



# County of San Mateo

## Inter-Departmental Correspondence

**Department:** PLANNING AND BUILDING

**File #:** 21-336

Board Meeting Date: 5/4/2021

**Special Notice / Hearing:** 10-day, within 500 feet

**Vote Required:** Majority

**To:** Honorable Board of Supervisors

**From:** Steve Monowitz, Community Development Director

**Subject:** Consideration of (1) a General Plan Map Amendment to change an 18,951 sq. ft. parcel developed with a single-family home from Medium Density Residential to High Density Residential, (2) a Zoning Map Amendment to rezone the parcel from One-family Residential (R-1) to Multiple-family Residential (R-3), and (3) a Mitigated Negative Declaration, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act. The project is located at 206 Sequoia Avenue in the unincorporated Sequoia Tract area of San Mateo County.

County File Number: PLN 2020-00351 (Canyon Vista Partners, LLC)

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Recommendation to:

- A) Adopt a resolution adopting the Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration, and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the amendment of the County General Plan Land Use Map to change the land use designation of APN 069-341-050 at 206 Sequoia Avenue from "Medium Density Residential" to "High Density Residential" and rezoning the subject parcel from R-1/S-74 to R-3/S-3; and
- B) Adopt a resolution amending the San Mateo County General Plan Land Use Map to change the land use designation of APN 069-341-050 at 206 Sequoia Avenue from "Medium Density Residential" to "High Density Residential"; and
- C) Adopt an ordinance amending Chapter 2 of Division VI of the San Mateo County Ordinance Code (Zoning Annex) to revise the Zoning Maps, Appendix A, to change the zoning of APN 069-341-050 at 206 Sequoia Avenue from R-1/S-74 to R-3/S-3, previously introduced to the Planning Commission on February 24, 2021, and waive reading of the ordinance in its entirety.

### **BACKGROUND:**

The applicant proposes to rezone an existing 18,951 sq. ft. parcel currently developed with a single-

family home from R-1/S-74 (One-family Residential/5,000 sq. ft. lot minimum) to R-3/S-3 (Multiple-family Residential/5,000 sq. ft. lot minimum) zoning and amend the General Plan land use designation from Medium Density Residential (6.1 - 8.7 dwelling units per net acre) to High Density Residential (17.5 - 87.0 dwelling units per acre). The project does not include a development proposal at this time; however, the proposed rezoning and General Plan Map Amendment would allow a future proposal of up to a maximum of 15 residential units on the property. Any future development proposal would be subject to County review at the time of proposal, including environmental review, as applicable, for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Planning Commission Hearing: The Planning Commission considered the proposed amendments at its regularly scheduled public meeting on February 24, 2021. Public comments raised objection over allowing higher density within the predominantly single-family residential Sequoia Tract neighborhood that could change the character of the neighborhood through the proposed development standards (i.e., height), and increased traffic and parking congestion. Concern was also raised about the absence of design review for the area, lack of nearby parkland to support the increased density, and increased traffic and parking. The Planning Commission's final vote (3-2) was to recommend that the Board of Supervisors adopt the amendments.

Report Prepared By: Summer Burlison, Project Planner; 650/363-1815

Owner/Applicant: Canyon Vista Partners, LLC

Location: 206 Sequoia Avenue, Sequoia Tract

APN: 069-341-050

Size: 18,951 sq. ft.

Existing Zoning: R-1/S-74 (One-family Residential/5,000 sq. ft. lot minimum)

General Plan Designation: Medium Density Residential

Sphere-of-Influence: City of Redwood City

Existing Land Use: Single-family Residential

Water Supply: California Water Service

Sewage Disposal: Fair Oaks Sewer Maintenance District

Flood Zone: Flood zone X (area of minimal flood hazard); FEMA Panel No. 06081C0303E, effective October 16, 2021.

Environmental Evaluation: An Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration were prepared and circulated for review, with a 20-day review period commencing on January 7, 2021 and ending on January 27, 2021, as required by CEQA. Mitigation measures have been included in a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, Attachment I.

Setting: The project site is located in the densely urbanized Sequoia Tract community and is

accessed directly from Sequoia Avenue, an improved public roadway approximately 300 feet south of its intersection with Woodside Road (Highway 84). The property is located approximately 1.5 miles east of Interstate 280 and 1.5 miles west of the intersection of El Camino Real (Highway 82) and Woodside Road (Highway 84). The property is bordered by a commercial and multi-family residential development to the north, and single-family residential development to the west, south and east (across Sequoia Avenue). The project parcel is currently developed with a single-family residence built in 1978.

Major Development Pre-application Meeting: On August 17, 2020, a public workshop was held in order to introduce the proposed project to and obtain input from the surrounding community. A preliminary development design was presented at the meeting in conformance with the proposed R-3/S-3 development standards. Public comments focused on concerns for protecting the single-family residential Sequoia Tract neighborhood from higher density development that would result in parking and traffic impacts and adversely affect the neighborhood character of the area. A letter summarizing the workshop is included as Attachment H.

#### Chronology:

Date	Action
August 17, 2020	- Major Development Pre-application Public Workshop, PRE 2020-00006; see Attachment H for a summary letter.
October 14, 2020	- General Plan Amendment and Rezone applications received, PLN 2020-00351.
January 4, 2021	- Application deemed complete.
January 7, 2021 to January 27, 2021	- Mitigated Negative Declaration public comment period.
February 24, 2021	- Planning Commission hearing. The Planning Commission voted (3-2) to recommend that the Board of Supervisors adopt the proposed amendments.
May 4, 2021	- Board of Supervisors hearing.

#### **DISCUSSION:**

##### **A. KEY ISSUES**

##### **1. Conformance with the General Plan**

Staff has reviewed the project for conformance with the General Plan and determined that the project is in conformance with the applicable policies discussed below.

##### **a. General Land Use**

Policy 7.16 (*Land Use Objectives for Urban Areas*) and Policy 7.17 (*Appropriate Land Use Designations for Urban Areas*) encourages the designation of residential

land uses in urban areas to revitalize existing developed areas and discourage urban sprawl, among other goals. The Sequoia Tract community is defined as an urban area and has a mixture of land use designations. The subject property is currently designated Medium Density Residential (6.1 - 8.7 dwelling units/net acre). The proposed change in General Plan land use designation to High Density Residential (17.5 - 87.0 dwelling units per acre) will encourage efficient use and redevelopment of the 18,951 sq. ft. property. While the project seeks to increase the density of development allowed on the subject parcel, it will maintain a residential land use designation to remain consistent with this policy.

b. Urban Land Use

Policy 8.14 (*Appropriate Land Use Designations and Locational Criteria for Urban Unincorporated Areas*) provides guidelines for the appropriate designations and densities of properties located in Urban Neighborhoods to meet the stated objectives of the Urban Land Use Component, including but not limited to Objective 8.2(d) (*Land Use Objectives for Urban Communities*) which seeks to provide a mix and an amount of residential land uses that provide substantial housing opportunities in unincorporated areas. Table 8.1P in the General Plan identifies locational criteria for High Density Residential areas to include being adjacent to or in conjunction with commercial land uses, near employment centers, next to public services and facilities, and on large vacant parcels on the edge or outside of single-family neighborhoods.

The property is situated approximately 300 feet southeast of Woodside Road, a commercial transit corridor. Denser development is preferred in proximity to such an area because it offers services such as bus stops and commercial convenience services to reduce the need for vehicular trips. The project parcel is located at the edge of the single-family residentially zoned boundary of the Sequoia Tract neighborhood where the surrounding single-family residential zoned parcels range in size from 5,000 sq. ft. to 10,000 sq. ft. in size compared to the larger 18,951 sq. ft. project parcel. Adjacent parcels consist of commercial, multi-family and single-family developed properties served by public services and facilities with varying zoning combining districts of S-3, S-4, S-7 and S-74. These combining districts limit the number of units with a minimum lot area per dwelling unit standard and work in conjunction with the General Plan land use designation to provide for the appropriate density in urban areas.

The parcel's current land use designation of Medium Density Residential allows for a density range of 6.1 - 8.7 dwelling units/net acre. The proposed General Plan Map Amendment to High Density Residential will allow a density range of 17.5 - 87.0 dwelling units/net acre. In order to support multi-family residential development comparable and compatible to other multi-family developed properties in the Sequoia Tract area as encouraged in Policy 8.37 (*Density*), a High Density land use designation, with an S-3 combining district, is proposed. At maximum density, future development would be limited to no more than 15 units, which would result in a density of 34.5 dwelling units/net acre, consistent with the proposed High Density Residential range of 17.5 - 87.0 dwelling units/net acre.

Policy 8.30 (*Infilling*) encourages the infilling of urban areas where infrastructure and services are available. The project parcel is relatively larger in size, 18,951 sq. ft., compared to surrounding 5,000 sq. ft. - 10,000 sq. ft. residential parcels within the same R-1/S-74 zoning district. The proposed project will allow better utilization of the comparably larger project parcel to fulfill urban land use objectives which seek to provide a mix and an amount of residential land uses to maximize housing opportunities in urban areas of the County and decrease the demand to construct housing in undeveloped areas (i.e., urban sprawl). Additionally, the property is within walking distance to bus stops, Woodside Plaza and various commercial establishments on Woodside Road. The project has received preliminary approval by municipal service providers for continued service to the property. Also, given the urbanized area of the project parcel, there is existing infrastructure (i.e., public transit, commercial development, etc.) to serve future development.

Policy 8.35 (*Zoning Regulations*) seeks to ensure that development is consistent with land use designations through the continued use of zoning districts that establish specific development regulations. The proposed rezoning will allow better utilization of the larger parcel for a transitional buffer of multi-family residential development between the higher intensity commercial corridor along Woodside Road, the existing adjacent multi-family residential development, and the lower density single-family residential Sequoia Tract neighborhood. The proposed rezoning from R-1/S-74 (One-family residential/5,000 sq. ft. lot minimum) to R-3/S-3 (Multiple-family residential/5,000 sq. ft. lot minimum) will ensure future multi-family residential construction on the parcel is proportional in size and scale to the parcel and existing multi-family S-3 and S-4 development in the area including for height, bulk, and setbacks as sought in Policy 8.39 (*Height, Bulk, and Setbacks*).

c. Water Supply and Wastewater

Water Supply Policies 10.10 (*Water Suppliers in Urban Areas*) and 10.12 (*Coordination of Water Suppliers*) consider water systems as the appropriate water supply for urban areas and seek to ensure water providers have capacity commensurate with the level of development permitted by adopted land use plans. The project property is currently served by California Water Service, Bear Gulch District. The proposed amendment has been preliminarily reviewed by California Water Service, Bear Gulch District, and the District did not raise any objections to the ability to continue serving the property based on the proposed increase in development density. The District will provide further review under any future development proposal filed with the County.

Additionally, Wastewater Policies 11.4 (*Adequate Capacity for Unincorporated Areas*) and 11.5 (*Wastewater Management in Urban Areas*) consider sewerage systems as the appropriate method of wastewater management in urban areas and seek to ensure adequate capacity is available for unincorporated areas. The subject property is currently served by Fair Oaks Sewer Maintenance District. The District completed a capacity analysis of the District's downstream facilities and determined that the system has sufficient capacity to accommodate the additional flows from the future maximum projected development potential of 15 residential units. However, prior to the issuance of a building permit for development, the applicant would be required to mitigate the additional sewage to be generated by

the site's change in use with a sanitary sewer project within the Sewer District to reduce the amount of inflow and infiltration (I/I) in its collection system. The mitigation work is necessary to offset the project's effect on Sewer District and City of Redwood City sewer capacity limitations by reducing or eliminating wet weather inflow and infiltration from the Sewer District that would otherwise be conveyed to the downstream agencies' sewer systems. The mitigation work would be limited to the Fair Oaks Sewer Maintenance District boundary and specifically determined by the District at the time a future development project is filed with the County; however, the District boundary encompasses the highly urbanized areas of North Fair Oaks, Sequoia Tract and developed parts of Redwood City; therefore, such work would not be expected to generate any substantial adverse environmental impacts. The sewer mitigation measure has been incorporated into a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program to ensure appropriate enforcement.

d. Transportation

Policy 12.21 (*Local Circulation Policies*) seeks to ensure local circulation systems function adequately to maximize freedom of movement for transportation users and allows adequate and safe access for various land uses. The project site is located along Sequoia Avenue, an improved public roadway, which includes curb, gutter and sidewalk improvements commencing at the north side of the project property and extending to Woodside Road. Future development on the project property would require an extension of curb, gutter and sidewalk along the property's street frontage. Therefore, the project is not expected to result in a future adverse impact to non-motorized travel or to existing access to amenities along Woodside Road, including public transit stops. The maximum expected trip generation for a future development resulting from the proposed amendment is 88 trips per day based on the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE's) Trip Generation Manual for a multi-residential use type. This maximum expected trip generation is below the County Department of Public Works and City/County Association of Government's (C/CAG's) thresholds for requiring a traffic impact study. Additionally, this maximum expected trip generation does not require a Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) analysis because as a "small project" generating less than 110 daily trips, it falls below the screening thresholds designed to identify projects that could result in a significant VMT impact. Furthermore, future residential development would be required to provide off-street parking in compliance with the parking requirements set forth in the County's Zoning Regulations.

e. Housing Element

Policy HE 12 (*Amend Zoning and General Plan Land Use Designations to Meet Future Housing Needs*) encourages modification of General Plan land use designations and zoning regulations to accommodate the construction of needed new housing units and Policy HE 20.1 seeks to undertake General Plan amendments and/or rezoning of undeveloped and underutilized land for higher density residential and mixed-use development, as necessary, to meet the County's current and future Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) and to facilitate housing production countywide. The State of California requires each jurisdiction in the State to include a Housing Element as part of its General Plan. Within the Housing Element, one of the required components is to demonstrate how the

existing and projected housing needs of people of all income levels will be met. The State's process to identify the type and amount of housing units each jurisdiction is required to provide is called the Regional Housing Need Allocation (RHNA) and covers an eight-year period. In July 2013, the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) adopted the *Final Regional Housing Need Plan for the San Francisco Bay Area: 2015-2023*, which identified that unincorporated San Mateo County would need to provide 913 housing units over four income levels for the current cycle. The proposed project would support a future maximum development of 15 residential units, therefore, allowing for the creation of needed additional housing units. Given that no development is proposed at this time, the income level for future units resulting from the proposed project is unknown, except that 20 percent would be required to be affordable pursuant to the County's existing regulations. However, the need for housing in unincorporated San Mateo County is present at all income levels.

Policy HE 15 (*Require Development Densities Consistent with General Plan*) requires development densities that are consistent with the General Plan. The proposed zoning and General Plan modifications are proposed in an effort to maximize the number of housing units on the subject property while remaining compatible with the type and level of other multi-family development in the Sequoia Tract area. While no development is proposed at this time, future construction would be required to conform with the proposed density.

Policy HE 17 (*Encourage Residential Mixed-Use and Transit Oriented Development*) and Policy HE 44 (*Encourage Transit Oriented Development, Compact Housing, and Mixed-use Development in Appropriate Locations*) encourage a range of housing and mixed-use development in proximity to transit or within commercial districts with development standards that facilitate rather than impede such compact and mixed-use development. As previously mentioned, the project parcel is adjacent to commercial and multi-family zoning districts and within walking distance to bus stops and commercial establishments along the nearby Woodside Road commercial and transit corridor where denser development is encouraged to reduce vehicular trips and provide needed housing within the County.

## 2. Conformance with Zoning Regulations

The project parcel is presently zoned R-1/S-74 (One-family Residential/5,000 sq. ft. lot minimum). The project includes the proposal to change the zoning designation of the parcel to R-3/S-3 (Multiple-family Residential/5,000 sq. ft. lot minimum). While no development is proposed at this time, the below table illustrates the comparison of development standards between the current R-1/S-74 zoning district and proposed R-3/S-3 zoning district standards.

Zoning Standards Comparison		
Standard	S-74 (Existing)	S-3 (Proposed)
Minimum Lot Width	50 ft.	50 ft.
Minimum Lot Area	5,000 sq. ft.	5,000 sq. ft.
Minimum Lot Area per Dwelling	5,000 sq. ft.	1,250 sq. ft.

Density	6.1 - 8.7 units/net acre Existing development: <i>2.3 units/net acre</i>	17.5-87.0 units/net acre Maximum development: <i>34.5 units/net acre</i>
Minimum Setbacks Front Rear	20 ft. 20 ft. 5 ft.	20 ft. 20 ft. 5 ft.
Maximum Lot Coverage	50%	50%
Maximum Floor Area	6,227.26 sq. ft.	None
Maximum Height	28 ft.	36 ft.
Maximum Stories	2	3
Daylight Plane	Yes	No
Maximum Parking Requirement	2 covered parking spaces (dwelling with 2 or more bedrooms)	30 covered parking spaces (assuming maximum development potential of 15 units with 2 or more bedrooms each)

### 3. Findings for Rezoning and General Plan Map Amendment

The Board of Supervisors is required to make findings in order to change the General Plan land use designation and the zoning for the subject parcel. The required findings are:

**a. That the proposed rezoning of the subject parcel meets the public necessity, convenience, and the general welfare of the community.**

The project parcel is located in the highly urbanized Sequoia Tract area of San Mateo County. The project parcel is relatively larger in size compared to surrounding residential parcels with the same existing one-family residential zoning designation and abuts both commercial and multiple-family developed and zoned parcels that buffer the one-family residential zoned area from Woodside Road. The proposed rezoning would be compatible with the type and density of development in the area and will allow better utilization of the larger parcel for a transitional buffer of multi-family residential development between the higher intensity commercial corridor along Woodside Road and the lower density single-family residential area within the Sequoia Tract neighborhood. The rezoning provides the opportunity for future development of much needed housing in an area that already has this use present, as well as adequate infrastructure. Staff prepared an Initial Study for the proposed amendment, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (Attachment I), which concludes that the project would not result in any adverse environmental impacts. Any future development proposal will be subject to County review at the time of proposal, including environmental review, as applicable, for compliance with California Environmental Quality Act.

**b. That the General Plan Land Use Map Amendment is compatible with adjacent land uses and will not be in conflict with the policies of the General Plan.**

As previously discussed, the project parcel is located approximately 300



feet southeast of Woodside Road, at the edge of the one-family residential zoned boundary of the Sequoia Tract neighborhood. The property abuts commercial development fronting Woodside Road and multi-family and single-family development. The parcel is comparably larger in size at 18,951 sq. ft. than the 5,000 sq. ft. - 10,000 sq. ft. adjoining one-family residential zoned parcels. Re-designation of the subject parcel will allow better utilization of the parcel for a transitional buffer of multi-family residential development between the higher intensity commercial corridor along Woodside Road and the lower density single-family residential area of the Sequoia Tract, while maintaining a consistent land use pattern in the area and supporting future housing development within the County.

## B. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

An Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration were prepared and circulated for this proposal. The public comment period commenced on January 7, 2021 and ended on January 27, 2021. No comments were received as to the adequacy of the Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration. Mitigation measures have been included in a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, Attachment I.

One comment letter was received during the 20-day public review period raising general objection to the rezoning and future potential for high density housing in the Sequoia Tract neighborhood which was protected in 2004 when the Board of Supervisors adopted the R-1/S-74 zoning district in the area.

The Sequoia Tract neighborhood is primarily comprised of modest single-family homes on predominantly 5,000 sq. ft. parcels bounded by commercial and higher density residential zoning and development along and nearest to Woodside Road. Over the preceding few years leading up to the adoption of the S-74 zoning regulations, the neighborhood had started to see several modest single-family homes being torn down and replaced with substantially larger sized houses. Residents grew concerned over the change from an otherwise modestly developed neighborhood to larger homes being built. In response to this growing concern, the S-74 regulations were developed to control house size, height, and bulk and shape, controls that the former zoning development standards lacked. The proposed project parcel is relatively larger in size at 18,951 sq. ft. than the surrounding 5,000 sq. ft. - 10,000 sq. ft. parcels zoned for and supporting single-family residential development. Further, the project parcel is located along the western boundary of the one-family residential zoning district within the Sequoia Tract neighborhood and abuts commercial and multi-family zoned and developed properties nearest Woodside Road. The proposed project provides an opportunity for better utilization of the property while maintaining a consistent land use pattern in the area and supporting future housing development within the County in an area that has nearby established service amenities such as bus stops and commercial service establishments along Woodside Road.

## C. REVIEWING AGENCIES

County of San Mateo Department of Public Works  
County of San Mateo Department of Housing  
Menlo Park Fire Protection District  
California Department of Transportation, District 4  
California Water Service - Bear Gulch District

The Resolutions and Ordinance have been reviewed and approved by County Counsel as to form.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

No fiscal impact.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- A. Resolution Adopting the Initial Study, and Mitigated Negative Declaration, and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program
- B. Resolution Adopting the General Plan Land Use Map Amendment
- C. Ordinance Amending the Zoning Map
- D. Vicinity Map
- E. Zoning Map
- F. General Plan Land Use Map
- G. Topographic Survey
- H. Public Workshop Summary Letter, dated September 21, 2020
- I. Initial Study, Mitigated Negative Declaration, and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program