color schemes are interchanged between the different styles and include a palette of white and off-white, blue, green, lemon merengue, and peach. There are three different roof colors, two tapered slate colors: charcoal, neutral earth; and standing seam in sandstone.

Setbacks

The Municipal Code requires the following setbacks in the R-2 district:

Front: 20 feet for building, 18 feet for front entry garage, 15 feet for side entry garage.

Side (Interior): 10 feet one side, 5 feet other side

Side (Corner): 15 feet on the street side, 5 feet on the interior side

Rear: 10 feet, but 20 feet when the rear yard adjoins the R-1 zoning district

The Planning Commission may approve or recommend approval for reduced setbacks through the Planned Development Permit process. The applicant is requesting a setback modification for all setbacks to be reduced as follows:

Detached (Plans 1 through 3)

Setback	Proposed	Required	Reduction
<i>Front</i>	5 feet	20 feet	15 feet
<i>Interior Side</i>	3 feet and 5 feet	5 feet and 10 feet	2 feet and 5 feet
<i>Corner Side</i>	3 feet and 5 feet	5 feet and 15 feet	2 feet and 10 feet
<i>Rear</i>	5 feet	10 feet	5 feet

Duplexes (Plan 4)

Setback	Proposed	Required	Reduction
<i>Front</i>	5 feet	20 feet	15 feet
<i>Interior Side</i>	0 feet and 5 feet	5 feet and 10 feet	5 feet and 5 feet
<i>Corner Side</i>	0 feet and 5 feet	5 feet and 15 feet	5 feet and 10 feet
<i>Rear</i>	8 feet	10 feet	2 feet

Landscaping and Fencing

The landscape proposed with this project is included along East Main Street, within the retention basin and open space areas, and within the front yard areas of the residences.

Due to the small lot sizes, tree planting will not be possible in every front yard. Staff have worked extensively with the applicant to ensure that the conceptual tree planting plan is feasible, and to ensure as many trees as can be accommodated by the project design are planned for and planted. The existing site contains approximately 300 trees of various species, including several species of orchard trees. A condition of approval has been incorporated to require a tree inventory and a one-to-one replacement for any healthy and viable tree removed by the project. The conceptual planting plan includes 272 trees planted throughout the site. The final tree list and planting locations are to be reviewed and approved by both the Planning Division and the City Arborist.

The overall landscape planting for the site is approximately 193,200-square-feet, or 31-percent of the total site area, which exceeds the city's requirement of 20-percent site coverage. The project proposes nearly 50,800-square-feet of open space area, which complies with the R-2 requirement for 300-square-feet of open space area per residential unit, or 42,600-square-feet for the 142 units proposed. Included in the project are common amenities such as: a 2,862-square-foot community clubhouse with a pool, spa, cabanas, outdoor living and activity lawn. Also proposed is a pet friendly pocket park with a covered gazebo and flexible outdoor seating arrangements.

Requested Modifications to Development Standards

As part of the Planned Development Permit process, the applicant is requesting that the Planning Commission approve modifications to a few of the Municipal Code development standards. The approval of the requested modifications requires the final decision-making body (City Council) to make findings that the proposed modifications are otherwise consistent with the General Plan, Municipal Code and applicable Specific Plan, have been minimized to the maximum extent feasible, and are necessary for the project's design.

The following modifications are requested by the applicant:

- *Modification #1 – Reduction in Front Yard Setback Requirement*
 - Request for a 15-foot reduction in the required 20-foot front yard setback for all lots.
- *Modification #2 – Reduction to Side Yard Setbacks*
 - Request for a two-foot to ten-foot reduction in the required five-foot, ten-foot or fifteen-foot side yard setbacks, as applicable, for all lots.
- *Modification #3 – Reduction to Rear Yard Setbacks*
 - Request a two-foot to five-foot reduction in the required ten-foot rear yard setback, for all lots.
- *Modification #4 – Reduction in the sight distance requirements*

Request to modify the sight distance requirements (Santa Maria Municipal Code Chapter 12 Appendix, Figure 2) for lots 17, 18, 23, 30, 35, 36, 41, 47, 54, 55, 62, 63, 70, 71, 78, 79, 86, 87, 94, 95, 102, 103, 110, 111, 126, 127, 142 (27 total lots). The proposed encroachment would not result in any safety issues or obstruction to vehicular turning movements. The lot meets the Caltrans Highway

Design Manual Topic 405 – Intersection Design Standards and the Public Works Engineering Division have accepted the sight distance corner analysis provided by the applicant.

The findings for the Planning Commission’s recommendation for approval of these modifications are included in the attached Planned Development Permits. The applicant has included extensive private onsite amenities for the residents of the subdivision which compensates for the potential impacts of the proposed modifications. The project includes superior design elements such as ample amenities and open space areas for residents including a 2,862-square-foot community clubhouse with a pool, spa, and cabanas; an outdoor living and activity lawn; and a pet-friendly pocket park with a covered gazebo and outdoor seating. Provision of these community amenities is not required by the Municipal Code beyond the minimum 300-square-feet of landscaped open area for each unit and is an added feature for use by the future residents of the project. The project includes 50,736-square-feet of general open space areas throughout the site. The project is over-parked according to Chapter 12-32 of the Santa Maria Municipal Code referring to senior age restricted communities. A total of 363 parking spaces are proposed within the project, whereas only 145 parking spaces are required.

Environmental

Under the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) was prepared for the City as Lead Agency. This document identifies potential project impacts in the topic areas of Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, and Noise. Mitigation measures are incorporated in the Draft MND to reduce any of the potential impacts identified to less than significant levels. The mitigation measures are also referenced in the Planned Development Permit conditions and Tentative Tract Map conditions.

The Draft IS-MND was circulated for a 30-day public review period that began on September 3, 2024, and ended on October 2, 2024. The City of Santa Maria received four comment letters on the Draft IS-MND. One letter was received from the project applicant’s planning consultant, Urban Planning Concepts, another letter was received from the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), the third letter was received from the California Department of Conservation, Geologic Energy Division (CalGEM), and the fourth letter was received from the Santa Barbara Air Pollution Control District (SBAPCD). The letter from Urban Planning Concepts included clarifications and additional details about the project to incorporate into the document and expressed disagreement with the conclusion for potential impacts related to Geological Resources and Noise. The DTSC letter provided recommendations and requests for consideration regarding the potential presence of a number of contaminants of concern (COCs) due to the historical agricultural use of the property and the age of the buildings or other structures on the property. The CalGEM letter clarified that no known oil wells are located on the property, but also recommended procedural steps to take if a previously unknown oil well is discovered on the property during construction. The SBAPCD letter stated the City should ensure that Tier 4 engine standards for construction equipment are made a condition of approval or otherwise made enforceable throughout a construction phase of

the project. Each of these comments were addressed as appropriate, with changes depicted in strike-out/underline text in the MND attached to this staff report (Attachment B). For reference, the public comment letters are attached to the MND.

A resolution for the Planning Commission to recommend the City Council adopt the MND and Mitigation Monitoring Program is included with this staff report. No additional environmental review is necessary.

Attachments

- A – Vicinity Map
- B – Bellecrest Mitigated Negative Declaration/Initial Study and Mitigation Monitoring Program
- C – Land Use and Zoning Map Figures
- D – Tentative Tract Map Conditions
- E – Tentative Tract Map
- F – Planned Development Permit PD2022-0008
- G – Bellecrest Senior Residences Plan Set