



City of Arts & Innovation

Utility Services / Land Use / Energy Development Committee

TO: **UTILITY SERVICES / LAND USE / ENERGY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS** **DATE:** JUNE 9, 2015

FROM: **COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT** **WARD:** 5

SUBJECT: **PLANNING CASES P13-0685 (COA) AND P13-0852 (EIR) – CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE DEMOLITION OF THE RIVERSIDE FREE METHODIST CHURCH ON THE CALIFORNIA BAPTIST UNIVERSITY CAMPUS – 8431 DIANA AVENUE – APPEAL - DIRECT SUBMITTAL**

ISSUE:

This item for Utility Services / Land Use / Energy Development Committee consideration is an appeal filed by California Baptist University (CBU) of the Cultural Heritage Board's action on a recommendation to the City Council regarding a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) and a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the proposed demolition of the Riverside Free Methodist Church on the CBU campus, located at 8431 Diana Avenue (Project).

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Utility Services / Land Use / Energy Development Committee recommends to the City Council approval of Planning Cases P13-0685 and P13-0852 certifying a Final EIR and issuing a COA for the Project.

DISCUSSION:

CBU acquired the Riverside Free Methodist Church (RFMC) site located at 8431 Diana Avenue after the City Council approved the CBU Specific Plan (CBUSP). The RFMC is within the boundary of the CBUSP. The RFMC congregation has moved to another church site, and the RFMC does not fit within the master plan programming of the CBUSP. A DEIR was prepared in accordance with CEQA to support the COA request. The DEIR was released for the 45-day public review from March 27, through May 11, 2015. When a COA includes an EIR, the City Council is the final approving authority for the COA and the EIR, and the CHB's action is a recommendation in those cases. In addition, all DEIRs are reviewed by the City Planning Commission (CPC) for a recommendation to the City Council.

On May 20, 2015, the Cultural Heritage Board (CHB) considered the COA along with the DEIR in a public hearing for CBU's proposed demolition of the RFMC. Staff recommended that the CHB recommend approval of the COA and the EIR to the City Council. Following CHB discussion, a motion to recommend approval of the COA and the EIR to the City Council was seconded and voted upon. The vote resulted in a tie vote of 4-4 since one CHB member was absent. Because it was a tie vote CHB's action resulted in no recommendation from the CHB to the City Council on

the planning cases. Therefore, an appeal of the COA is required. On May 21, 2015, the CPC considered the DEIR in a public hearing for a recommendation to the City Council. The CPC unanimously (5-0-4) recommended that the City Council approve a Final EIR for the project.

On May 21, 2015, CBU filed an appeal of the CHB's action on Planning Cases P13-0685 and P13-0852. In accordance with Title 20, appeals of the CHB's actions are considered by the Utility Services / Land Use / Energy Development Committee (Committee) for a recommendation to the City Council. The Committee's recommendation will be forwarded, along with the CPC's recommendation and a summary of the CHB's action, to the City Council at a future public hearing.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The required appeal fee was submitted to complete the appeal application. There is no fiscal impact associated with the appeal of the CHB's action on Planning Cases P13-0685 and P13-0852.

Submitted by: Emilio Ramirez, Interim Community & Economic Development Director
Certified as to availability of funds: Brent A. Mason, Finance Director/Treasurer
Approved by: Al Zelinka, FAICP, Assistant City Manager
for John A. Russo, City Manager
Approved as to form: Gary G. Geuss, City Attorney

Attachments:

1. May 20, 2015, CHB Staff Report
2. May 21, 2015, Appeal Letter Submitted by Gresham Savage Nolan & Tilden on behalf of CBU

On Jun 4, 2015, at 3:53 PM, Field, John <JFIELD@rcbos.org> wrote:

Good afternoon Councilman: I received a phone call from Dave Leonard earlier this week regarding the hearing before the Riverside Cultural Heritage Board last month (on the 20th I believe). I was out of town on vacation that week and missed the meeting. I have since learned that their item ended in a 4-4 vote (which is a de facto denial I believe). They were seeking a certificate of appropriateness and CEQA approval to demolish the former sanctuary of the Riverside Free Methodist Church (and ancillary buildings), which CBU has acquired and intends to utilize in a future expansion of their campus.

Dave expressed to me that you would like to hear my opinion of the proposal. As such I have watched the entire video of the CHB staff presentation and hearing, I visited the site in person yesterday afternoon, and I met with Dave Leonard and Mark Howe from CBU this afternoon. While I completely understand the position of some of my fellow board members that without a proposed development plan in place they are not comfortable supporting this item, there are several other (frankly better) examples of this style of architecture in the City. In addition, CBU has a track record that is in my mind impeccable with respect to building amazing structures on its campus. If we were dealing with a land developer who just wanted to clear the site to bring it to market I would not be in support, but that is not the case here. CBU has done a remarkable job expanding its campus. They are great stewards and a tremendous asset to this community. For these reasons I am in support of their project per the recommendations in the staff report.

If you need anything further from me I would be happy to discuss. My office number is (951) 955-9159 and my cell phone is (951) 206-2479.

Sincerely, John Field, Riverside Cultural Heritage Board Member

cc: Mayor
City Council
City Manager
City Attorney
Interim Community and Economic Development Director