



# CITY OF CARSON

## PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

**PUBLIC HEARING:** January 10, 2006

**SUBJECT:** Conditional Use Permit No. (CUP) 596-05;  
Variance No. (VAR) 453-04

**APPLICANT:** The Samoan Congregational Christian Church of  
South Los Angeles c/o  
Sai Momoli  
21207 S. Catskill  
Carson, CA 90745

**REQUEST:** To construct a 22,000 square foot church on 1.55  
acres in the RM-25 (Residential, Multifamily – 25  
units per acre) zone district and within  
Redevelopment Project Area No. 4. The proposal  
includes a Site Plan and Design Review and  
Variance requests for increased building height.

**PROPERTY INVOLVED:** 1249 E. Carson Street

### COMMISSION ACTION

- Concurred with staff
- Did not concur with staff
- Other

### COMMISSIONERS' VOTE

AYE	NO		AYE	NO	
		<b>Cottrell –Chairperson</b>			<b>Hudson</b>
		<b>Pulido –Vice-Chairman</b>			<b>Saenz</b>
		<b>Diaz</b>			<b>Verrett</b>
		<b>Faletogo</b>			<b>Wilson</b>

## I. Introduction

### *Date Application Received*

- February 19, 2004: Conditional Use Permit No. 596-05; Variance No. 453-04; Variance No. 454-04

### *Applicant/Representative*

- The Samoan Congregational Christian Church of South Los Angeles, c/o Sai Momoli: 21207 S. Catskill Ave.; Carson, CA 90745

### *Property Owner*

- Reverend Elder Dr. John Mailo: 354 Carriagedale Drive; Carson, CA 90745

### *Project Address*

- 1249 E. Carson Street

### *Project Description*

- To construct a new 22,000 square-foot church building. The project site is 1.55 acres in the RM-25 (Residential, Multifamily – 25 units per acre) zone district and within Redevelopment Project Area No. 4.
- Parking has been added behind the church building on the north side of the property to bring the total number of parking from 106 to 126 spaces.
- The applicant has revised the building size to include the following:

**TABLE 1: BUILDING AREA**

<b>ROOM</b>	<b>OLD (s.f.)</b>	<b>NEW (s.f.)</b>	<b>CHANGE (+/- s.f.)</b>
Community Hall (Assembly Area only)	4,308	3,430	-878
Sanctuary	4,804	4,417	-387
Museum (1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floors)	6,950	1,166 (Foyer)	n/a
Sunday School/Office (2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Only)	4,597	3,558	-1,039
Other Areas (i.e., storage, kitchen, dressing rooms, etc.)	1,271	7,374	n/a
Building Footprint (1 <sup>st</sup> Floor Only)	16,249	14,858	-1,391
Second Floor	5,681	5,087	-594
<b>Total Building Area</b>	<b>21,930</b>	<b>19,945</b>	<b>-1,985</b>

The CUP is required because the project site is located between an arterial street (Carson Street) and a collector street (216th Street). The applicant originally requested two (2) variances:

- Variance No. 453-04: To exceed the 30-foot height limit up to 59 feet for the church steeple. A portion of the church building will be approximately 35 feet.

- Variance No. 454-04: To reduce the required number of parking spaces from 154 to 106. This variance request was denied by the Planning Commission on July 26, 2005, and upheld on appeal by the City Council on September 20, 2005.

## II. **Background**

- On July 26, 2005, the Planning Commission approved Conditional Use Permit No. (CUP) 596-05 for the location of the church building and Variance No. (VAR) 453-04 for the building height, but denied Variance No. (VAR) 454-04 to reduce the required number of onsite parking spaces.
- On August 10, 2005, the applicant filed a timely appeal of the Planning Commission's decision to the City Council.
- On September 20, 2005, the City Council held a duly noticed public hearing on the appeal, received public comments, closed the public hearing, and upheld the Planning Commission's decision to approve CUP 596-05 and VAR 453-04, and deny VAR 454-04. The City Council referred the matter back to the Planning Commission for further consideration of plan revisions.

### *Previous Uses of Property*

- According to the Building and Safety records, a single-family residence and eight-unit, two-story apartment building were demolished in 1986. Since then, there is no record of any development and the site has remained vacant.

### *Surrounding Land Uses*

- To the north across 216<sup>th</sup> Street are single-family residences; to the east are single-family residences and a medical building; to the south across Carson Street are single-family residences and a mobilehome park; to the west are two-story condominiums; and to the northwest is a new neighborhood park.

### *Previously Approved Discretionary Permits*

- None.

### *Public Safety Issues*

- According to the Building and Safety records, in the mid-1980s there were issues on the subject property due to substandard buildings as described in the Building Code. In 1986, the buildings were demolished and no development has occurred since.
- The Public Safety Department has not reported any recent zoning code enforcement cases.

### III. Analysis

#### *Location/Site Characteristics/Existing Development*

- The project site is vacant, fairly flat (less than a 2 percent slope), and located in a residential area; and
- The project site is considered a through lot because it fronts both Carson Street to the south and 216<sup>th</sup> Street to the north. Hence, the site has two (2) front yards and no rear yards.

#### *Zoning/General Plan/Redevelopment Area Designation*

- The project site, condominiums to the west, and mobilehome park to the southeast are zoned RM-25 (Residential, Multifamily – 25 units per acre); the single-family homes to the north and south are zoned RS (Residential, Single-family); and the properties to the east along Carson Street and to the southwest are zoned CG (Commercial, General) or CG-D (Commercial, General – Design Overlay), except for the vacant property to the southwest (1216-1226 E. Carson Street) which was recently changed by the City Council from CG-D to RM-12-D (Residential, Multifamily – 12 units per acre – Design Overlay);
- The subject site is designated by the General Plan Land-Use Element as High Density. Properties to the west and southeast are also designated High Density. The single-family homes to the north and south are designated Low Density. The commercial areas to the east and southwest are designated General Commercial; and
- The project site and all properties along Carson Street from Perry Street to the west and Vera Street to the east are within Redevelopment Project Area No. 4. Properties further west are within Redevelopment Project Area No. 1. The single-family residences to the north and south, and the mobilehome park to the south are not within a Redevelopment Project Area.

#### *Applicable Zoning Ordinance Regulations*

The following table summarizes the proposed projects' consistency with current site development standards for the MH zone district and other zoning code sections applicable to this type of proposed use:

**TABLE 2 – ZONING CONFORMANCE**

<b>Applicable Zoning Ordinance Sections</b>	<b>Compliant</b>	<b>Non-Compliant</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Section 9121.1: Uses Permitted	<b>x</b>		Proposed project is consistent with the RM-25 zone, but requires CUP
Section 9123: Conditional Use Criteria	<b>x</b>		Subject to Section 9128.51-9128.55
Section 9124 :	<b>x</b>		Church permitted with

<b>Applicable Zoning Ordinance Sections</b>	<b>Compliant</b>	<b>Non-Compliant</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Dwelling Units			CUP
Section 9125.3: Street Frontage and Access	<b>x</b>		Site has access to Carson Street and 216 <sup>th</sup> Street
Section 9126.12: Height of Buildings and Structures		<b>x</b>	30' allowed; <b>Variance request submitted</b>
Section 9126.21: Ground Cover	<b>x</b>		Maximum 40% building coverage of net lot area; Proposed 25%
Section 9126.221: Parking Setback	<b>x</b>		No garage proposed; No access from alley
Section 9126.23: Front Yard	<b>x</b>		20' setback required
Section 9126.24: Side Yard	<b>x</b>		10' required
Section 9126.25: Rear Yard	n/a		Property is a through lot and there is no rear yard
Section 9126.27: Space Between Bldgs.	<b>x</b>		10' min.; 15' min. if parking space in-between
Section 9126.28: Usable Open Space	<b>x</b>		30% required
Section 9126.4: Trash and Recycling Areas	<b>x</b>		Trash enclosure relocated away from residential uses
Section 9126.6: Parking, Loading, and Driveways	<b>x</b>		Building area revised to require less parking spaces; 124 parking spaces required; 126 provided
Section 9126.7: Signs		<b>x</b>	<b>No sign plan submitted</b>
Section 9126.8: Utilities	<b>x</b>		Condition of Approval
Section 9127.1: Exterior Lighting	<b>x</b>		Condition of Approval
Section 9128.13: Application for CUP	<b>x</b>		CUP application submitted
Section 9161.1: Purposes, Definitions and Applicability	<b>x</b>		Subject to Public Works requirements
Section 9161.3: Dedications	<b>x</b>		Subject to Public Works requirements
Section 9161.4: Improvement Requirements for Buildings and Structures	<b>x</b>		Subject to Public Works requirements
Section 9161.10: Parkway Trees	<b>x</b>		Subject to Public Works requirements
Section 9162.21: Parking Spaces Req'd	<b>x</b>		1 sp. per 5 fixed seats, plus 1 sp. per 7½ linear feet of fixed pew, plus 1

Applicable Zoning Ordinance Sections	Compliant	Non-Compliant	Comments
			sp. per 35 s.f. for remaining area in the largest assembly room; 124 sp. required, 126 sp. provided
Section 9162.42: Parking for the Disabled and Associated Signing and Ramping	<b>x</b>		5 handicap spaces required, including 1 van-accessible space
Section 9162.43: Compact Automobile Parking Spaces	<b>x</b>		26 compact parking spaces provided; 37 allowed
Section 9162.52: Landscaping Requirements		<b>x</b>	Unclear if 5% interior landscaping provided; <b>Clarification needed</b>
Section 9162.7 and 9162.8: On-Site Automobile and Truck Maneuvering Standards, Driveway Widths, Driveway Approaches and Traffic Sight Distance. Section 9163.2: Noise-absorbing Walls on Residential Lot Lines. Section 9164.1, 9164.2, 9164.4, and 9162.5: Purposes, Definitions and Applicability, Residential Trash Areas, Collection and Loading of Recyclable Materials, Design Standards for Trash and Recycling Areas	<b>x</b>		Trash enclosure relocated away from residential uses
Section 9166.1 and 9166.2: Project Grading, and Conditions for Project Grading. Section 9168.1 through 9168.5: Adoption of Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance, Definitions, Violations and Penalties, Fees, and Amendments to Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance	<b>x</b>		Project to be reviewed by City Engineer; Subject to Conditions of Approval
Section 9171.1 through 9171.4: Types of Procedure, Elements of Procedure, Interchangeability, and Environmental Review Requirements	<b>x</b>		Mitigated Negative Declaration prepared

*Issues of Concern / Proposed Condition/Change:*

- Issue – Parking: The plans have been revised to meet the parking requirement. The changes to the plan are as follows:

**TABLE 3: SANCTUARY AREA AND PEW LENGTH**

	Altar Space	Aisles & Walkways	Sanctuary Area Minus Pew Area	Total Linear Feet of Fixed Pews	No. of Fixed Seats
Old	732 s.f.	1,764 s.f.	2,496 s.f.	620'	0
New	248 s.f.	1,825 s.f.	2,073 s.f.	356.6'	84

**TABLE 4: PARKING CALCULATION**

	Parking Requirement (Section 9162.21)	Required Parking for Sanctuary Area (Minus Pew Area)	Required Parking for Pews and Fixed Seats	Total Parking Required
Old	1 sp. per 5 fixed seats, plus 1 sp. per 7½ lin. ft. of fixed pew,	71	83	154
New	plus 1 sp. per 35 s.f.	59	65 (Pews, 48; Seats, 17)	124
<b>Revised plan provides 126 parking spaces</b>				

- *Proposed Condition/Change:* No additional conditions are required. Conditions No. 62-64 of the previous resolution have been stricken.
- Issue – Trash Enclosure: The applicant has relocated the trash enclosure away from the western property line and closer to the church building. The relocation provides additional distance from the residential uses.
  - *Proposed Condition/Change:* The revision meets the requirements of Condition of Approval No. 51. No further conditions are necessary.
- Issue – Outdoor Advertising Sign: There is an existing outdoor advertising sign on the southeastern corner of the property. It is staff's opinion that this sign would detract from the overall quality of the church. The outdoor advertising sign is ground leased to a private company and is separate from the church management. It is encouraged that the applicant work with the private company for removal of the outdoor advertising sign.

- *Proposed Condition/Change*: No condition proposed. The applicant is encouraged to work with the billboard company for removal of the billboard.
- Issue – Sign Program: A sign program has not been submitted.
  - *Proposed Condition/Change*: Conditions of Approval No. 35-39 have been included to address signage.
- Issue – Interior Landscaping: The plans do not indicate if the five (5) percent interior landscaping requirement is met.
  - *Proposed Condition/Change*: Prior to submitting to Building Plan Check, staff shall review and approve the revised development plans to assure that five (5) percent interior landscaping requirement is met. See Condition No. 18.
- Issue – Access to 216<sup>th</sup> Street: The initial revised plan showed vehicular access onto 216<sup>th</sup> Street. Staff had concerns that the vehicular access would encourage traffic onto the residential streets north of the project site. Per staff’s direction, the applicant has revised the plan to close off vehicular access, but has provided a pedestrian gate at the northeastern corner of the lot. The pedestrian gate may still encourage patrons and guests to park on 216<sup>th</sup> Street and walk to the church, however, it would allow pedestrians living in the neighborhood to the north to walk to the church rather than drive. It is staff’s opinion that the pedestrian gate is a fair compromise that is best located in the northeastern corner away from the multifamily units and the neighborhood park to the west.
  - *Proposed Condition/Change*: Condition No. 65 has been added to read, “Vehicular access to 216<sup>th</sup> Street shall not be permitted. A pedestrian gate is allowed only at the northeastern corner of the project site, and shall be attractively maintained at all times.”

*Findings:*

- Staff can make the required findings for the CUP for the church use and variance request for increased building height. The findings are included in the proposed resolution.

#### **IV. Environmental Review**

An Initial Study for this project has been prepared in accordance with CEQA. Staff has reviewed the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project and has prepared a Mitigated Negative Declaration (Exhibit No. 3) pursuant to Section 15074 of CEQA. Potentially significant impacts identified in the Initial Study include aesthetics, air quality, geology/soils, noise, and transportation/traffic impacts. Mitigation measures to reduce the potentially significant impacts to less than significant have been included.



**V. Recommendation**

That the Planning Commission:

- **ADOPT** the Mitigated Negative Declaration;
- **APPROVE** Conditional Use Permit No. 596-05 for the church use and Variance No. 453-04 for the increased building height;
- **WAIVE** further reading and **ADOPT** Resolution No.\_\_\_\_\_, entitled "A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF CARSON APPROVING CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. 596-05 AND VARIANCE NO. 453-04 FOR A NEW CHURCH BUILDING LOCATED AT 1249 E. CARSON STREET."

**VI. Exhibits**

1. Draft Resolution
2. Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration
3. City Council Report dated September 20, 2005, without exhibits
4. Excerpted Minutes from September 20, 2005, City Council Meeting
5. Project Plans (Submitted under separate cover)

**Prepared and Approved by:** \_\_\_\_\_  
John F. Signo, AICP, Acting Senior Planner