

Shape Our Fremont

Summer Developments

Although the shelter-in-place restrictions and resulting economic uncertainties have slowed the number of new development submissions, several old and new projects are moving forward for review. Here is a summary of the most recent development activity this summer.

Niles Gateway Setback

On July 9, the Planning Commission voted 3 to 3 on the latest revision of the Niles Gateway proposal. One commissioner was recused because of prior involvement on a citizens' advisement group. Lacking a majority decision, the proposal is considered denied. The applicant appealed the Planning Commission's denial and it will be heard by the City Council sometime in early September.

The proposal from Lennar/Valley Oak is for 75 market-rate, two-story townhouse units, with no commercial space, on the vacant property once occupied by the Henkel Corporation. The proposal requires a General Plan Amendment (GPA) and a change in zoning because the property currently has its former industrial designations. Several concerns were raised by residents, including remaining issues about the architecture, massing, and impact on traffic. There was also an issue about the level of benefits provided to the city, which is one of the criteria for granting a GPA.

One of the biggest concerns was the lack of affordable housing. Although the applicant committed to offer 3 units in the moderate range of income affordability, which is one income level below market rate, several commission members felt that would not be enough to warrant granting a GPA for such a large project. One commissioner suggested 6 or 8 units, but the applicant declined. Staff reminded the commission that state law prohibited a city from requiring any affordable housing unless the applicant agreed.

To make further comments, contact City Staff Planner David Wage at dwage@fremont.gov.

Homes near the Mission

Westgate Ventures, on behalf of St. Joseph Parish, has submitted a General Plan Amendment (GPA) Screening Request to change the land-use designation of a 1.3 acre parcel behind the St. Joseph Church in Mission San Jose from Hillside Residential to Low-Medium Residential. They are asking the City Council to decide if it would consider a proposal for 13 single-family, multi-story, detached houses. In the preliminary plans, the average floor area of each house would be 2,700 square feet, and the average height would be 34 feet. Vehicle access would be from a single central driveway off St. Joseph Terrace. Guest parking would be across St. Joseph Terrace near the church rectory.

This property is within the core area of the Mission San Jose Historic Overlay District, which sets standards for architectural details. It is also within the areas covered by the Hillside Initiative and Measure A, which limit minimum lot size and maximum density.

If the council decides it would consider this proposal, the applicant would then have to submit full plans and details to the Planning Department for a formal review. Once this is complete, the proposal would also have to be reviewed by the Historical Architectural Review Board, Planning Commission, and City Council for a final decision.

The GPA Screening Request will be heard by the Planning Commission on August 27 and by the City Council on September 15. Residents may submit comments about the request to City Staff Planner Courtney Pal at cpal@fremont.gov.

Decoto Lux Approved

When this proposal for 4 single-family houses came before the City Council in 2018, the council sent it back for redesign because there were concerns about traffic safety and the height of one of the

houses. The latest proposal moved the access from Nightingale Court to a shared driveway off Decoto Road and located an emergency vehicle access gate at the end of Nightingale. The lot layout and house architecture were changed so that the one-story house would be adjacent to the existing one-story house on Nightingale.

After discussion about the access off Decoto, the applicant also agreed to make two separate driveway curb cuts -- one for the new development, and the other for the neighboring property on Decoto. Despite these changes, there were still several concerns, which resulted in a 4 to 3 vote for approval.

Summer Recess

Every year, the City Council takes an August recess. The first council meeting after the recess will be September 1. The Planning Commission will not meet on August 13 but will meet on August 27.

For more information on these and other housing developments in Fremont, go to [**www.ShapeOurFremont.com**](http://www.ShapeOurFremont.com)