



PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA REPORT

VI.1

MEETING DATE: MARCH 24, 2008

ITEM NUMBER:

SUBJECT: SPECIFIC PLAN SP-08-01, AN AMENDMENT TO THE NORTH COSTA MESA SPECIFIC PLAN

DATE: MARCH 13, 2008

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: WILLA BOUWENS-KILLEEN, AICP
PRINCIPAL PLANNER (714) 754-5153**

DESCRIPTION

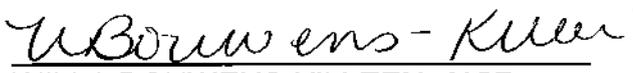
The applicant proposes modifying the Theater and Arts District plan (TAD) which is included as Appendix D of the North Costa Mesa Specific Plan (NCMSP).

APPLICANT

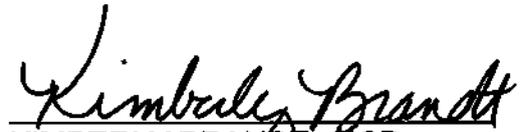
David Wilson of South Coast Plaza, is representing South Coast Plaza, Maguire Properties, and the Orange County Performing Arts Center, who are all participants in the plan.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommend approval to the City Council by adoption of the Planning Commission resolution.



WILLA BOUWENS-KILLEEN, AICP
Principal Planner



KIMBERLY BRANDT, AICP
Asst. Development Services Director

BACKGROUND

The Costa Mesa Theater and Arts District Plan (TAD) was required by the three Development Agreements approved for this area (one with South Coast Plaza, one with the Orange County Performing Arts Center, and the third with Commonwealth Properties, now Maguire Properties). The TAD plan is a means to foster and emphasize the unique qualities of the area, especially the four fine arts venues (Orange County Performing Arts Center, Renee and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall, South Coast Repertory, and the future arts museum). The TAD plan was originally adopted in February 2004 then amended in March 2006.

Amendments to the TAD plan require both Planning Commission and City Council review. Furthermore, the TAD plan is included as Appendix D the North Costa Mesa Specific Plan (NCMSP).

ANALYSIS

The proposed changes are as follows:

Introduction

Page 1a is proposed to be added to formalize that any references in the TAD Plan to Commonwealth Partners is understood to refer to Maguire Properties, since they are the successor in interest to Commonwealth Partners.

Pages 10 and 11 – Pedestrian Linkages

Page 13 – Landscaping and Street Rehabilitation Improvements/Street Furniture

The existing TAD plan calls for enhanced crosswalks to foster the pedestrian linkage between the shared parking in Town Center and the arts venues. Additionally, specially designed bus shelters and landscaping improvements were proposed throughout Town Center. However, due to the higher costs of providing other improvements in Town Center, the applicant proposes to modify the TAD plan to encourage (but not require) the provision of these improvements. (See the discussion under Page 25.)

Page 21 – Private Improvements

The page has been modified to reflect the conceptual approval of the high-rise residential projects approved by City Council in 2007.

Page 25 – TAD Plan Area Improvements

This page originally listed specific improvements that were to be made to the area to unify the "Theater and Arts District" theme. Improvements such as street banners and signage, crosswalk improvements and landscaping rehabilitation, were included. Some of these items have been completed; however, the cost of these improvements exceeded the original cost estimates. Additionally, a public art obligation was added as a condition of approval for the new office tower at the south end of Park Center Drive. Consequently the applicant proposes deleting some of the required

improvements, such as enhanced crosswalks, bus shelters, and street banners. Instead, the applicant will focus the allocated money on a comprehensive sign program to identify the TAD plan area. The applicant will be submitting a sign program that will enhance the TAD, providing a consistent appearance for ease of identification for patrons attending activities at the various arts venues.

The original plan called for South Coast Plaza to provide a minimum of \$1 million worth of improvements and Maguire to provide a minimum of \$1.2 million worth of improvements. The revised plan will not reduce the private improvements below a total of \$2.2 million worth of improvements, albeit distributed in a different manner.

GENERAL PLAN CONFORMITY

The proposal will have no effect on the General Plan designations and policies for the property.

ALTERNATIVES

Denial of the request would require the developer to provide the improvements contained within the current version of the TAD plan.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

The request is exempt under the General Rule because there is no possibility that the approval of this document will have a significant effect on the environment.

CONCLUSION

Staff is in support of the requested modifications to the TAD plan because the changes will not prohibit the developers from installing enhancements keeping with the unique character of the TAD. The requested modifications will not reduce the monetary commitment already made by the two parties.

Attachments: Draft Planning Commission Resolution
 Exhibit "A" - Draft Findings
 Location Map
 Revised TAD plan pages
 TAD plan

Distribution: Deputy City Mgr.-Dev. Svs. Director
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File: 032408SP0801	Date: 031308	Time: 2:45 p.m.
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RESOLUTION NO. PC-

**A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF
THE CITY OF COSTA MESA RECOMMENDING
APPROVAL OF SPECIFIC PLAN SP-08-01, AN
AMENDMENT TO THE NORTH COSTA MESA SPECIFIC
PLAN**

THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF COSTA MESA HEREBY
RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

WHEREAS, an application was filed by David Wilson of South Coast Plaza with respect to the real property located between Bristol Street, Sunflower Avenue, Avenue of the Arts, and the I-405 freeway, requesting approval to amend portions of the text of the Theater Arts District (TAD) plan, contained as Appendix D of the North Costa Mesa Specific Plan (NCMSP) in the Town Center zone; and

WHEREAS, a duly noticed public hearing was held by the Planning Commission on March 24, 2008.

BE IT RESOLVED that, based on the evidence in the record and the findings contained in Exhibit "A", the Planning Commission hereby **RECOMMENDS APPROVAL TO CITY COUNCIL** of the proposed changes to the text to the TAD plan of the NCMSP with respect to the property described above.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Costa Mesa Planning Commission does hereby find and determine that adoption of this Resolution is expressly predicated upon the activity as described in the Staff Report for Specific Plan SP-08-01. Any approval granted by this resolution shall be subject to review, modification or revocation if there is a material change that occurs in the operation, or if the applicant fails to comply with any of the conditions of approval.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 24th day of March, 2008.

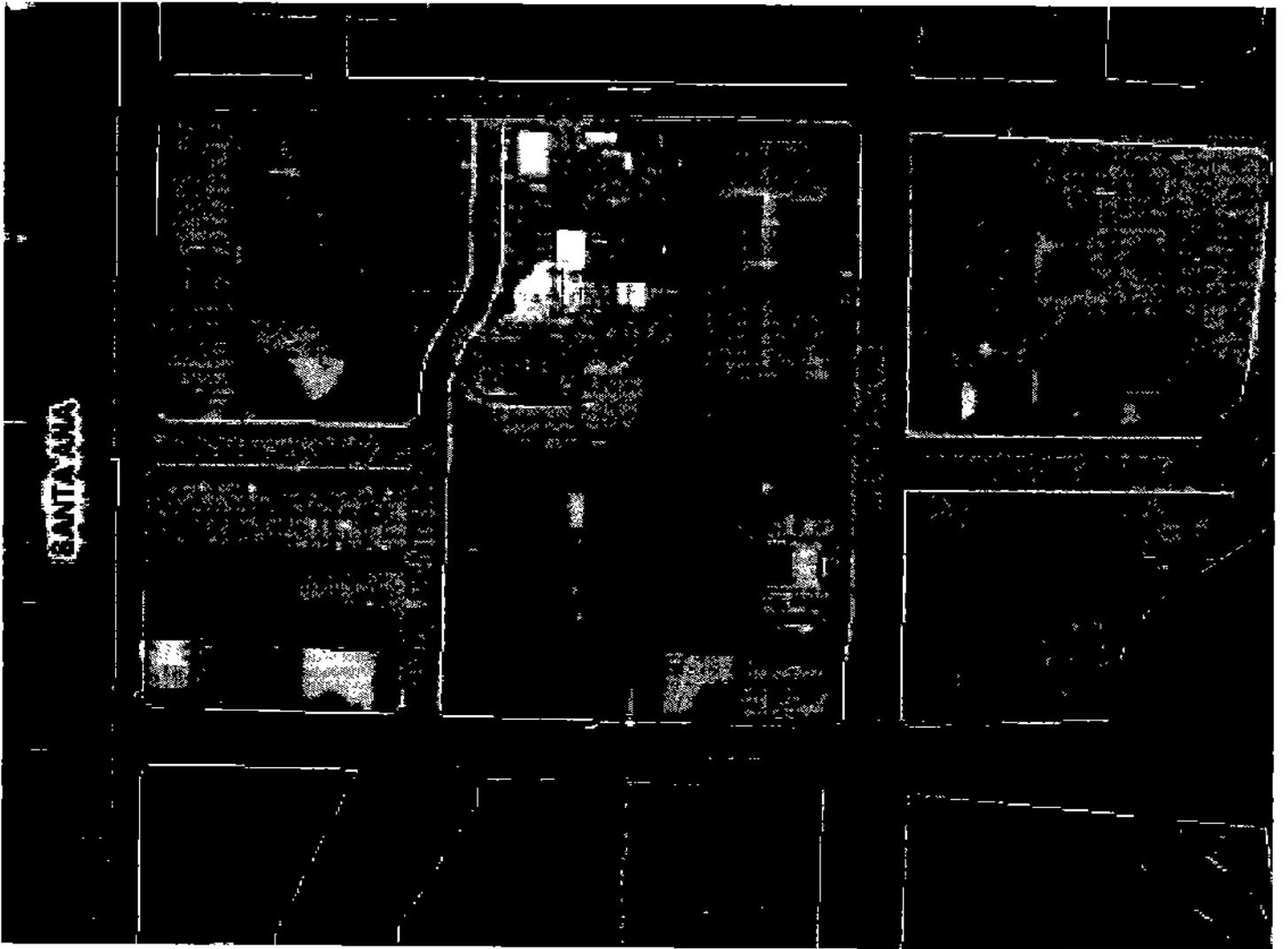
Donn Hall, Chair,
Costa Mesa Planning Commission

EXHIBIT "A"

FINDINGS

- A. The proposed modifications to the Theater Arts District (TAD) Plan of the North Costa Mesa Specific Plan will not prohibit developers from installing enhancements in keeping with the unique character of the TAD. The requested modifications reflect the same monetary commitment made by the two parties under the original TAD plan and development agreements.
- B. The project has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the CEQA Guidelines, and the City environmental procedures, and has been found to be exempt from CEQA.
- C. The project is exempt from Chapter XII, Article 3, Transportation System Management, of Title 13 of the Costa Mesa Municipal Code.

Theater Arts District



PROPOSED CHANGES TO TAD PLAN

NOTE:

References in this document to **CommonWealth Properties** shall be understood to refer to **Maguire Properties**, the successor in interest to **CommonWealth** for some properties in the Theater and Arts District.

1a

Costa Mesa Theater & Arts District

Theater
& Arts

Pedestrian Linkages

The major streets that traverse the Theater and Arts District offer challenges to the establishment of a unified and pedestrian-friendly environment. The major paths of pedestrian travel in the area are represented in Figure 11, where seven specific locations in public and private rights-of-way have been identified as candidate linkages for which it may be possible to create a more welcoming pedestrian experience. Safety, esthetics and pedestrian convenience shall guide any modifications to these linkages, and the developers who are cooperating in this plan shall be mindful of opportunities to provide linkage enhancements as their projects proceed. Under no circumstances, however, shall any improvements or enhancements be pursued if technical analysis shows that they would be detrimental to pedestrian safety or traffic flow.

Private property owners shall to the greatest extent possible preserve and enhance pedestrian connections associated with improvements on private property.

View Linkages

Development in the Theater and Arts District to this point has been sensitive to the creation and maintenance of view corridors from one subarea to another. (See Figure 12.) The major north-south corridor is oriented along the two portions of Park Center Drive and the intervening section of open space easement. Major east-west view corridors exist along Town Center Drive between Bristol Street and Avenue of the Arts, and from the foot of the pedestrian bridge through the open space easement to South Coast Repertory. The secondary view corridors include a north-south view corridor between the south wall of the performing arts center and the landscaped area just north of the office tower located at 611 Anton Boulevard, as well as an east-west view corridor that terminates at its eastern end in a portion of the California Scenario.

Future development of the Theater and Arts District shall be mindful of the quality of existing view linkages and, to the greatest extent practical, shall be planned to preserve or enhance view corridors that currently exist.

Landscaping and Street Rehabilitation Improvements

In order to create an attractive and consistent landscaping element adjacent to the public right-of-way, new landscaping will be designed and installed along Bristol Street south of Anton Boulevard, the south side of Anton Boulevard and Avenue of the Arts south of Anton Boulevard. Such landscaping shall observe the provisions of the City of Costa Mesa Streetscape and Median Design guidelines with the provision that the Costa Mesa Parks and Recreation Commission may make an exception to those guidelines when a superior landscaping alternative is presented for review. The landscaping will be installed as part of the approved master plan improvements for the area.

In the vicinity of the new concert hall, additional street or landscape rehabilitation improvements (and optionally both) will occur on Sunflower Avenue (between Bear Street and Avenue of the Arts), Bristol Street (north of Anton Boulevard to Sunflower Avenue), Park Center Drive (between Town Center Drive and Sunflower Avenue), Avenue of the Arts (between its off-ramp terminus and Sunflower Avenue), and Anton Boulevard (between Bristol Street and Avenue of the Arts).

Street Furniture

In keeping with the artistic theme of the district, architecturally distinguished bus shelters (See Figure 7 for concept) shall be encouraged as works of functional art that will replace existing bus stop furniture in locations where such stops currently exist. (See Figure 8 for the location of the four existing bus stops in the Theater and Arts District.)

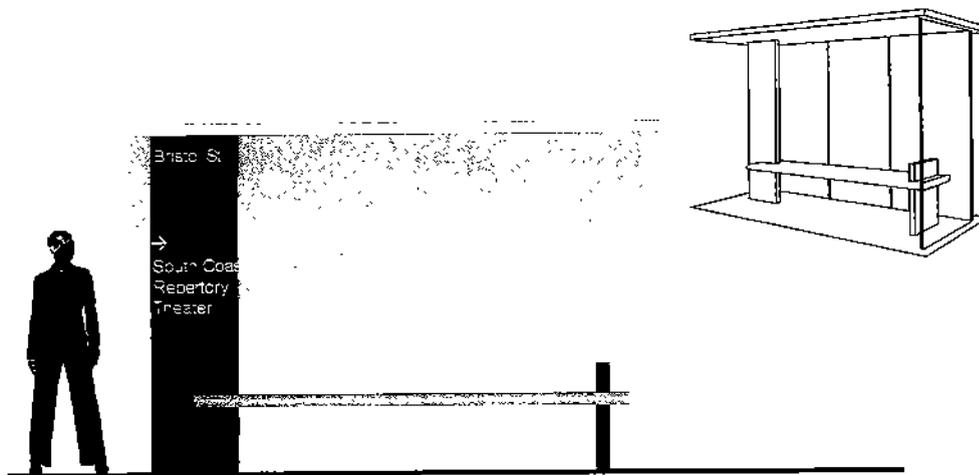


Figure 7 – Bus Shelter Concept

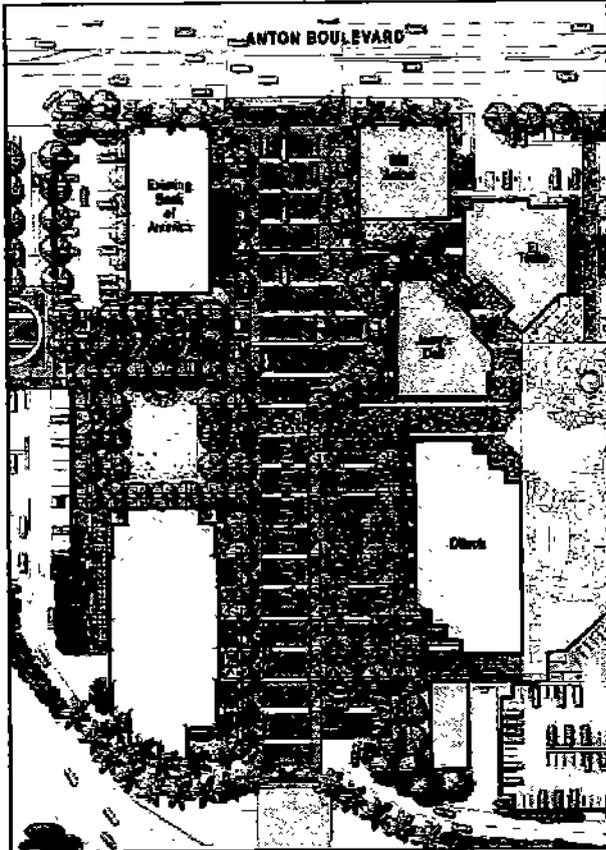


Figure 15 – Conceptual Two Town Courtyard

Two Town Courtyard:

Adjacent to the new 18-story office building, a new open space courtyard will be added on Park Center Drive just south of Anton Boulevard. The courtyard aligns with the main entry of Noguchi’s “California Scenario.” The open space, surrounded by trees, will offer an outdoor gathering space for office workers and area visitors. It will also serve as a programmable outdoor venue for organized events. (See figure 15 for conceptual courtyard plan.)

Park Center Drive:

In conjunction with its development of the new office building and high-rise residential tower, Maguire Properties will install new street amenities along Park Center Drive south of Anton

Blvd. Such new amenities will include landscape, hardscape, lighting and signage. Hardscape improvements may include enhanced pavement treatment on Park Center Drive.

Additional Arts Venue:

An additional arts venue of roughly 140,000 s.f. (expected to be a museum) with a superposed residential tower is planned on Avenue of the Arts between Plaza Tower and the Orange County Performing Arts Center. The new venue will be part of the Segerstrom Center for the Arts.

Arts Promenade:

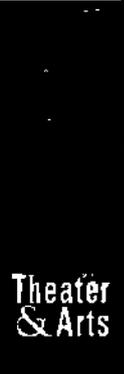
An arts promenade shall be located between the new concert hall and the new arts venue. This promenade forms part of the Town Center Open Space Easement

New Office Tower:

The Town Center Master Plan envisions an office tower at the southeast corner of Bristol St. and Sunflower Avenue. This tower may optionally be assigned to high-rise residential uses.

New Hotel:

A new 200-key hotel that will include in addition up to 50 residential units is planned for the northeast corner of Bristol Street and Town Center Drive.



**Thematic Signage Program
In or Adjacent to Public Right-of-Way, or in Accessible Areas**

Item	Estimated Cost	Proposed Implementation Schedule
Area signage program consisting of TAD corner monuments, auto directional signs and pedestrian informational signs	\$ 400,000	Following final approval of planned signage program, and before certificate of occupancy for first major hotel or office tower.
Street signs in public right-of-way	(included in above)	Installation completed in 2006.

Private Improvements of Public Benefit:

Item	Estimated Cost	Proposed Implementation Schedule
New courtyard at Park Center Drive south of Anton Blvd. including kiosk for California Scenario sculpture garden	\$ 800,000	Before certificate of occupancy for new office tower at south end of Park Center Drive.
Arts Plaza	800,000	Completed by South Coast Plaza in 2006/2007.
Public Art obligation (Maguire Properties)	200,000	Before certificate of occupancy for new office tower at south end of Park Center Drive

Additional Area Improvements (public funds):

Item	Estimated Cost	Proposed Implementation Schedule
Landscaping and Street Rehabilitation	\$ 3,000,000	Completed in 2006/2007.



CITY OF COSTA MESA

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DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

**FOR ATTACHMENTS NOT INCLUDED IN THIS REPORT,
PLEASE CONTACT THE PLANNING DIV. AT (714)754-5245.**