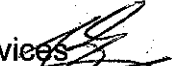




PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

DATE: JANUARY 7, 2009 STUDY SESSION

SUBJECT: DISCUSSION OF ESTHETICS OF INFILL SITES

FROM: Craig A. Ewing, AICP, Director of Planning Services 

Based on the Commission's discussion at its meeting of November 5, 2008, staff has prepared a set of draft conditions of approval to address the issue of undeveloped sites. As detailed below, staff has identified four "site status" circumstances that may warrant conditions of approval should a project not proceed in a timely way. The intent is not to unfairly burden any property owner, but assure that undeveloped sites do not become a nuisance or potential hazard to the community.

The proposed conditions would be discussed between staff and the project applicant, who would propose their preferred conditions. Staff would evaluate the proposed conditions in the project report and provide a recommendation to the Planning Commission or City Council. The Commission or Council would have the final say on which conditions would be adopted as part of the project approval.

Note that all conditions would be prefaced with the statement, "If construction of the approved project has not commenced within three / six / (other) months..." The actual time would be set based on the type and complexity of the project.

1. Site status: Vacant site, no improvements

Condition A: *The site shall be maintained in its natural, existing condition. No perimeter or other fencing shall be installed. Vegetation removal shall be limited to that required by the Fire Marshall to minimize potential hazards from combustible materials. Existing access ways may be closed by the placement of (locked barrier gates / boulders).*

OR

Condition B: *Landscape vegetation shall be installed at all street front property lines. The landscape border shall have a minimum depth of five feet; plant materials shall be drought-tolerant and have a mature height of four feet. No perimeter or other fencing shall be installed.*

OR

Condition C: *Perimeter fencing shall be installed at all street front property lines and any other property line, as determined by the Director of Planning Services. The fencing shall be tube steel or other decorative form, but may not be chain link or barbed / razor wire. The maximum height of the fence at grade shall not exceed six (6) feet.*

OR

Condition D: *Perimeter fencing with decorative graphic screening shall be installed at all street front property lines and any other property line, as determined by the Director of Planning Services. The fencing may be chain link, and the graphic screening shall comply with the City Council's policy for decorative fence graphics, including student murals. The maximum height of the fence at grade shall not exceed six (6) feet.*

2. Site status: Vacant site, remains of previously demolished structures. In addition to one of the above conditions (A through D), the following conditions may be considered and required:

Condition E: *The existing improvements shall be removed and the site returned to a pre-existing grade to the greatest extent feasible. No new grading and no import or export of fill shall be allowed, except to eliminate any potential hazards or to conduct exploratory investigations for geo-technical or other studies, as allowed by the Director of Building Safety..*

OR

Condition F: *The existing improvements shall remain until such time as building permits are issued. No grading or other activity shall be allowed, except to conduct exploratory investigations for geo-technical or other studies, as allowed by the Director of Building Safety.*

3. Site status: Developed site, existing structures abandoned. In addition to one of the above conditions (A through F), the following conditions may be considered and required:

Condition G: *The existing improvements shall be secured and maintained in a first-class condition. All doors shall be secured with locks to prevent unauthorized entry. All windows shall be repaired or removed, boarded and painted to match surroundings. All signs shall be removed and mounting surfaces shall be patched and painted to match surroundings. All graffiti shall be removed within 48 hours of notification.*

AND / OR

Condition H: *A private security service shall be contracted to patrol the site and buildings on a regular schedule, as determined by the Chief of Police.*

4. Site status: Developed site, existing buildings vacant. In addition to one of the above conditions (A through H), the following conditions may be considered and required:

Condition I: *The property shall participate in the City's window poster program, including placement and maintenance of historic / decorative window posters.*

The following chart summarizes the options available to the applicant and the Planning Commission. It is not anticipated that all these conditions would be imposed, but that any could be considered – including a combination of two or more – as needed to address unique site circumstances.

Site status:	1. Vacant Site	2. Vacant w/ Remains	3. Abandoned Structures	4. Vacant Buildings
COA:				
A. Natural State	X	X	X	X
B. Landscape	X	X	X	X
C. Fence	X	X	X	X
D. Fence w/ Mesh	X	X	X	X
E. Remove Struct.		X	X	X
F. Maintain Struct.		X	X	X
G. Secure Struct.			X	X
H. Private Security			X	X
I. Window Posters				X

Based on the Commission's recommendation, staff will report the draft conditions to the City Council for their comments. No ordinance amendment is required to administer these conditions.