



PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY Hearing on June 8, 2006

Project Name: Western SoMa Formula Retail Controls and Notification Requirements
Case Number: 2006.0544ET [Board File Number 060482]
Initiated by: Supervisor Chris Daly / introduced April 11, 2006
Staff Contact: Paul A. Lord, Jr., Senior Planner

Project Description

Ordinance introduced by Supervisor Daly adding Planning Code Section 803.6 to designate formula retail as a conditional use in the Western SoMa Planning Area Special Use District and by adding Section 803.7 to require public noticing requirements for building permit applications in the Special Use District; and adopting finding including environmental findings and finding of consistency with the General Plan and the Priority Policies of Planning code section 101.1(b).

Required Commission Action

The proposed Ordinance is before the Commission so that it may recommend adoption, rejection, or adoption with modifications to the Board of Supervisors.

Issues and Other Considerations

The proposed Ordinance has been drafted to promote stabilization for the dynamic real estate market in the Western SoMa Special Use District (SUD). The initial Conditional Use designation for "formula retail" uses in the SUD does no more than require a conditional use findings and public hearing for these uses when proposed in the Western SoMa SUD. Concerns have been expressed through the Western SoMa Citizens Planning Task Force that the increasing levels of new and existing ground floor non-residential use space in the SUD and the increasing number of new residents to the area could stimulate market interest from a wide variety of formula retail uses. Not all of these formula retail uses are necessarily appropriate to the long-term service and shopping needs of existing and future residents of the Western SoMa SUD. Conditional use controls of this nature are already in place for the neighborhood commercial areas of along Haight and Divisadero Streets and in Cole Valley.

The second portion of the draft ordinance proposes neighborhood notification for expansions in building envelopes and changes in use within the Western SoMa SUD. The proposed neighborhood notifications are identical to those found throughout San Francisco neighborhood commercial and residential areas.

Basis for Recommendation

The neighborhood defined as Western SoMa has a designated group of 26 citizens working on community planning recommendations for the next two years. During the course of this citizens planning effort, there are potentially numerous Planning Code amendment recommendations that will either stabilize the dynamic community or advance the neighborhood planning goals. The first steps in stabilizing the neighborhood are to provide notice and careful consideration of proposals for new "formula retail" uses in the Western SoMa SUD.

PLANNING COMMISSION

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Western SoMa Notice and
Formula Retail Controls

Recommendation

The Department recommends that the Commission adopt the attached Draft Resolution. This resolution recommends Board of Supervisors approve the proposed draft Ordinance dated April 10, 2006.

Environmental Review Status

The proposed Ordinance has been determined to be categorically exempt from environmental review.

Public Comment

The Department has received letters supporting the proposed Ordinance from the San Francisco Small Business Commission.

Attachments

- Exhibit A: Draft Planning Commission Resolution
- Exhibit B: Draft Board of Supervisors Ordinance
- Exhibit C: Western SoMa SUD Map
- Exhibit D: Small Business Commission Recommendations