

September 25, 2014

MCRT Investments LLC  
949 South Coast Dr., Suite 400  
Costa Mesa, CA 92626

**RE: 435 W. LOS FELIZ ROAD  
PARKING EXCEPTION PERMIT NO. PPEX 1423179  
(Tropico Apartments)**

Dear Applicant:

Pursuant to Chapter 30.32.020, the Director of Community Development has processed an application for a Parking Exception for the property at 435 W. Los Feliz Road. The application is hereby **APPROVED**, based on the analysis and findings, and subject to the conditions, listed below.

### **PROJECT PROPOSAL**

The purpose of the Parking Exception is due to a typographical error on the City staff report which listed an incorrect number of total parking spaces for the Project. Whereas staff stated that the project would provide 367 parking spaces, the correct total, as listed on the plans, was 337 spaces for the 220-unit apartment project. The Council approved a Parking Exception on April 22, 2014, for a total of 367 parking spaces. The current Parking Exception request is to allow a total of 337 parking spaces on the property as originally requested by the applicant.

### **ANALYSIS**

A total of 499 spaces are required by Code for the approved project. The rationale provided by the Developer supporting the exception is that parking standards from the Downtown Specific Plan (DSP) should be applied because the Project is located in a former redevelopment project area and has the same characteristics of downtown projects.

Under DSP standards, the total parking requirement the 220-unit apartment project is 320 spaces and the Project (with 337 spaces) would provide 17 spaces in excess of the DSP standard. Forty of the 337 spaces will be tandem spaces. The DSP allows tandem spaces for up to 50 percent of the required parking. Tandem spaces must meet the dimensional requirements of the Code. Of the 40 tandem spaces, 10 of the spaces will be 17 feet long rather than 18 feet and another 10 will be 16 feet long rather than 18 feet. The applicant believes the reduced size of these 20 spaces is justified for three reasons:

1. using DSP standards, the Project has a surplus of 17 spaces, so the requested deviation only applies to non-required parking;
2. the shape of the spaces is dictated to a certain degree by the structural requirements of the parking garage (including having to clear the flood control easement); and

3. each tandem pair will be assigned to one unit so occupants will not be dependent on someone from another unit to gain access to the spaces.

Staff believes that using the DSP parking standards for the Revised Project is sensible for the reasons cited above. The pattern of development in this portion of the San Fernando corridor will be similar to downtown. The DSP's reduced parking standards are also based on the availability of services that can be accessed by walking or transit. With the train station and major bus lines nearby, as well as the vibrant San Fernando/Los Feliz commercial district, use of DSP standard ratios is justified. The smaller dimensions requested for three of the required parking spaces are a minimal deviation.

The Developer has requested and has received an Administrative Exception to permit parking spaces adjacent to a wall or column to deviate in width from Code by up to one foot.

## **REQUIRED/MANDATED FINDINGS**

After considering the evidence presented with respect to this application, the Director of Community Development has determined that Parking Exception Case No. PPEX 1423179, a request for a 162-space parking exception in conjunction with a new apartment project at 435 W. Los Feliz Road meets the findings of Section 30.32.020 as follows:

### **A. Parking spaces required for the proposed use or construction proposal cannot reasonably be provided in size, configuration, number of spaces or locations specified by the provisions of this title without impairment of the project's viability;**

The project is providing 337 instead of 499 parking spaces required by code. The size, configuration and number of spaces cannot reasonably be provided for several reasons. First, the site is physically constrained; it is adjacent to a rail road right-of-way which runs along the westerly boundary, and subterranean construction adjacent to the railroad right-of-way has the potential to disturb track foundations and damage tracks which could result in a public safety hazard such that constructing additional parking below ground cannot feasibly be constructed on this site. Second, the maximum building height in the IMU-R zone at this site is 75 feet, and at 72.5 feet in height, this project would need a height variance to add above-ground garage height necessary to accommodate full parking capacity. Also, since zoning requires parking in this area to be either subterranean or semi-subterranean, a larger above-ground parking garage creates further deviation from code requirements. Added building height would potentially negatively affect the project aesthetics. Third, this site is bisected by 20 foot wide storm drain easement over which improvement may not be constructed. This easement constricts the extent to which either subterranean or above-ground development can occur on the site and limits developer's ability to provide parking. For these reasons the developer cannot reasonably provide the total required parking on site.

By way of analogy to the DSP parking standards there is additional support to permit a reduction in required parking because this project shares many characteristics of large residential projects in the downtown; like the DSP, this project is in a mixed use zone in a redevelopment project area. Under DSP standards, the total parking requirement for this project would be 320 spaces instead of 499. This project is providing 337 spaces, which exceeds DSP standards by 47 spaces. Given the similarity of this project to DSP projects, and because it is not anticipated that project will create actual demand that will exceed parking capacity it is reasonable to allow a parking reduction.

It should be noted that forty (40) of the total 337 spaces (about 11%) are proposed as tandem spaces. Of the 40 tandem spaces proposed, the applicant is requesting a size reduction for half of these spaces. Specifically, 10 of the spaces will be 17 feet long and another 10 will be 16 feet long rather than the required 18 feet because of the structural requirements of the parking garage and physical development constraints (existing storm drain easement). The applicant believes the reduced size of these 20 spaces is justified due to these development constraints and because each pair of tandem spaces will be assigned to one resident. Further, and by way of analogy, the DSP permits up to 50% of the required parking be tandem. In contrast, this project proposes only about 11% tandem spaces.

**B. The parking exception will serve to promote specific goals and objectives of the adopted plan for the San Fernando Road Corridor Redevelopment Project Area and will be consistent with the various elements of the General Plan and will promote the general welfare and economic well-being of the area.**

Approving the parking exceptions will help ensure the viability of the project and will promote the goals and objectives of the San Fernando Road Redevelopment Project Area by:

- reducing blight;
- providing needed housing;
- creating a significant and attractive gateway building to the City of Glendale; and
- enhancing the economic vitality of the neighborhood.

The project is permitted in the IMU-R of the zoning code and is a land use that is consistent with the Land Use Element of the General Plan. The project, as a gateway project into the City, will provide needed housing in southern Glendale which will promote the General Plan Land Use Element goals to reinforce Glendale's image and community identity within the greater Los Angeles area and metropolitan complex; it will form an urban environment which will provide for residential diversity and opportunity because this project will provide housing near industrial and commercial areas; this project will improve the livability of the total community because it will provide housing near key Glendale commercial and industrial areas; it will support the creation of higher density residential development and alternative forms of medium and high density housing in those areas best suited from the standpoint of accessibility, current development, community organization, transportation and circulation facilities and economic feasibility. Specifically, this project is high density, it is highly accessible to both standard and alternative forms of transportation including trains, buses, and freeways. Accordingly, granting a parking exception will allow construction of this project in a manner that will conform to and promote these goals.

**C. The project involves exceptional circumstances or conditions applicable to the property involved, or the intended use or development of the property that do not apply generally to other property in the area.**

The site is exceptional in terms of its size and configuration compared to other properties under single ownership in this area. The site is surrounded by three streets and railroad tracks and is bisected by a 20-foot wide storm drain easement -- a condition which significantly limits its buildability. The property has a significant slope with a grade change of 17 feet, primarily on the Los Feliz Road frontage. The site is constrained from constructing additional subterranean parking due to being adjacent to the railroad right-of-way and the potential to disturb track foundations which could result in a public safety hazard such that below ground parking cannot be constructed on this site to fulfill the parking requirement. Also, maximum building height at this loca-

tion is 75 feet, and at 72.5 feet, additional building height to accommodate more floors of parking would necessary a height variance.

**D. There are mitigating circumstances whereby the exception will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to property or improvements in the vicinity of the property or in the neighborhood in which the property is located.**

This site is surrounded by three streets and a railroad right of way; it is bisected by a storm drain easement. It is not directly adjacent to any other residential uses or sensitive receptors. The fact that this project is surrounded on all sides by rights of way is a mitigating circumstance such that the reduction in parking will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to property or improvements in the vicinity; most of the neighborhood is commercial such that actual parking demand for this residential project will be during the evening and nighttime hours whereas parking demand for the adjacent and nearby uses will occur during the day. Moreover, and by analogy, were this project built in the DSP area it would exceed total required parking. It is therefore anticipated that the parking to be provided will in fact meet the actual parking demand. Accordingly, allowing the parking reduction will not be detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to property or improvements in the vicinity or in the neighborhood because all of the anticipated parking demand can be successfully accommodated on site.

#### **CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL**

**APPROVAL** of Parking Exception PPEX 1423179 is subject to the following conditions:

1. Any change to the exterior of the building is subject to the review and approval of the City Council if the proposed change(s) are not exempt.
2. The development shall be in substantial accord with the plans submitted with the application and presented at the City Council hearing of April 22, 2014, except for any modifications as may be required to meet specific Code standards or other conditions stipulated herein to the satisfaction of the Director of Community Development.
3. All necessary permits shall be obtained from the Building and Safety Section and all construction shall comply with the Glendale Building Code and all other applicable regulations.
4. The parking exception is limited to the subject multi-family apartment use with a maximum of 220 units.

#### **APPEAL PERIOD, TIME LIMITS, LAPSE OF PRIVILEGES, TIME EXTENSIONS**

The applicant's attention is called to the fact that this grant is not a permit or license and that any permits and licenses required by law must be obtained from the proper City and public agency.

Under the provisions of the Glendale Municipal Code, Title 30, Chapter 30.62, any person affected by the above decision has the right to appeal said decision to the Planning Commission if it is believed that the decision is in error or that procedural errors have occurred, or if there is substantial new evidence which could not have been reasonably presented.

It is strongly advised that appeals be filed early during the appeal period and in person so that imperfections/incompleteness may be corrected before the appeal period expires. Any appeal must be filed on the prescribed forms within fifteen (15) days following the actual date of the decision. Information regarding appeals and appeal forms will be provided by the Building and Safety Division upon request and must be filed with the prescribed fee prior to expiration of the 15-day period, on or before October 10, 2014, in the Building and Safety Division, 633 East Broadway, Room 101.

  
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Hassan Haghani, Director of Community Development

9/24/14  
Date