



# SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

**MEMO**

**DATE:** October 13, 2011  
**TO:** Tommy Lee  
**FROM:** Joy Navarrete, Planning Department  
**RE:** PPA Case No. 2011.0898U for 478-484 Haight Street

1650 Mission St.  
Suite 400  
San Francisco,  
CA 94103-2479

Reception:  
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Please find the attached Preliminary Project Assessment (PPA) for the address listed above. You may contact the staff contact, Rachel A. Schuett, at (415) 575-9030 or [Rachel.Schuett@sfgov.org](mailto:Rachel.Schuett@sfgov.org), to answer any questions you may have, or to schedule a follow-up meeting.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Navarrete", written over a horizontal line.

Joy Navarrete, Senior Planner





# SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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## Preliminary Project Assessment

*Date:* October 11, 2011  
*Case No.:* 2011.0898U  
*Project Address:* 478 – 484 Haight Street  
*Block/Lot:* 0849/019  
*Zoning:* NC-2  
40-X  
*Project Sponsor:* Tommy Lee  
415-218-6776  
*Staff Contact:* Rachel Schuett – 415.513.3030  
[Rachel.Schuett@sfgov.org](mailto:Rachel.Schuett@sfgov.org)

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### DISCLAIMERS:

Please be advised that this determination does not constitute an application for development with the Planning Department. It also does not represent a complete review of the proposed project, a project approval of any kind, or in any way supersede any required Planning Department approvals listed below. The Planning Department may provide additional comments regarding the proposed project once the required applications listed below are submitted. While some approvals are granted by the Planning Department, some are at the discretion of other bodies, such as the Planning Commission or Historic Preservation Commission. Additionally, it is likely that the project will require approvals from other City agencies such as the Department of Building Inspection, Department of Public Works, Department of Public Health, and others. The information included herein is based on plans and information provided for this assessment and the Planning Code, General Plan, Planning Department policies, and local/state/federal regulations as of the date of this document, all of which are subject to change.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The project site consists of one lot Lot (019) located at 478 – 484 Haight Street. Lot 019 is the second lot east from Fillmore Street on the northeast corner of the intersection of Fillmore Street and Haight Street. The project site is within the NC-2 (Small-Scale Neighborhood Commercial) district. The NC-2 district largely includes lots with frontage on Haight Street from Webster Street, extending east to Steiner Street. The lots directly adjacent to the NC-2 district lots are largely zoned RH-3 and RM-1 and include mostly residential uses. The lot contains an existing commercial building (currently vacant) with one single family residential unit above (currently occupied), there is an alley accessible by a curb cut on Haight Street on the eastern edge of the property.

The proposal is to demolish the existing structure and construct a new four-story building with one floor of underground parking. As proposed, the building is approximately 46 feet tall. However, as described under Preliminary Project Comments, on page 7, the allowable height on the project site is 40 feet. The building would include ground-floor commercial uses, with a three-story residential elderly care facility above. The proposed project includes nine parking spaces, including one accessible parking space, two retail storefronts and office space on the ground floor, and the residential care facility includes 26

bedrooms, with largely shared bathrooms, a shared kitchen, shared common spaces, and shared open spaces provided as decks.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:**

The project initially requires the following environmental review. This review may be done in conjunction with the required approvals listed below, but must be completed before any project approval may be granted:

1. An **Environmental Evaluation Application** is required for the full scope of the project (demolition and new construction) and may include the following:
  - a. *Transportation Study.* A Transportation Study would not be required. The replacement of the existing retail and residential use with the proposed commercial and residential elderly care facility would add approximately 10 additional peak hour vehicle trips. The project garage would presumably be accessed via the existing curb cut on Haight Street. Consultation with the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) would be required if the project required a new curb cut or resulted in the removal of on-street parking spaces.
  - b. *Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA).* A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) study is required by the Planning Department. It must be completed prior to environmental clearance. A Phase I ESA which has previously been conducted for the site may be acceptable and should be submitted with the Environmental Evaluation (EE) application. Several sites containing Leaking Underground Storage Tanks (LUSTs) have been identified in proximity to the project site. The Phase I ESA should identify the clean-up status of these sites and their proximity (distance and directional gradient) to the project site, and determine whether soil or groundwater contamination from these sites is likely at the project site. If the Phase I ESA identifies likely soil or groundwater contamination, a Phase II ESA would be required.
  - c. *Geotechnical Study.* Given that the San Francisco Bay Area is seismically active, the project is located in a seismic hazard zone. The site is underlain by beach and dune sand of the Quaternary geologic unit. Approximately half of the site is located in a liquefaction hazard zone. A Geotechnical Study should be conducted for the site to identify site specific geologic conditions and potential hazards and should be submitted with the EE application. The Geotechnical Study should evaluate or make recommendations for the design of the building foundation. If geological impacts are identified, mitigation measures or design recommendations should be promulgated.
  - d. *Archeological Study.* The proposed project would require a Preliminary Archeological Review, which would be conducted in-house by Planning Department Staff. This review requires documentation as to potential project soils disturbance and the range of appropriate foundation types for the proposed structure. Such information is typically contained in the Geotechnical Study described above. The Preliminary Archeological Review will determine

whether or not mitigation measures and/or if additional archeological studies will be required as part of the environmental evaluation.

- e. *Historic Resource Evaluation Report (HRER)*. The subject property is not included on any historic resource surveys or listed on any local, state or national registries. The 478-484 Haight Street building was constructed prior to 1900; therefore, the building is considered a Category B property (Requires Further Consultation and Review) for the purposes of the Planning Department's California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review procedures due to its age (more than 50 years old). Further research or analysis directed by the Department is required to assess whether the building qualifies as a historic resource under CEQA and/or whether the building is within a potential historic district. A map of known and potential historic resources in the vicinity of the project site that are identified in the City's database is attached. The Department requires a Historic Resource Evaluation report prepared by a qualified professional selected from the Department's qualified historic consultant list to be submitted with the EE application. Please contact Tina Tam, Senior Preservation Planner, at (415) 558-6325 to coordinate the selection of a consultant. A general scope of work for the Historic Resource Evaluation report is included on page 35 of San Francisco Preservation Bulletin No. 16, and it is strongly recommended that the consultant submit a scope of work to the Planning Department's Preservation Division for review prior to drafting the report. If it is determined that the structure is a historic resource, the proposal to demolish it will most likely require preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR).
- f. *Air Quality Technical Report (AQTR)*. The proposed project includes the siting of new sensitive receptors near sources of pollutants. A Preliminary Air Quality Screening has been conducted by the Planning Department, which included consultation with the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD). Preliminarily, one potential stationary source of toxic air contaminants (TAC) was identified within 1,000 feet of the proposed project site, Plant #5474, the United States Mint at San Francisco, located at 155 Hermann Street, 968 feet from the project site. However, the BAAQMD confirmed that Plant #5474 does not exceed BAAQMD's single source screening level thresholds.

The project site is located within the Potential Roadway Exposure Zone (PREZ) as identified by the San Francisco Department of Public Health (DPH) which means that residents of the proposed project could be exposed to significant concentrations of diesel particulate matter from high volume roadways within approximately 500 feet (150 meters) of the project site. Since the proposed project includes more than 10 new residential units, it is subject to Article 38 of the San Francisco Health Code which requires a DPH analysis to identify risks related to PM 2.5 exposure. This analysis would be initiated as part of the environmental evaluation.

The Preliminary Air Quality Screening identified two other high volume roadways within 1000 feet of the project site; Fell Street and Oak Street. However, the impacts related to traffic on Fell Street and Oak Street would not exceed the PM 2.5 and cancer risk thresholds.

The estimated construction period for the proposed project would be ten to eleven months including demolition, excavation and construction. During this time construction would be undertaken six days per week (Monday through Saturday) from 8 am to 6 pm. Diesel equipment (Bobcat E50) would be used for the one week demolition phase, and (Bobcat T870) would be used for the two to three week excavation phase. No diesel equipment would be used during the construction phase. A total of 90 truck trips is estimated for the entire project construction period. The closest sensitive receptors, primarily residential land uses, are located adjacent to the proposed project site meaning that the project construction would not meet the construction air quality screening criteria promulgated by the BAAQMD.

Therefore, further study, in the form of a Health Risk Analysis (HRA) prepared by a qualified consultant is required to determine the impact (if any) of the project construction on nearby sensitive receptors.

The operational phase of the proposed project does not include a new boiler or generator, therefore the proposed project would not result in a new stationary source of air pollutants. Further, the project meets the BAAQMD screening criteria for operational emissions of criteria air pollutants. Therefore, it is likely that no further analysis of operational impacts would be required.

In summary, an air quality screening and subsequent Air Quality Technical Report (AQTR) including a Health Risk Analysis (HRA) should be prepared for the project by a qualified consultant. The Planning Department requires the air quality consultant to submit a scope of work (with the full air quality screening attached) for review and approval prior to initiation of the AQTR.

- g. *Interior and Exterior Noise.* The proposed project site is located on Haight Street, which is subject to 75 dBA (Ldn) traffic noise levels (see San Francisco 2004 and 2009 Housing Element EIR, Figure V.G-3), and involves siting new noise-sensitive uses, since the project includes a residential care facility for the elderly.

As a result, the Planning Department will require the preparation of an analysis that includes, at a minimum, a site survey to identify potential noise-generating uses within two blocks of the project site, and at least one 24-hour noise measurement (with maximum noise level readings taken at least every 15 minutes), prior to completion of the environmental review. The analysis should demonstrate with reasonable certainty that Title 24 standards, where applicable, can be met, and that there are no particular circumstances about the proposed project site that appear to warrant heightened concern about noise levels in the vicinity. Should such concerns be present, the Department may require the completion of a detailed noise assessment by person(s) qualified in acoustical analysis and/or engineering prior to the first project approval action, in order to demonstrate that acceptable interior noise levels consistent with those in the Title 24 standards can be attained.

Also, to minimize effects on development in noisy areas, for new residential uses, the Planning Department shall, through its building permit review process, in conjunction with the noise analysis required above, require that open space required under the Planning Code for such uses be protected, to the maximum feasible extent, from existing ambient noise levels that could prove annoying or disruptive to users of the open space. One way that this might be accomplished is through a site design that uses the building itself to shield on-site open space from the greatest noise sources, construction of noise barriers between noise sources and open space, and appropriate use of both common and private open space in multi-family dwellings. Implementation should also be undertaken consistent with other principles of urban design (see Mitigation Measure M-NO-1: Interior and Exterior Noise, San Francisco 2004 and 2009 Housing Element EIR).

It should be noted that the open space proposed on the Haight Street side of the building is not required under the Planning Code, as described under Preliminary Project Comments, below.

The Planning Department requires that the noise measurements and preliminary acoustical analysis be prepared, and the findings be included in the environmental review document.

- h. *Aesthetics.* The proposed project would demolish the existing retail store and residential flat and replace it with a building approximately 45 feet nine inches tall, approximately one story taller than the existing residential flat (see discussion of allowable height under Preliminary Project Comments, on page 7). The Planning Department recommends that at least one visual simulation (or rendering of the project) be prepared for inclusion in the environmental document. The visual simulation should depict the Haight Street building frontage and should include some portion of the adjacent buildings to provide some visual context.
- i. *Wind.* Wind impacts are generally caused by large building masses extending substantially above their surroundings, and by buildings oriented such that a large wall catches a prevailing wind, particularly if such a wall includes little or no articulation. Typically, buildings that are less than 100 feet tall do not result in substantial changes to ground-level wind. The proposed project would be up to approximately 46 feet tall (see discussion of allowable height under Preliminary Project Comments, on page 7) on the Haight Street elevation, therefore no additional analysis of wind impacts will be required.
- j. *Shadow.* Section 295 restricts new shadow upon public spaces under the jurisdiction of the Recreation and Park Department by any structure exceeding 40 feet, unless the Planning Commission finds the impact to be less than significant. To determine whether the project would conform with Section 295, a shadow fan analysis is typically prepared by the Planning Department.

Given the height of the building at approximately 46 feet (see discussion of allowable height under Preliminary Project Comments, on page 7), a shadow fan analysis is required. An application for a shadow fan analysis should be submitted, with the required fee, prior to

submittal of the EE application. The findings of the shadow fan analysis would be incorporated into the environmental document. Preliminarily, given the location of the project site and the distance to public spaces protected by Section 295, it is not anticipated that the proposed project would have a significant shadow impact.

Please note that this project is not likely to qualify for a Categorical Exemption under CEQA. Additional analysis will determine if an Initial Study is required. If so, the Initial Study will help determine that either (1) the project is issued a Negative Declaration stating that the project would not have a significant effect on the environment, or (2) an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is required to determine the project's significance on the environment.

Environmental Evaluation applications are available in the Planning Department lobby at 1650 Mission Street Suite 400, at the Planning Information Center at 1660 Mission Street, and online at [www.sfplanning.org](http://www.sfplanning.org). The San Francisco Preservation Bulletin No. 16 is available at [www.sfplanning.org](http://www.sfplanning.org) under "Historic Preservation."

#### **PLANNING DEPARTMENT APPROVALS:**

The project requires the following Planning Department approvals. These approvals may be reviewed in conjunction with the required environmental review, but may not be granted until after the required environmental review is completed.

1. A **Dwelling Unit Removal Application** per Planning Code Section 317 is required as the project proposes to demolish a residential unit.
2. A **Conditional Use Application** is required for the project per the following Planning Code Sections;
  - a. Section 711.39 – Demolition of a residential unit at or above the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor requires a Conditional Use hearing for the Commission to determine the appropriateness of the proposed residential demolition.
  - b. Sections 711.81 and 790.50 – The residential care facility is considered a large institutional use in the NC-2 District. Large institutional uses proposed to occupy the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor or above require a Conditional Use authorization.
  - c. Per Section 711.22, no off-street parking is required for the proposed residential care facility or the two retail spaces; however Section 204.5 does allow a maximum of three accessory parking spaces for the project. The parking proposed in excess of the three accessory parking spaces is considered an automobile parking use per Section 711.56 and requires Conditional Use authorization.
3. **Demolition and Building Permit Applications** are required for the demolition of the existing building and the construction of the proposed project.

Dwelling Unit Removal (Section 317) and Conditional Use applications are available in the Planning Department lobby at 1650 Mission Street Suite 400, at the Planning Information Center at 1660 Mission



Street, and online at [www.sfplanning.org](http://www.sfplanning.org). Demolition and Building Permit applications are available at the Department of Building Inspections at 1660 Mission Street.

### **NEIGHBORHOOD NOTIFICATIONS AND PUBLIC OUTREACH:**

Project Sponsors are encouraged to conduct public outreach with the surrounding community and neighborhood groups early in the development process. Additionally, many approvals require a public hearing with an associated neighborhood notification. Differing levels of neighborhood notification are mandatory for some or all of the reviews and approvals listed above.

This project is required to conduct a Pre-application meeting with surrounding neighbors and registered neighborhood groups before a development application may be filed with the Planning Department. The Pre-application packet, which includes instructions and template forms, is available at [www.sfplanning.org](http://www.sfplanning.org) under the “Permits/Zoning” tab. All registered neighborhood group mailing lists are available online at [www.sfplanning.org](http://www.sfplanning.org) under the “Publications” tab.

### **PRELIMINARY PROJECT COMMENTS:**

The following comments address specific Planning Code and other general issues that may significantly impact the proposed project:

1. Per Article 2 of the Planning Code and the 40-X Height and Bulk District, the maximum allowable building height for the lot shall be 40 feet.
2. Per Planning Code Section 138.1, four, 24-inch-box sized street trees will be required for the project.

### **PRELIMINARY DESIGN COMMENTS:**

The Urban Design Advisory Team (UDAT) met and reviewed the plans for the proposed project. The following comments address preliminary design issues that may significantly impact the proposed project:

#### **1. Building Massing, Site Design, and Open Space**

Make sure the proposed light well matches the adjacent neighbor’s light well. Overall, the massing is handled well.

#### **2. Ground Level Street Front**

Differentiate the residential lobby entry more from the commercial storefront. Consider recessing the commercial storefront entries, and look at making the storefront higher, or detail to create the appearance of a higher ground floor.

#### **3. Architecture**

Overall the proposed architectural design has an appropriate rhythm, detail, and scale. Clarify the façade treatment on Haight Street as the design develops further.

**PRELIMINARY PROJECT ASSESSMENT EXPIRATION:**

This Preliminary Project Assessment is valid for a period of **18 months**. An Environmental Evaluation, Conditional Use Authorization, or Building Permit Application, as listed above, must be submitted no later than **April 11, 2013**. Otherwise, this determination is considered expired and a new Preliminary Project Assessment is required. Such applications and plans must be generally consistent with those found in this Preliminary Project Assessment.

Enclosure: Neighborhood Group Mailing List

cc: Tommy Lee, Project Sponsor  
Glen Cabrerros, Current Planning  
Rachel A. Schuett, Environmental Planning  
Shelley Caltagirone, Current Planning