P93-087 - DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE/ ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE

REQUEST:

A. Environmental Impact Report (SCH# 93062058);

B. Mitigation Monitoring Plan;

C. Major Project Special Permit to develop a 17 story (256 foot high) 372,097 square foot office building with 587 parking spaces; and,

D. Lot Line Adjustment to merge four lots into one lot on 1.17+ vacant acres in the Central Business District-Special Planning District (C3-SPD) zone.

LOCATION: 1300 I Street
006-0054-007,008,016 and 019

Central City
Sacramento City Unified School District
Council District #1

APPLICANT/ OWNER:	OPUS Corporation, 9900 Bren E., Minnetonka, MN. 55343 Jeff Smith (916) 556-1940
PLANS BY:	Same as above
APPLICATION FILED:	May 5, 1993
STAFF CONTACT:	Donald C. Smith, 264-5381

SUMMARY/RECOMMENDATION:

The applicant proposes to construct a 17 story (256 foot high) 372,097 square foot office building with 587 parking spaces on a 1.17± acres in the Central Business District. In order to meet the applicant's objectives, the project requires a Major Project Special Permit and a Lot Line Merger as described above. **Staff recommends approval of the project.** This recommendation is based on a review and finding of consistency with the

policies regarding office uses contained in the General Plan, Central City Community Plan, Urban Design Plan and Central Business District - Special Planning District zoning.

PROJECT INFORMATION:

General Plan Designation:	Community/ Neighborhood Commercial and Offices
Central City Community Plan Designation:	Multi Use
Existing Land Use of Site:	Vacant/ Surface Parking
Existing Zoning of Site:	C3-SPD
Surrounding Land Use and Zoning:	
North:	Office, Surface Parking; C-2
South:	Office, C3-SPD
East:	Retail, Surface Parking; C3-SPD
West:	City Parking Structure; C3-SPD

Setbacks:	Required	Provided
I Street:	10′	15′
13th and 14th Streets:	0′	5′
Alley:	2′	13′

Property Dimensions:	160′ x 320′
Property Area:	1.933± gross acres 1.179± net acres
Square Footage of Building:	583,084± gross sq.ft. 372,097± office sq.ft. 210,000± parking and misc, sq.ft.
Height of Building:	256 feet, 17 stories
Exterior Building Materials:	Pre-cast Concrete, granite embellishment at building's base
Parking Provided:	587 spaces (1:600)
Parking Required:	587 spaces (1:600)
Utilities:	Existing

OTHER APPROVALS REQUIRED: In addition to the entitlements requested, the applicant will also need to obtain the following permits or approvals, including, but not limited to:

Permit	Agency
Certificate of Compliance	Public Works, Development Services
Encroachment Permit	Public Works, Development Services
Driveway Permit	Public Works, Development Services
Building Permit	Building Division

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

There have been a variety of requests for office buildings on the subject site since 1981 as reflected in planning files P9399, P9619, P87-238 and P91-298. The first two applications were approved for buildings 154,000± sq.ft. and 177,000± sq.ft. in size respectively. The second two applications for larger buildings (approximately 380,000 sq.ft.) were withdrawn. Currently, the central portion of the half block is vacant with two surface parking lots on the east and west portions of the site.

STAFF EVALUATION: Staff has the following comments:

A. Policy Considerations

General Plan

The proposal is consistent with the Community/ Neighborhood Commercial and Office designation of the General Plan. Specifically, the office proposal would support the City's goals to maintain and strengthen Downtown as a major regional office center and as a center for governmental office activity.

Central City Community Plan/ Zoning

The Central City Community Plan designates the site as Multi-Use with a Central Business District- Special Planning District (C3-SPD) zone. Projects within these designations are intended to encourage: high rise offices; development of governmental complexes; and, improvement of the physical environment of the urban setting.

Staff finds the proposal to conform with existing policies adopted in the General Plan, Central City Community Plan and Zoning Ordinance. In addition, the site is appropriate for a high rise office building as it is one block from a light rail station and compliments other governmental uses along I Street.

B. Site Plan Design/Zoning Requirements

The applicant has worked closely with staff in developing a proposal that meets zoning standards and the design criteria of the Urban Design Plan. Specifics of the building are as follows:

1. Setbacks/ Stepbacks/ Height

The zoning ordinance does not require setbacks in the C3-SPD zone unless the project is adjacent to a residential zone. The Urban Design Plan (UDP) contains several setback considerations. At the ground floor, the UDP identifies a five to ten foot setback on the south side of I Street. The

setback is to help create a grand approach to the Civic Center area (10th and I Streets). The proposed setback along the front of the building is 15 feet which exceeds that specified by the UDP. The proposed 13 foot alley setback also exceeds the two foot setback specified in the UDP. These generous setbacks allow advantages in that they enhance the building's design, allow a greater amount of light to penetrate the area and improve circulation around the structure.

The Urban Design Plan Guidelines also identify stepbacks that should be applied to the building as it extends upward. Stepbacks are intended to: help reduce the visual mass of the building; add interest to the design of the building; and, allow additional light to penetrate around the structure. As proposed, the building's mass is divided into two tower elements. Exterior materials assist in the division as the two tower elements contain more stone material than the central glass element. The overall mass and design proposed conforms to the criteria of the Urban Design Plan.

The building is outside the Capitol View Protection Area which limits building height around the State Capitol. Therefore, the unlimited height of the C3-SPD zone would apply to the proposed building. At 256 feet, the Attorney General's building will be approximately 11 feet higher than the 245 foot high Corps of Engineering building which is located directly south.

2. Parking/ Circulation/ TMP

The Zoning Ordinance requires a parking ratio with a maximum of one parking space for every 500 square feet of office use (1:500), and a minimum of one parking space for every 600 square feet of office area, less the first 20,000 sq.ft. of office space and no requirement for retail space (considered a 1:600 ratio). The first levels of the structure will include the 587 spaces needed to meet the 1:600 minimum parking ratio.

The original proposal by the applicant contained more parking than what is proposed today. The amount of parking was reduced through negotiations with city staff. As indicated above, the proposal now meets the minimum parking ratio of 1:600. The applicant indicates that due to the sensitive nature of their selection process (with the State) it is important to stay within the City's parking ratio requirements which was stipulated in the projects's RFP. It is recommended that any additional parking should be made available to Convention Center users, especially during evenings and weekends.

A Transportation Management Plan (TMP) has been submitted which includes promotion of transit pass subsidies, ridesharing and the use of other alternative forms of transportation. The TMP has been reviewed and

approved by the Transportation Review Committee which consists of the Transportation Coordinator and representatives from the Planning Division and Regional Transit.

3. Landscaping

Landscaping is proposed along I, 13th and 14th Streets. In addition, the extended setback along I Street allows a landscape area between the sidewalk and building. Within this area is proposed a second row of trees. These trees will be ornamental trees that would add to the interest of the street level activity and building.

The applicant has been working with the City Arborist who has made several recommendations. Recommendations include removal of the liquidambars along I Street and retention of one of the two large elm trees 14th streets. The elm adjacent to 13th Street has been found to be diseased and will be removed.

4. Child Care

The applicant is working with the state to provide child care for the building. The current direction is that the state is looking into obtain a nearby building on 13th and H Street for child care. Staff is recommending a condition that will require child care, or pay an in-lieu fee, prior to final occupancy of the building. Staff would prefer the development of a child care center either on-site or off-site to facilitate the child care needs of the building.

5. Signage

Signage for the building shall meet the requirements of the City Sign Ordinance and the Urban Design Plan and shall be subject to the review and approval of the Planning Director.

C. Building Design

As proposed the building will be 17 stories and 256 feet high. There will be 583,084 gross sq.ft. Of this, 372,097 sq.ft. will be office space, approximately 210,000 sq.ft. will be a parking facility with 587 cars. A lobby, cafeteria, print shop, loading dock and bicycle lockers are located on the first floor. The next five floors are parking with the office floors above. There will not be any underground levels.

The building will be clad with pre-cast concrete panels in rose and tan colors accented with granite at the building's base.

Staff finds the proposed structure to be compatible with the surrounding structures in that it is comparable in height to the Corps of Engineers building at 1325 J Street (directly south of the proposed building). The site is in the C3-SPD zone which allows unlimited height. The Design Review/ Preservation Board has reviewed the project on several occasions and is working with the developer to ensure the building is of the best design. The remaining design issue is for the developer to better define the building top.

PROJECT REVIEW PROCESS:

A. Environmental Determination

An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) has been prepared for the project (SCH# 93062058). The Draft EIR was circulated for comments between August 9, 1993 and September 21, 1993. The Final EIR contains comments received and a response to those comments. Significant unavoidable impacts of the project have been identified. The most significant of these are transportation (several intersections and freeway off-ramps may be impacted) and air quality (ozone and carbon monoxide). The Environmental Impact Report contains a more detailed description of the project and its potential impacts. As part of the project approval, the Planning Commission will adopt a statement of overriding considerations which essentially indicates that the project's benefits outweigh its potential to impact the environment.

B. Neighborhood Association and Public Comments

The Mansion Flats Neighborhood Association has reviewed the proposal and is in support of it. They envision the project to have a positive impact on security in their neighborhood. The Sacramento Old City Association is not opposed to the project but commented on the desire to see more active ground floor retail uses.

Other neighbors along 14th Street have indicated a concern over parking during the construction phase of the project. In response, the developer is including in their construction mitigation plan a parking pass subsidy for residents of the 14th Street apartments (located between H and I Streets) during the construction phase. In addition, construction workers will be requested by the developer to park in nearby lots rather than on residential streets.

A representative of the D. Benvenuti Company, owner of the Corps of Engineers building on the south side of the alley, has expressed a concern that the loading dock of the proposed building will interfere with access to their parking garage (see Exhibit C). Transportation Division staff have evaluated the situation and have found that truck traffic can be managed to where it will not have an impact on vehicles accessing the parking garage. In addition, the proposed building design incorporates an additional 13 feet to the alley width which will allow easier

maneuvering. The Transportation Division is recommending a restriction on large trucks during peak commute hours and the placement of "no parking" signs on the south side of the alley. Further discussion of this issue and recommendations are contained within the Final EIR and Mitigation Monitoring Plan.

C. Summary of Agency Comments

The project has been reviewed by several City Departments and other agencies. The following summarizes the comments received:

1. Public Works

Comments received from Development Services pertain to the lot line merger and are contained in the conditions of approval.

The Utility Division is concerned about the applicant's participation in the City's future combined sewer system. An agreement between the City and developer is required as part of the mitigation monitoring program.

Transportation Division provided comments pertaining to the garage parking and ramping. These comments are include in the conditions of approval.

The Transportation Coordinator indicated that a Transportation Management Plan has been submitted and approved by the Transportation Review Committee.

Other project related comments were received in response to the environmental review process. See the Final EIR for those comments and the response to those comments.

D. Planning Commission/ Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency Commission Subcommittee Meeting

On September 20, 1993, a subcommittee of the Planning and Redevelopment Agency Commissions reviewed the subject project. Comments received from the committee pertained largely to the architecture of the building. These comments were presented to the Design Review Board for their consideration.

PROJECT APPROVAL PROCESS: Of the entitlements below, Planning Commission has the authority to approve or deny the Major Project Special Permit and Lot line Merger. On July 27, 1993, the City Council amended Ordinance No. 88-066 (by Resolution No. 93-045). Ordinance No. 88-066 provides that the City Council approve projects within 400 feet of the Convention Center. The amendment delegated final approval authority to the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission's decision may be appealed to the City Council.

The Design Review/ Preservation Board (DR/PB) typically conducts their review after the Planning Commission's action on the project. In this case, the DR/PB has reviewed the project on three occasions for preliminary review and final review. The DR/PB has given final approval of the building design subject to conditions which include further definition of the building's top.

Fast Track Review:

During the review of this project, the City was committed to a six month fast track review process. The six month period incorporated the environmental analysis, planning entitlement review (including review and input from other departments and agencies), DR/PB meetings and building plan review.

During the review period, a committee of city, state and developer's representatives met twice each month to identify and address concerns. The purpose was to bring to the Planning Commission as complete a project as possible to allow construction to commence quickly after project approval. This is necessary for the applicant to meet the occupancy deadline contained in the state contract.

With the assistance of State Department of Justice (Attorney General's) staff, General Services staff, various city staff and the applicant, the process was brought to the Planning Commission for final decision within the six month time commitment. The process used for this project may be used as a model for other projects. Although the Attorney General's project is located within a relatively controversial free area of the Central Business District, efficiencies of concurrent processing have been employed during the fast track review process that may assist in reducing the processing time of other projects. The expedited review process includes a closely coordinated effort which relies on the responsiveness of all its participants.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the proposed development as it is consistent with the General Plan and Central City Community Plan designations, the Central Business District- Special Planning District zoning, and surrounding neighborhood in which it located.

Staff recommends the Planning Commission take the following actions:

A. Certify the Environmental Impact Report (SCH# 93062058) as complete;

B. Adopt the Mitigation Monitoring Plan by adopting the attached resolution;

C. Adopt the attached resolution to approve the Major Project Special Permit to develop a 17 story (256 foot high) 372,097 square foot office building with 587 parking spaces; and,

D. Adopt the attached resolution to approve the Lot Line Adjustment to merge four

lots into one lot on 1.17+ vacant acres in the Central Business District-Special Planning District (C3-SPD) zone.

Report Prepared By,

Report Reviewed By,

Planner

Senior Planner

Attachments