

AGENDA ITEM: 5.

DATE: 03-15-10

STAFF REPORT

TENTATIVE TRACT MAP NO. 62873 (Amended)

DATE: March 15, 2010

TO: Lancaster Planning Commission

FROM: Planning Department

APPLICANT: Rahgan Real Estate Development Co.

LOCATION: 2.5± gross acres located on the northeast corner of 7th Street East and Avenue K

REQUEST: Amendment of Tentative Tract Map No. 62873 by deleting Condition No. 4, “the requirement of a right-turn lane on Avenue K at the intersection with 7th Street East”, and replacing with additional lot for a total of 10 single family lots in the R-7,000 Zone

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt Resolution No. 10-09 denying the request on Tentative Tract Map No. 62873 (Amended).

BACKGROUND:

- On February 21, 2006, the Planning Commission approved Tentative Tract Map No. 62873 for a request to subdivide 9 single family lots located on 2.5± gross acres on the northeast corner of Avenue K and 7th Street East in the R-7,000 zone. The approval was valid for two years.
- On March 27, 2008, the Planning Commission granted a one-year extension request until February 21, 2009.
- On July 15, 2008, Senate Bill 1185 granted an automatic one-year extension until February 21, 2010.
- On July 15, 2009, Assembly Bill 333 granted an automatic two-year extension until February 21, 2012.

GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION, EXISTING ZONING, AND LAND USE: The subject property is designated UR (Urban Residential; 2.1 to 6.5 dwelling units per acre) by the General Plan, is zoned R-7,000 (single family residential, minimum lot size of 7,000 square feet), and is

currently vacant. The General Plan designation, zoning, and land use of the surrounding properties are as follows:

	<u>GENERAL PLAN</u>	<u>ZONING</u>	<u>LAND USE</u>
NORTH	UR	R-7,000	Vacant
SOUTH	UR	R-7,000	Single-family residences
WEST	UR	R-7,000	Single-family residences
EAST	UR	R-7,000	Vacant

PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS: The site is bounded to the west by 7th Street East, and to the south by Avenue K. 7th Street East is partially improved with one travel lane in each direction. Avenue K is partially improved with two travel lanes in each direction. All utilities are available or can be extended to serve the site.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW: Potential environmental effects from the subdivision of the property have been analyzed in an Initial Study prepared for Tentative Tract Map No. 62873. Although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because mitigation measures will be incorporated into the project, and a Mitigated Negative Declaration was adopted on February 21, 2006. Therefore, no further environmental review is required at this time.

LEGAL NOTICE: Notice of Public Hearing was mailed to all property owners within a 500-foot radius of the project, and noticed in a newspaper of general circulation per prescribed procedure.

ANALYSIS: The applicant is requesting to amend the conditions list approved for Tentative Tract Map No. 62873 with the deletion of Condition No. 4 to install a right-turn lane on Avenue K at the intersection with 7th Street East. Tentative Tract Map No. 62873 was approved by the Planning Commission on February 21, 2006. The applicant has indicated an economic hardship, and can no longer offset the development cost to install the improvements as originally approved. The removal of the right-turn lane at this intersection would allow the addition of one lot to the subdivision for a total of 10 single family lots.

According to the City Engineer, Avenue K is identified as a primary arterial street in Lancaster's Transportation Master Plan. Primary arterials are typically high volume, and high speed roadways that are functionally designed for mobility rather than access. Making right-turns from a through traffic lane on Avenue K at 7th Street East could create a public safety hazard. Vehicles slowing down to turn present a hazard to other vehicles travelling on Avenue K due to the speed differential. Turning vehicles slowing down in a through traffic lane could lead to an increase in rear-end collisions. Constructing a right-turn lane at this intersection would provide a refuge for turning vehicles to safely decelerate prior to turning.

The capacity of the intersection would also be increased with the addition of a right-turn lane for 7th Street East. Removing the turning vehicles from the through lane would allow a higher volume of vehicles to traverse the intersection. As traffic volumes continue to increase, intersection capacity will become more critical. It is important to note that this may be the only opportunity to obtain the necessary right-of-way and construct the right-turn lane. If the subdivision is allowed to develop without these improvements, it would be nearly impossible to obtain the necessary right-of-way in the future.

In addition, the intersection of Avenue K and 7th Street East is a quarter-mile intersection. This is important because the City Code generally restricts intersections to quarter-mile spacing on primary arterials and traffic signals are typically required when traffic conditions warrant installation. As a result, traffic is concentrated at these intersections and full turning movements can be provided. The intersection also could provide a pedestrian crossing for students attending Jack Northrop Middle School south of Avenue K, once a traffic signal is installed.

Based on the foregoing information, the Public Works Department considers a right-turn lane necessary to provide a safe refuge for turning vehicles, maintain intersection capacity, provide for a future traffic signal, and provide a safe pedestrian crossing for students. Staff, therefore, does not support the applicant's request to eliminate Condition No. 4 from the approved conditions for Tentative Tract Map No. 62873.

Respectfully submitted,

Brigitte Ligons, Assistant Planner

Carlyle Workman, City Engineer

cc: Applicant
Engineer

RESOLUTION NO. 10-09

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LANCASTER, CALIFORNIA, DENYING TENTATIVE TRACT MAP NO. 62873 (AMENDED)

WHEREAS, an amended tentative subdivision map has been filed by Rahgan Real Estate Development Co., to remove the installation of a right-turn lane on Avenue K at the intersection with 7th Street East (Condition No. 4) approved for the division of 2.5± gross acres of land into 9 single family lots located on the northeast corner of Avenue K and 7th Street East (TTM No. 62873) in the R-7,000 Zone, as shown on the attached site map; and

WHEREAS, staff has conducted necessary investigations to assure the proposed division of land would be consistent with the purposes of the City's Subdivision Ordinance, the State Subdivision Map Act; and

WHEREAS, a written report was prepared by staff which included a recommendation for denial of this amended tentative map because the applicant's request could create a public safety hazard; and

WHEREAS, public notice was provided as required by law and a public hearing was held on March 15, 2010; and

WHEREAS, this Commission hereby finds that the Initial Study, Mitigated Negative Declaration, and Mitigation Monitoring Program previously prepared for Tentative Tract Map No. 62873 under Resolution No. 06-17. and adopted on February 21, 2006, of which the proposed project is a part determined that the proposed subdivision could have a significant effect on the environment; however, there will not be a significant effect in this case because the implementation of mitigation measure as referenced have been incorporated into the project, and no further environmental review is required; and

WHEREAS, this Commission hereby adopts the following findings in denial of this amended subdivision map:

1. The goals, objectives, policies, and specific actions of the General Plan; Goal 14 states, "A well-balanced transportation and circulation system which provides for the efficient and safe transport of goods and people within and through the City of Lancaster; and which balances concerns for mobility with concerns for safety and the quality of the City's living environment."; and
2. Objective 14.1.1 "Design the City's street system to serve both the existing population and future residents."; and
3. The proposed amendment for the subdivision would:
 - a. Adversely affect the safety of persons travelling in the area, because making right-turns from a through traffic lane on Avenue K at 7th Street East could create a public safety hazard.

- b. Be materially detrimental to the use, enjoyment, or valuation of property of other persons located in the vicinity of the subdivision, due to the following:
 - The City development standards would not be met because Avenue K is identified as a primary arterial street in Lancaster's Transportation Master Plan; and
 - Primary arterials are typically high volume and high speed roadways that are functionally designed for mobility rather than access; and
4. Staff does not support the applicant's request because a right-turn lane is considered necessary to provide a safe refuge for turning vehicles, maintaining intersection capacity, provide for a future traffic signal, and provide a safe pedestrian crossing for students.
5. The proposed request, if approved could have a long term impact on traffic mobility, and pedestrian and vehicular safety.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

This Commission hereby denies the request to delete Condition No. 4 of Tentative Tract Map No. 62873 (Amended).

ADOPTED this 15th day of March, 2010, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

JAMES D. VOSE, Chairman
Lancaster Planning Commission

ATTEST:

BRIAN S. LUDICKE, Planning Director
City of Lancaster