



STAFF REPORT

11/12/2024

AGENDA ITEM

**TO: HONORABLE MAYOR
AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

**FROM: CARLO TOMAINO
CITY MANAGER**

**BY: COLLEEN T. DOAN
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR**

SUBJECT: PUBLIC HEARING - ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT 24-01 ESTABLISHING A NEW SPECIFIC PLAN FOR THE COURTYARD CONSISTING OF EIGHT DETACHED SINGLE-FAMILY DWELLINGS AT 1933 THROUGH 1939 TEMPLE AVENUE

Summary:

The applicant, Guy Alexander, as agent for Signal Ventures, LLC, is requesting to demolish three existing garage/storage structures on a narrow, underdeveloped, infill site which is surrounded on three sides by three-story condominiums, and construct eight detached single-family dwellings on eight small single-family lots. The site is 0.59 acres and is located on the west side of Temple Avenue between East 19th and East 20th Streets at 1933-1939 Temple Avenue. A similar residential project under a different applicant was previously denied by the City Council due to the project exceeding height standards and impacting views pursuant to the City's View Policy. The current project has been redesigned to reduce heights to below the maximums allowed by the City Municipal Code, to eliminate Primary and Secondary view impacts identified in the City View Policy, and to further reduce view and privacy impacts to the satisfaction of previously concerned adjacent residents.

Form of Notice: Form of Notice: Notice was published in the Signal Tribune newspaper per Government Code §65091(a)(4) on November 1, 2024; and was posted in accordance with Signal Hill Municipal Code Section 1.08.010 on or before November 1, 2024.

Strategic Plan Goal(s):

Goal No. 3 Economic and Downtown Development: Improve the local economy, support local businesses, and create a vibrant downtown core.

Recommendations:

1. Adopt the resolution, entitled:

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SIGNAL HILL, CALIFORNIA, ADOPTING INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION (SCH 2024100062) AND APPROVING A MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM, RELATIVE TO ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT 24-01, TENTATIVE TRACT MAP 74232, AND SITE PLAN AND DESIGN REVIEW 24-01, FOR THE COURTYARD SPECIFIC PLAN (SP-21)

2. Introduce the ordinance, entitled:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SIGNAL HILL, CALIFORNIA, APPROVING ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT 24-01, AMENDING THE OFFICIAL ZONING MAP TO CHANGE AN APPROXIMATE 0.59-ACRE SITE AT 1933 THROUGH 1939 TEMPLE AVENUE FROM RESIDENTIAL HIGH DENSITY (RH) TO THE COURTYARD SPECIFIC PLAN (SP-21) AND ADDING CHAPTER 20.28, THE COURTYARD SPECIFIC PLAN (SP-21) TO THE SIGNAL HILL MUNICIPAL CODE AND ESTABLISHING DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS FOR THE SITE

Fiscal Impact:

City impact fees are one-time charges imposed by local governments on new developments and are used to help municipalities recover the costs of growth-related infrastructure and public services, such as: Local roads, Schools, Parks, and Fire protection facilities. The estimated impact fees for this project are included in the 2025-2026 fiscal year budget revenues. Under the current impact fee schedule, the City would receive an estimated \$427,028.48 in impact fees as follows:

- \$204,336.00 in Parks and Recreation Impact Fees
- \$5,476.48 in Traffic Impact Fees
- \$217,216.00 in Water Impact Fees

Background:

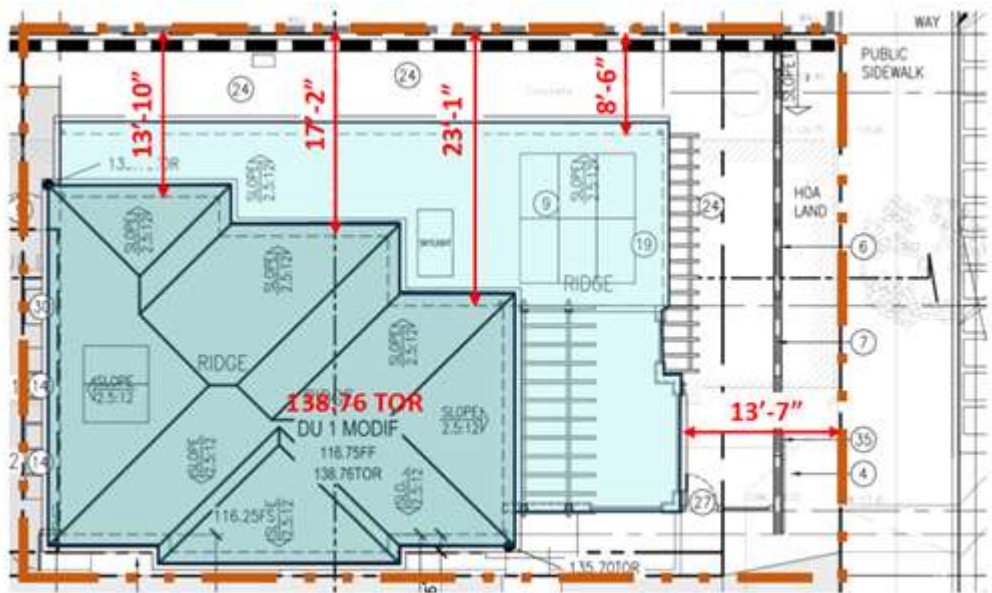
In 2014, the City received an application for a residential project which included a request for a Zoning Ordinance Amendment to create the Courtyard Specific Plan to develop ten townhome-style condominiums on an underdeveloped “infill” site. The project deviated from several of the underlying zoning standards. Most importantly, the project exceeded the maximum allowed two-story height standards (three-story, 32 feet in height), creating Primary and Secondary views impacts for adjacent residents, pursuant to the City’s View Policy.

On January 10, 2017, after an extensive planning process that included community outreach, two Planning Commission workshops, a Planning Commission public hearing, a neighborhood meeting, City Council Public Hearings and a City Council Study Session, the City Council conducted a final Public Hearing on the project and denied the project without prejudice, specifically due to view impacts.

In August 2022, the property was sold to the current applicant, Signal Ventures LLC, which submitted plans for a preliminary design review in response to the City Council and resident concerns which resulted in a reduced number of units (from 10 to 8) and a reduced height for the development to a

maximum of 25-foot height and two stories. Between May 2023 and August 2024, the applicant revised the project design and successfully eliminated the impacts to Primary and Secondary Views for adjacent residents and continued to meet and work with two remaining residents in the Temple View Condominiums adjacent to the north of the proposed project.

The applicant voluntarily worked to further reduce project impacts, including impacts not covered by City policies. These voluntary revisions included a re-design of Unit 1 from a two-story unit to a partial one- and partial two-story structure and a minor revision to the two-story roofline, changing it from a gable to a hip roof design. These voluntary changes increased the distance of the second story wall and roofline away from the Temple View units most impacted by the infill project (units 101 and 102); this voluntary re-design preserves views not otherwise protected by the City's View Policy for Units 101 and 102 of the Temple View condominiums as illustrated in the images below:



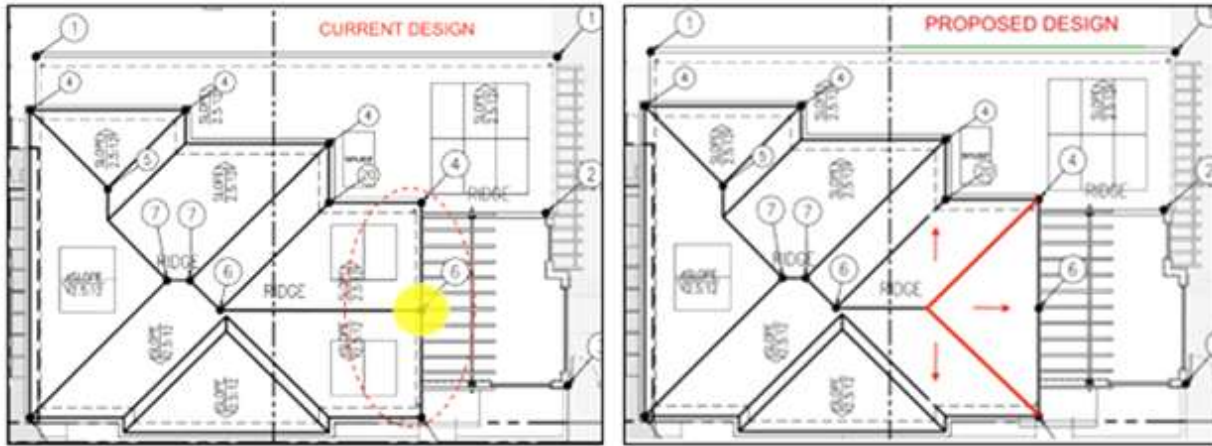
Unit 1, One- and Two-story Design

Unit 102

Unit 101 (Temple View Condos.)

Initial Gable Roofline

Revised Hip Roofline



In accordance with the Signal Hill View Policy, the developer has preserved to the extent possible, all neighboring views through design considerations and neighbor input regardless of view designation or eligibility.

On October 15, 2024, the Planning Commission conducted a duly noticed Public Hearing and unanimously approved Site Plan and Design Review (SPDR) 24-01 subject to compliance with the conditions of approval and approved Tentative Tract Map 74232, contingent on City Council accepting their recommendations to approve the Initial Study /Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) SCH #2024100062 and Zoning Ordinance Amendment 24-01 for the Courtyard Specific Plan (SP-21) (Attachment A).

Analysis:

Site Description

The project site is an infill parcel located on the west side of Temple Avenue between East 19th and East 20th Streets within the Hilltop Neighborhood and RH, zoning district. Three-story condominium complexes surround the site on three sides. The surrounding developments were built in the 1980s under the R-4 development standards, which allowed for denser, taller projects with reduced setbacks compared to current development standards.

<p><u>Hillbrook Condominiums</u> • 82 dwelling units • 3-stories, 35' height • 10' Temple Ave. setback</p>	<p><u>Temple View Condominiums</u> • • 16 dwelling units • 3-stories, 35' height • 8'-6" Temple Ave. setback</p>	<p><u>Project Site</u> • 8 dwelling units • 2-stories, 23' height • 13'-7" and 26'- 9" Temple Ave. setback</p>
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Vicinity Map

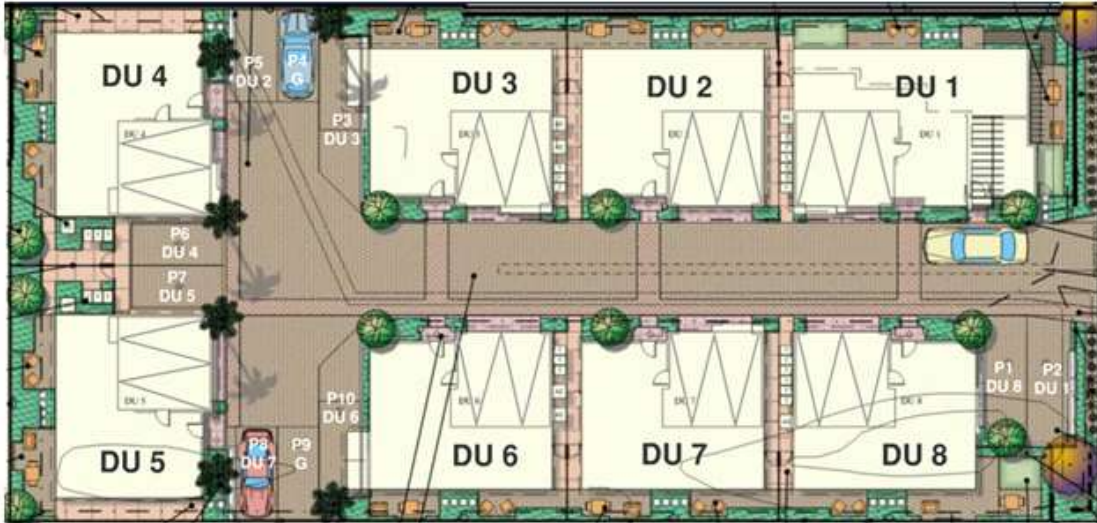


The existing zoning designations and land uses for the project site and adjacent properties are as follows:

Direction	Zoning Designation	Existing Land Use
Project Site	Residential High Density (RH)	Garage/storage structure and two non-residential building structures
Northeast	Residential High Density (RH)	Temple View Condos
Northwest	Residential High Density (RH)	Single-family dwelling (Future Smart Homes 3-unit)
South	Residential High Density (RH)	Hillbrook Condos -82 units
West	Residential High Density (RH)	Hillbrook Condos -82 units
East (Across Temple Ave.)	California Crown Specific Plan (SP-5)	Single-family dwellings

Site Plan

The proposed site plan consists of eight detached single-family town homes. Vehicle and pedestrian access to the project site is provided from Temple Avenue via a two-way, 20-foot-wide private driveway with a hammerhead turnaround.



Site Plan

Zoning Ordinance Amendment 24-01

The applicant is proposing a Zoning Ordinance Amendment (ZOA 24-01) for a new specific plan. This amendment would allow for a single-family development format in place of the multi-family format currently permitted under the RH standards. There are 14 residential specific plans in the City. These plans establish development standards specific to each development, considering site constraints and aiming to achieve broader City goals as stated in the City’s Strategic Plan and Land Use Element of the General Plan such as:

- Increase the local housing supply to support current and potential residents
- Encourage high-quality housing
- Encourage ownership opportunities
- Continue to use Specific Plans to improve on the quality of new development

The development constraints at the subject site include:

- Long and narrow site configuration
- Two abandoned oil wells
- Grade/slope of site
- Infill parcel surrounded by three-story, high density residential developments
- View Impacts

The proposed ZOA would change the official zoning designation from the current RH classification to SP-21, the Courtyard Specific Plan, and create development standards for a single-family format exclusive to the project site. The proposed new standards for the specific plan would permit certain deviations noted in the chart below.

Development Standard	RH Zoning District	Proposed SP-21
Unit per square feet	2,100 sf.	Lot 7: 2,038.67 sf
Min. front setback	20 ft	DU 1: 13'-7" (Temple Ave.)
Max. side yard projections	18"	Privacy Awnings 22"
Max. hardscape material within front setback	25%	Lot 8: 30%
Patio Covers-Open Trellis	Open trellis shall not be constructed in front yards.	18" encroachment on Lot 1 (not technically a front yard)
Parking for SF w/4 bedrooms	3 garage spaces	2 garage spaces and 1 surface space per unit plus 2 guest parking stalls.
Min. parking stall size	10 'x 20'	9' x 20'
Fence and wall heights in front yard setback	4 ft	5'-6" with a minimum 30% open/transparent on the street frontage (not technically a front yard)
Fence and wall height on side and rear property line	6 ft	6'-6"

Parking

On-site parking includes two parking spaces within an enclosed garage and one designated surface parking space for each dwelling unit. Additionally, two guest parking spaces are provided resulting in a hybrid between the parking standards for multi-family parking which requires guest parking and the single-family standard of a three-car garage for a four-bedroom home. The project provides a total of 26 parking spaces for the eight dwellings, which is two parking spaces beyond the minimum required for a single-family development.

Elevation Overview

The two units with the most visibility from Temple Avenue are Units 1 and 8. The redesign of Unit 1 from a two-story unit to a partial single-story unit would create a more visually diverse view of the project from Temple Avenue. All other dwellings feature exterior modifications to ensure that no two units are exactly the same. The project’s architectural theme embraces a modern, simplified Spanish style, as shown in the renderings below.



TEMPLE AVENUE VIEW



Birdseye view looking northwest

Stormwater Compliance

The project site currently receives stormwater runoff from the adjacent property to the northwest which has a recently approved residential project for three detached condominiums (SPDR 19-02). As part of the approved project, the applicant secured and recorded an Agreement with the Courtyard applicant for shared sewer and stormwater facilities. The stormwater and sewer from the approved Smart Homes property will be collected via separate lines in compliance with the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works and as approved by the City Engineer. The easement is shown on the Tentative Parcel Map, which the Planning Commission approved, and will be part of the recorded Final Parcel Map which requires approval by the City Council. The stormwater infiltration system captures stormwater runoff which would then percolate into the ground.

Waste Management

As requested by staff, the applicant shared its proposed method for waste removal with the local trash hauling company, EDCO, which approved their proposed hauling procedures.

Regional Housing Needs Assessment

The Regional Housing Needs Assessment allocation (RHNA) is the target number of homes across income levels each city and county must zone for as part of its Housing Element. The City of Signal

Hill’s share of the regional housing needs allocation for the 2021-2029 Housing Element is 517 housing units (October 2021-present) as follows:

Table 1: Regional Housing Needs Assessment Allocation

Income Level	RHNA Allocation 2021-2029	# of Permits Issued 2021-present	Project Site
Extremely Low	80	–	
Very Low	81	–	
Low	78	–	
Moderate	90	2 JADUs	
Above Moderate	188	8 SFDs 19 ADUs	8 SFDs
Combined	517	29	

The table above includes production numbers based on permits issued thus far, including Accessory Dwelling Units. If approved and constructed, the project is anticipated to be counted in the above-moderate income category.

Oil Code Compliance

There are two plugged/abandoned oil wells on the project site, in the southwest corner and near the southeast corner. In compliance with the City’s Oil and Gas Code for development on properties with abandoned oil wells, both wells were located, excavated, and tested for methane leaks, then surveyed and fitted with vent cones. In 2021, the applicant prepared a Well Abandonment Report which the City’s Oil Services Coordinator approved. However, the 24-month validation period for the report expired; consequently, the applicant is required to prepare a new investigation permit before the City can issue demolition, building, or grading permits, as noted in the SPDR Conditions of Approval (No. 59). The proposed project positions both abandoned wells within the parking area, ensuring emergency access and preventing any habitable structures from being placed on or near them.

Environmental Analysis

IS/MND SCH #2024100062 was prepared by one of the City’s on-call contract environmental firms, Catalyst Environmental Solutions. The MND for the Site Plan and Design review, Zoning Ordinance Amendment, and Tentative Tract Map found potentially significant environmental impacts unless mitigated and includes required mitigation measures to address Biological Resources, Cultural

11/12/2024

Resources, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Tribal Cultural Resources, and Geology and Soils.

Conclusion

The proposed project has undergone a comprehensive review, addressed community feedback, view impacts, planning requirements, and environmental considerations. The Planning Commission recommended the City Council approve IS/MND SCH #2024100062 and ZOA 24-01 to construct the Courtyard development project.

Reviewed for Fiscal Impact:

Sharon del Rosario

Attachments:

- A. October 15, 2024, Planning Staff Report and Attachments
- B. City Council Resolution
- C. Exhibit A - Final Draft MND
- D. City Council Ordinance
- E. Exhibit A - Revised Zoning Map