



AGENDA ITEM: 2.

DATE: 11-13-2023

STAFF REPORT

TENTATIVE TRACT MAP NO. 69560 VARIANCE NO. 23-001

DATE: November 13, 2023

TO: Lancaster Planning Commission

FROM: Keri Colgrove, Senior Specialist
Community Development Department

APPLICANT: JT Engineering

LOCATION: 3.5± gross acres located between 7th Street East and 8th Street East, north of Avenue J-6 (Assessor Parcel Numbers: 3140-009-003, 3140-009-006 and 3140-034-036)

REQUEST: Tentative Tract Map (TTM) No. 69560 and Variance (VAR) No. 23-001 to allow for the subdivision of 3.5 gross acres into 15 single-family lots and a reduction of corner lot width standards in the R-7,000 zone located between 7th Street East and 8th Street East, north of Avenue J-6 (APN: 3140-009-003, 3140-009-006 and 3140-034-036) and adopting a mitigated negative declaration.

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt Resolution No. 23-33 approving Tentative Tract Map (TTM) No. 69560 and Variance (VAR) No. 23-001 to allow for the subdivision of 3.5 gross acres into 15 single-family lots and a reduction of corner lot width standards in the R-7,000 zone located between 7th Street East and 8th Street East, north of Avenue J-6 (APN: 3140-009-003, 3140-009-006 and 3140-034-036) and adopting a mitigated negative declaration.

BACKGROUND

On May 25, 2021, JT Engineering submitted TTM No. 69560 for the subdivision of 15 single-family lots. Subsequently, the applicant submitted for a Variance on May 8, 2023 for a reduction of corner lot width standards.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Table 1 summarizes the general information concerning this project.

Table 1: General Information

ITEM	DESCRIPTION
APN	3140-009-003, 3140-009-006 and 3140-034-036
LOCATION	3.5± gross acres zone located between 7 th Street East and 8 th Street East, north of Avenue J-6
ZONING AND LAND USE	R-7,000 (single-family residential, minimum lot size 7,000 square feet)
SURROUNDING LAND USES AND ZONING	North: Single-family homes, R-7,000 South: Single-family homes, R-7,000 East: Vacant Land and single-family homes, R-7,000 West: Single Family Residences, R-7,000
CURRENT DEVELOPMENT	Vacant Land
ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW	<p>An initial study/mitigated negative declaration (SCH #2023100256) was prepared for the proposed project and circulated for a 30-day public review period in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The public review period started on October 10, 2023 and ended November 9, 2023.</p> <p>Effective January 1, 1991, applicants whose projects have the potential to result in the loss of fish, wildlife, or habitat through urbanization and/or land use conversion are required to pay filing fees as set forth under Section 711.4 of the Fish and Game Code. Pursuant to Section 21089(b) of the Public</p>

	Resources Code, the approval of a project is not valid, and no development right is vested, until such fees are paid.
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PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The proposed project consists of the subdivision of approximately 3.5 acres into 15 single-family residential lots. The lots would range in size from 8,075 square feet to 10,026 square feet. Access to the subdivision would be provided from Avenue J-6, Avenue J-5, and 8th Street East. The streets within the subdivision would be public. The applicant is also requesting a variance to reduce the required corner lot width located between 7th Street East and 8th Street East, north of Avenue J-6 from 75 feet to a minimum of 61 feet.

ANALYSIS:

General Plan Consistency

The proposed project would be consistent with the following goals, objectives, policies, and specific actions:

- Specific Action 3.2.1(a):** Through the landscape plan check process, require the provision of drought-tolerant landscaping and water-saving irrigation systems for new residential, commercial, and industrial developments in accordance with City landscape ordinances.
- Objective 3.6:** Encourage efficient use of energy resources through the promotion of efficient land use patterns and the incorporation of energy conservation practices into new and existing development, and appropriate use of alternative energy.
- Policy 3.6.3:** Encourage the incorporation of energy conservation measures in existing and new structures.
- Policy 15.1.2:** Cooperate with local water agencies to provide an adequate water supply system to meet the standards for domestic and emergency needs.
- Policy 15.1.5:** Ensure sufficient infrastructure is built and maintained to handle and treat wastewater discharge.
- Policy 16.3.1:** Promote development patterns which will minimize the costs of infrastructure development, public facilities development and

municipal service cost delivery.

Policy 18.1.4: Encourage the long-term maintenance of new residential development.

Policy 18.2.2: Encourage appropriate development to locate so that municipal services can be efficiently provided.

Objective 19.2: Integrate new development with established land use patterns through quality infill to enhance overall community form and create a vibrant sense of place.

There are no goals, objectives, policies, or specific actions of the General Plan that would conflict with the proposed project. The proposed project would subdivide approximately 3.5 gross acres into 15 single-family residential lots. It would adhere to all Federal, State and local energy efficiency requirements, including Title 24 standards that would not result in the inefficient, wasteful or unnecessary consumption of building energy. All utilities would service the project. In addition, the construction of new homes would be compatible to the adjacent properties.

Housing Element Consistency

Goal 6: To promote sufficient housing to meet the diverse housing needs of all economic segments of the present and future City of Lancaster.

The proposed project supports the goals and objectives of the City of Lancaster's Housing Element. Specifically, the Housing Element identifies objectives and policies to provide a variety of housing types to residents of the City and Antelope Valley as a whole. The proposed project would provide single-family residences on lots ranging from 8,075 square feet to 10,026 square feet in area. This provides an additional housing choice for individuals.

Compliance with the Lancaster Municipal Code

The proposed project complies with the development standards for residential uses in the R-7,000 zone as identified in Sections 17.08.060 and 17.08.070 of the Lancaster Municipal Code (LMC) with the exception of corner lot width standards.

Compliance with the City of Lancaster Design Guidelines

The proposed project complies with the intent of the City Design Guidelines with respect to site design and layout for residential developments. Pedestrian connectivity is provided within the project site and along the project frontage. The elevations and floor plans for the proposed

residential lots would be reviewed and approved prior to issuance of construction permits for compliance with the design guidelines. This would ensure quality design with 360-degree architecture, which enhances the community's image and quality of life.

Variance

The proposed project is for 15 single-family residential lots in the R-7,000 zone and is subject to development regulation under LMC Section 17.08.060.B (Table 2). There are 13 lots that conform with all R-7,000 development standards. There are two lots that have a substandard corner lot width and the shortest width is 61 feet.

Table 2: R-7,000 Development Standards

Site Specification	Standard
Minimum Lot Size	7,000 square feet
Minimum Width	60 feet
Minimum Corner Lot Width	75 feet
Minimum Depth	100 feet

The subject site is surrounded by single-family residential lots and vacant property. The tracts built around the subject site are Tract 45676, recorded in 1989, Tract 24620, recorded in 1971, and Tract 43181 which was recorded in 1985. These tracts all have substandard lots that do not meet the minimum lot size, lot depth and corner lot width. For example, Tract 45676 consists of a corner lot that is 59 feet wide and Tract 43181 consists of a corner lot that is 68 feet wide. These are just a couple of examples of substandard lots in these tracts. The proposed project would be similar in design with the existing neighboring tracts. With approval of the variance, the proposed project would be compatible with the existing single-family lots and land uses within the vicinity.

TENTATIVE MAP FINDINGS:

In order to grant a TTM, Section 16.08.110 of the Lancaster Municipal Code states that the Planning Commission must make all of the following findings:

- A. The proposed subdivision is consistent with the general plan, any applicable specific plan, and is compatible with the general plan land uses, goals, objectives, policies and specific actions specified in such plan**

The proposed project is a residential subdivision that is consistent with the general plan land use designation of Urban Residential (UR) and with the policies, goals, objectives, and specific actions identified above. The proposed project is not located within the boundaries of a Specific Plan.

B. The design and improvement of the proposed subdivision is consistent with the general plan, any applicable specific plan, Title 17, and this title.

The proposed design and improvements of the proposed project are consistent with the General Plan land use designation of UR and with the development standards identified in Sections 17.08.060 and 17.08.070 of the LMC with the exception of the corner lot width and depth standards. The applicant is requesting approval of a variance for the two substandard lots. The proposed project would be consistent with the design of neighboring residential development that have substandard lots. In addition, the proposed project is not located within the boundaries of a Specific Plan.

C. The site is physically suitable for the type and density of the development proposed.

The project site is physically suitable for the type and proposed density of development because adequate roadway capacity and infrastructure exists or can be provided to support the development.

D. The design of the subdivision or the proposed improvements are not likely to cause substantial environmental damage or substantially and avoidably injure fish or wildlife or their habitat.

The design of the subdivision and the proposed improvements would not cause substantial environmental damage or substantially and avoidably injure fish or wildlife or their habitat. All environmental impacts to biological resources associated with the proposed project would be less than significant with the incorporation of the identified mitigation measures and conditions of approval. Additionally, the developer would be required to pay the City's biological impact fee, which is utilized to help conserve the biological resources found throughout the Antelope Valley.

E. The design of the subdivision or the type of improvements will not cause serious public health problems.

The design and improvement of the subdivision are not likely to cause serious public health problems as adequate sewer, and water systems will be provided to the proposed project. Additionally, all residences within the subdivision are required to have trash collection services in accordance with the City of Lancaster's Waste Management franchise agreement.

F. The design or the types of improvements of the subdivision will not conflict with easements acquired by the public at large, for access through, or use of, property within the subdivision. The city may approve the map if alternate easements will be provided in accordance with Section 66474(g) of the Subdivision Map Act.

There are no known public easements or access across the subject property; therefore, the design of the subdivision will not conflict with public access. Any utility can be accommodated within the design of the proposed project.

- G. The city's action will not have an adverse effect on the housing needs of the region and the city has balanced these needs against the public service needs of its residents and available fiscal and environmental resources, in accordance with Section 66412.3 of the Subdivision Map Act.**

The proposed subdivision would have a beneficial effect on the housing needs of the region because an additional 15 dwelling units could be provided. The proposed project would not adversely affect the economic health of the City as the infrastructure to support the proposed project, such as roadways and utility lines, currently exist in the vicinity of the project site, and the maintenance of this infrastructure is already occurring.

- H. The design of the subdivision provides, to the extent feasible, for future passive or natural heating or cooling opportunities.**

The proposed project is not expected to have any significant impact on any future passive or natural heating or cooling opportunities. The proposed project has been designed to take advantage of heating and cooling opportunities, to the extent feasible. Additionally, the proposed project is required to comply with Title 24, which includes requirements for solar energy.

VARIANCE FINDINGS:

In order to grant a TTM, Section 17.32.320 of the Lancaster Municipal Code states that the Planning Commission must make all of the following findings:

- A. That because of special circumstances or exceptional characteristics applicable to the property, the strict application of this title deprives such property of privileges enjoyed by other property in the vicinity and under identical zoning classification; and**

The surrounding tracts (Tract 45676, 43181, 24620) are zoned R-7,000 and were approved with substandard lot sizes, lot depth and lot width. The proposed project is in the R-7,000 zone and a majority of the lots would meet the development standards. Due to the location of the subject site and the previously approved tracts within the vicinity, the proposed project deprives the property of privileges enjoyed by the other property in the vicinity and under identical zoning classification.

- B. That the adjustment authorized will not constitute a grant of special privilege inconsistent with the limitations upon other properties in the vicinity and zone in which the property is situated; and**

Properties south and west of the subject site have approved tracts with substandard lots. The approval of a variance would grant similar lot sizes as the nearby properties and therefore does not constitute special privilege inconsistent with the limitations upon other properties in the vicinity and zone in which the property is situated.

- C. That strict application of zoning regulations as they apply to such property will result in practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships inconsistent with the general purpose of such regulations and standards; and**

The proposed project would result in practical difficulties and unnecessary hardship because the required corner lot width would create expansive corner lots inconsistent with the existing neighboring tracts. The City's Housing Element encourages the development of housing to meet the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA). The RHNA is mandated by State housing law and quantifies the need for housing within each jurisdiction. The City's allocation is 9,023 units and the proposed project would help meet the allocation. The proposed project is consistent with the City's goals for additional housing to help meet the City's regional housing needs.

- D. That such adjustment will not be materially detrimental to the public health, safety or general welfare, or to the use, enjoyment or valuation of property of other persons located in the vicinity.**

The design and improvement of the subdivision are not likely to cause serious public health problems as adequate sewer, and water systems will be provided to the proposed project. Additionally, all residences within the subdivision are required to have trash collection services in accordance with the City of Lancaster's Waste Management franchise agreement.

LEGAL NOTICE

A notice of Public Hearing was mailed to all property owners within a 500-foot radius of the project, posted in three places, posted on the subject property, and noticed in Antelope Valley Press on November 3, 2023.

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt Resolution No. 23-33 approving Tentative Tract Map (TTM) No. 69560 and Variance (VAR) No. 23-001 to allow for the subdivision of 3.5 gross acres into 15 single-family lots and a reduction

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Tentative Tract Map No. 69560/Variance No. 23-001

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of corner lot width standards in the R-7,000 zone located between 7th Street East and 8th Street East, north of Avenue J-6 (APN:3140-009-003, 3140-009-006 and 3140-034-036) and adopting a Mitigated Negative Declaration.

Attachment:

A. Resolution No. 23-33