



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:20-4674

Agenda Item Number: 13.

Agenda Date: 8/26/2020

In Control: Planning Commission

DEPARTMENT: Development Services

SUBJECT: TPV 20-015 Tree Preservation Variance for Vista Colina Apartments

SUMMARY:

Request by Mr. Robert Copeland for approval of a tree preservation variance request from Unified Development Code 35-523 (h), "significant trees shall be preserved at eighty (80) percent and heritage trees at one hundred (100) percent preservation within both the 100-year floodplains and environmentally sensitive areas", located at 17811 Kyle Seale Parkway. Staff recommends approval. (Mark Bird, (210) 207-0278, mark.bird@sanantonio.gov, Development Services Department)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Project A/P# 2171146/Plat 160356

Council District: In ETJ, outside Council District 8

Consultant: Mr. Robert Copeland

Staff Coordinator: Mark Bird, City Arborist, (210) 207-0278

ANALYSIS:

The Development Services Department (DSD) has reviewed the information presented in Mr. Robert A. Copeland Jr.'s letter dated June 29, 2020.

The Unified Development Code (UDC) - Article V, Section 35-523 (h), 100-Year Floodplain(s) and Environmentally Sensitive Areas states that, "Significant trees shall be preserved at eighty (80) percent preservation within both the 100-year floodplains and environmentally sensitive areas. Heritage trees shall be preserved at one hundred (100) percent preservation within both the 100-year floodplain and environmentally sensitive areas. Mitigation shall be prohibited in floodplains and environmentally sensitive areas except when a variance is granted by the Planning Commission."

The applicant is requesting a Variance Request to mitigate for removal of significant trees in excess of the 80% preservation requirements within the steep slope Environmentally Sensitive Areas for construction of the Vista Colina Apartments. DSD staff does agree with the applicant's request to mitigate for the removal of significant trees below 80% for the following reasons:

1. *Existing site conditions* - The RRG Developers purchased the 13.9-acre property from the previous land owner and apartment developer who did not complete construction after commencement of the project.

All construction plans by the previous owner and developer were approved through the County. An approved Tree Preservation plan met the minimum 80% preservation of significant trees in the ESA steep slopes areas. At issue is the construction of an 8" private sanitary sewer main. Due to the steepness of the slope and limitations of the rock saw equipment a different utility alignment is required. The re-designed route to accommodate the rock saw is longer and requires the removal of protected trees in excess of the minimum 80% preservation requirements. The revised preservation percentage is 74.84% for a total of 344 inches of mitigation. There are no Heritage trees within the steep slope ESA.

2. *Tree mitigation* - The project will exceed the required mitigation of 344" inches by upsizing trees to be planted from 1.5 inches caliper to 3 inches caliper. A total of 132 trees will be planted. This mitigation exceeds the minimum 80% tree preservation required within the steep slopes ESA.
3. The mitigation tree planting will provide a mature tree canopy cover of 309,541 square feet which equals 51% overall canopy cover. The minimum 25% canopy cover for the project is 151,393 square feet.

The proposed mitigation planting plan provides added tree species diversity to include medium and large shade trees per Appendix E "San Antonio Recommended Plant List."

DSD staff supports the applicant's request to fall below 80% of significant tree preservation requirements within the Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) based on the conditions of the site, design constraints, and exceeding mitigation requirements. The proposed Variance Request meets the intent and spirit of the Tree Ordinance therefore, staff recommends approval.