

April 20, 2016

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Arcadia, CA 91006

SUBJECT: PRE 16-10 – FOUR SEASONS CARLSBAD
APN: 216-140-44-00

Thank you for submitting a preliminary review for a resort hotel/timeshare project proposed at the southwest corner of Carlsbad Boulevard and Avenida Encinas. The project site, an approximately 14-acre property, currently is undeveloped.

In response to your application, the Planning Division has prepared this comment letter. Please note that the purpose of a preliminary review is to provide you with direction and comments on the overall concept of your project. **This preliminary review does not represent an in-depth analysis of your project. It is intended to give you feedback on critical issues based upon the information provided in your submittal. This review is based upon the plans, policies, and standards in effect as of the date of this review. Please be aware that at the time of a formal application submittal, new plans, policies, and standards may be in effect and additional issues of concern may be raised through a more specific and detailed review.**

Planning:

General

1. General Plan and zoning designations for the property are as follows:
 - a. General Plan: VC and OS (Visitor Commercial and Open Space)
 - b. Zoning: P-C (Planned Community)
 - c. The property is in the Coastal Zone and is subject to the West Batiquitos Lagoon/Sammis Properties Segment of the Local Coastal Program (LCP). The Coastal land use designation and zone are the same as the general plan and zoning above.
 - d. The property is subject to the Poinsettia Shores Master Plan (PSMP) for Planning Areas G and H (and a portion of Planning Area I, Open Space, is included at the southwesterly corner of the property). Planning Areas G and H require the development standards of the Commercial Tourist (C-T) zone, Chapter 21.29 of the Carlsbad Municipal Code (CMC).
 - e. The project is subject to the vision and guidelines contained within the Ponto Beachfront Village Vision Plan.

- f. The southeasterly edge of the property is within the Carlsbad Habitat Management Plan Existing Hardline Preservation area.
 - g. The project is within Local Facilities Management Plan (LFMZ) Zone 9.
 - h. The property is not within any McClellan-Palomar Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan areas or zones.
2. The project requires the following permits; city permits will be considered by the Planning Commission and City Council:
- a. General Plan Amendment (GPA) and Local Coastal Program Amendment (LCPA): Required to change the land use to Open Space for the on-site habitat mitigation areas and dedicated open space areas (see additional comments below).
 - b. Tentative Map (CT): Pursuant to Section 21.42.140(B)(155) of the Carlsbad Municipal Code (CMC), development of timeshares requires a subdivision map.
 - c. Nonresidential Planned Development (PUD): Pursuant to Section 21.47.010 of the CMC, development of a commercial subdivision requires a PUD.
 - d. Site Development Plan (SDP): Pursuant to the PSMP and Chapter 21.06 of the CMC, development of the site requires a SDP.
 - e. Conditional Use Permit (CUP): Pursuant to Sections 21.29.030 and 21.42.140(B)(155) of the CMC, development of timeshares and any proposed amplified live entertainment requires a CUP.
 - f. Coastal Development Permit (CDP): Pursuant to Section 21.201.030 of the CMC, a Coastal Development Permit is required for development within the coastal zone (appealable to the Coastal Commission).
 - g. Hillside Development Permit (HDP): Pursuant to Section 21.95.140 of the CMC, a HDP will be required if any existing criteria slopes would be affected (projects that grade, erect, or construct on top of, a slope which has a gradient of fifteen percent or more and an elevation differential greater than fifteen feet).
 - h. Habitat Management Plan Permit (HMP): Pursuant to Sections 21.210.030 and 21.210.060 of the CMC, a HMP is required for development projects that impact, either directly or indirectly, habitat in the city.
3. The development standards of the C-T Zone and Special Development Standards of the Poinsettia Shores Master Plan that apply to the project include:
- a. 1.2 parking spaces per hotel/timeshare unit.
 - b. 1 parking space for every 200 square feet of retail use gross floor area.
 - c. 1 parking space for every 100 square feet of public conference/banquet, etc., gross floor area.
 - d. 40 foot building setback from the Carlsbad Boulevard right-of way.
 - e. 40 foot building (includes parking structure) setback from the railroad right-of-way. For structures that are entirely below existing grade, the setback is typically zero. Please contact North County Transit District for any standard they may have regarding below-ground structures.
 - f. 45 foot building setback from the lagoon bluff edge. The bluff edge must be determined based on an accurate survey/topographical maps.
 - g. Maximum 50% lot coverage by structures.

- h. Maximum height is 35 feet and three stories, except maximum building height within 100 feet of the lagoon bluff is 25 feet, above finished grade. All building height is measured from finished grade when associated with a discretionary action which establishes that finished grade.
4. Although the PSMP and the C-T zone are silent with regard to any required setback at the front of the property along Avenida Encinas, an appropriate structural setback from the right-of-way line and edge design should be provided at the northwest frontage in order for staff to support the required findings for the Site Development Plan and Non-Residential Planned Unit Development applications. Ideally, there should be a minimum of 10 feet for a landscaped area between the nearest corner of the building and the property line. Please see the following comment as it may also affect the concept design.
5. The submitted exhibits show the northerly property line as the center line of Avenida Encinas, which is public right-of-way. Please show the property line as the area minus the right-of-way.
6. The required 45 foot blufftop setback is to be measured from the alignment of the blufftop edge, not from the property line as implied in the submitted exhibits. The 100 foot area with a 25 foot reduced height restriction is also to be measured from the blufftop edge, not the property line. The submitted exhibit shows a 40 foot Carlsbad Boulevard setback wrapping around the blufftop to the southeast; this area needs to instead observe the 45 foot setback from the blufftop. Moreover, the PSMP states that the blufftop setback is a minimum and “a greater setback may be required with review and approval of specific development proposals in conjunction with review and input by the California Department of Fish and Game for this planning area.”
7. The areas within the 40 foot setbacks from Carlsbad Boulevard and the railroad right-of-way, and the 45 foot blufftop setback, are public open space per the PSMP. The PSMP and Local Coastal Program (LCP) also require these areas to be dedicated as open space easements. These areas allow for the public trail system with seating nodes and lagoon viewing areas as indicated in PSMP Figure 11 and described in the Landscape Concept, and as further detailed in the standards for Planning Areas G and H. The Local Coastal Program also requires a permanently public trail to be dedicated and improved along the bluff and railroad right-of-way. The trails are to be constructed prior to issuance of any building permits for the project. The public trail/use of these areas will take precedence over the project development components of streets, parking and landscaping allowed by the PSMP. Future submittal of the project will need to show the alignment and design of the public trails within these open space areas. You will need to coordinate the blufftop setback distance, and trail location and design, with the resource agencies and City of Carlsbad staff (including Planning, Engineering and Parks and Recreation staff) prior to formal submittal of the project.
8. Standards of the PSMP that appear to require some additional attention in the proposed design include the following:
 - a. Building placement shall be designed to create opportunities for plazas or other landscaped open spaces within the planning area.
 - b. Building designs are to be related to the pedestrian scale.

- c. For Planning Area H, specific architectural standards or designs must be proposed concurrent with the review of a Site Development Plan for this Planning Area in order to address potential visual impacts to the lagoon.

9. The General Plan Land Use Element policies for the project area (Ponto/Southern Waterfront) reference the Ponto Beachfront Village Vision Plan (PBVVP) and encourage development of improved public access and activity centers with restaurants and retail. The PBVVP proposes a number of design visions for this property that may need to be addressed or considered in the formal submittal:
 - a. The PBVVP envisions pedestrian pathways, plazas, and courtyards as major features, with courtyards/plazas connecting buildings within this site.
 - b. The PBVVP envisions two-to-three story buildings that, where appropriate, have upper floors set back to lessen the appearance of mass and bulk; have roofline articulation and detail; and draw upon eclectic, beach cottage styles for inspiration and architectural features, materials, and colors, with Craftsman, Bungalow, and Mediterranean architectural influences cited as appropriate. If proposing a more modern rendition of these architectural influences, the attention to scale, massing, articulation and detail, as well as a rich palette of materials and textures, will be critical. There is an expectation by the City that any project at this location will have an exceptional presence, which we assume is also your expectation and intent for the project.
 - c. Public spaces that include retail and/or a restaurant need to be provided. The expectation as outlined in the PBVVP is that the restaurant will be open to the public and be located at the south end of the property to take advantage of the views to the lagoon and ocean surf. The submitted concept does not show that this will be provided as the restaurant appears to be located internal to the hotel without outdoor dining or views of the ocean and retail does not appear to be easily accessible to the public.
 - d. Some surface parking spaces should be provided for on-site retail and restaurant patrons that are not necessarily hotel/timeshare guests, while most parking should be underground. A small amount of public parking should also be provided for the beach and trails. This is also outlined in the General Plan Land Use and Community Design Element policies for future development along Carlsbad Boulevard (Policy 2-P.53.c).
 - e. A pedestrian trail crossing over the railroad tracks is envisioned by the PBVVP. Please be prepared to address and discuss the feasibility and/or constraints associated with this concept in the formal submittal.

10. Evaluation of the site plan should include information regarding the adjoining properties. The existing homes to the east should be plotted and the southern edge of the concepts proposed for the mixed-use area to the north should also be plotted. Please note that while the mixed-use area to the north is being revised through its review process, the expectation will be that the streetscape on both sides of Avenida Encinas will be coordinated between the two project areas. Please also coordinate with the property owner to the north and city Engineering regarding the traffic circle or round-about that is being proposed at Ponto and Avenida Encinas.

11. The tentative map will need to include a separate lot or lots for the Open Space designated portion of the property that is also within Planning Area I of the PSMP, as well as the proposed on-site habitat mitigation and dedicated open spaces areas. These new mitigation open space areas will be added to the Carlsbad Habitat Management Preserve.

12. The existing grades of the site are relatively flat and similar in height to the existing residential development to the east. Care should be given to maintain or lower existing grades versus raising them.
13. The property is adjacent to an HMP hardline preserve area. The project site will be subject to the adjacency standards of the HMP.
14. Prior to formal submittal of this project, obtain a written determination of State Lands Commission review pursuant to Chapter II-3, Section H, of the LCP.
15. HMP and LCP Requirements: The HMP (please make sure to reference specific additional measures for properties within the Coastal Zone on pages D-114 through D120 that modify some other provisions of the HMP) and the LCP may be obtained at the Planning Division front counter or found online at:

<http://www.carlsbadca.gov/services/depts/planning/codes.asp>

16. Biological Study: A formal submittal of this project will need to include a biological study of the site in compliance with the City of Carlsbad's Habitat Management Plan and *Guidelines for Biological Studies*. Because the site contains occupied Coastal Sage Scrub (CSS), it is strongly suggested that protocol surveys be conducted, if not already done, in a February/March period to adequately survey for the presence of nesting gnatcatchers. Surveys conducted outside of this nesting period may only observe presence/absence of gnatcatchers and may not be accepted as adequate for purposes of CEQA and LCP compliance. The biological study will also need to address fairy shrimp and any other potentially significant/covered species.
17. Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Study: Pursuant to the City of Carlsbad's Climate Action Plan (CAP) Chapter 5 and based on other recent similar size hotel projects, the proposed project will exceed the 900 MTCO_{2e} development project screening threshold for greenhouse gases (GHG). A formal submittal of this project will need to include a GHG Emissions Study with an analysis of the project's MTCO_{2e} business-as-usual emissions, and demonstrating how the project will comply with the CAP's GHG reduction targets. Please incorporate all project features into the plans by design or reference. The CAP can be found on the City's Website at the following link:

<http://www.carlsbadca.gov/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?BlobID=29361>

18. Noise Study: The easterly and westerly portions of the project site are within 60-65 CNEL or greater existing and future noise contours per the General Plan. A formal submittal of this project will need to include a noise study consistent with the City of Carlsbad's Noise Guidelines Manual, which can be obtained at the City's Planning Division front counter or found online at:

<http://www.carlsbadca.gov/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?BlobID=24094>

19. Preliminary Geotechnical Report: A formal submittal of this project will need to include a preliminary geotechnical report.

20. Paleontological and Cultural Resources Update Reports: A formal submittal of this project will need to include a paleontological resources update report and a cultural resources update report regarding any potentially significant impacts to paleontological or archaeological resources/Tribal Cultural Resources.
21. Conceptual Landscape Plans: A formal submittal of this project will need to include conceptual landscape plans demonstrating compliance with the City of Carlsbad Landscape Manual and recently adopted amendment to CMC Chapter 18.50, Water Efficient Landscape. The Landscape Manual is available for review at the Planning Division's front counter or it can be found online at:

<http://www.carlsbadca.gov/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?BlobID=24086>

All necessary application forms, submittal requirements, and fee information are available at the Planning counter located in the Faraday Building at 1635 Faraday Avenue or online at <http://www.carlsbadca.gov/services/depts/planning/default.asp>. You may also access the General Plan Land Use Element and the Zoning Ordinance online at the website address shown; select Department Listing; select Planning Home Page. Please review all information carefully before submitting.

Land Development Engineering:

1. The conceptual exhibits submitted do not provide sufficient engineering detail for specific comments, but the following comments should be noted in general.
2. The utility site plan shows a sewer alignment from the pump station east of the NCDT right of way north to Avenida Encinas. The alignment, easement, construction method and construction material specifics remain to be determined.
3. Public improvements to Carlsbad Boulevard may include a turn out with parking along the northbound lanes and pedestrian access across to the beach across both north and south bound lanes from the southwest corner of the project.
4. Public improvements to Avenida Encinas may include the construction of a traffic circle or round-about at the project entrance opposite Ponto Drive.

Fire:

1. The submitted plan is very conceptual. A formal submittal of this project will need to include a detailed and scaled site plan demonstrating fire department access, fire lanes, and on-site private fire hydrants, as well as an egress plan for subterranean assemblies.

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If you would like to schedule a meeting to discuss this letter with the commenting departments, please contact Teri Delcamp at the number below. You may also contact each department individually as follows:

- Planning Division: Teri Delcamp, Senior Planner, at (760) 602-4611
- Land Development Engineering: Steve Bobbett, Project Engineer, at (760) 602-2747
- Fire Prevention: Randy Metz, Fire Marshal, at (760) 602-4661

Sincerely,



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City Planner

DN:TD:fn

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