



CITY OF GLENDALE, CALIFORNIA REPORT TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION

AGENDA ITEM

Report: Vesting Parcel Map GLN No. 1635

Location: 1313 Swarthmore Drive (APN:5665-006-014)

Legal Description: Lot 1, Tract No. 25689 in the City of Glendale, County of Los Angeles as per map recorded in Book 764 Pages 81 through 82 inclusive of Maps, in the office of the County Recorder or said County.

Case Number: PVPM 1425257

Owner: Gregori Basilyan, MSN Family Trust

Applicant: Hayk Martirosian, Techna Land Co. Inc.

Approved for	August 7, 2024
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ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION

Prepared by:

Vista Ezzati, Principal Planner

Reviewed by:

Erik Krause, Deputy Director of Community Development

SUMMARY

This is a Vesting Parcel Map application to subdivide an undeveloped 203,623 square-foot (SF) lot (4.7 acres) into three parcels for the development of three new single-family dwellings in the R1R-III zone. The parcel areas will be 26,407 SF for Parcel A, 93,445 SF for Parcel B and 79,488 SF for Parcel C. The parcels will be accessible from a proposed 4,293 SF cul-de-sac.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

The project is exempt from CEQA review as a Class 3 “New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures” exemption, pursuant to Section 15303 of the State CEQA Guidelines, because the project will involve the development of three new single-family residences in an urbanized area.

California Public Resources Code Section 21071 defines an “urbanized area” as “(a) an incorporated city that meets either of the following criteria: (1) Has a population of at least 100,000 persons, or (2) Has a population of less than 100,000 persons if the population of that city and not more than two contiguous incorporated cities combined equals at least 100,000 persons.” According to the United States Census, 195,543 people are estimated to live within Glendale (U.S. Census 2020).

According to the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) California Scenic Highway Mapping System, no officially designated or eligible state scenic highways are located within the Project site’s vicinity (Caltrans 2024). In addition, the project is not located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code (Cortese List, California Department of Toxic Substance Control (DTSC)).

The proposed parcel map would not result in cumulative impacts, nor does the site include any historic resources. Based on the above, there is not a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances or result in cumulative impacts.

RECOMMENDATION

Planning Division staff recommends that Vesting Parcel Map GLN No. 1635 (Case No. PVPM 1425257) be approved as all the findings required by the Subdivision Map Act can be met.

BACKGROUND

General Information

Existing Zoning: R1R (Restricted Residential), FAR District III

General Plan Designation: Low Density Residential

Adjacent Land Uses

Direction	Zone	Existing Land Use
North	R1R (Restricted Residential) Zone FAR District III	Public High School (College View)
South	R1R (Restricted Residential) Zone FAR District I	Single-Family Residences
East	SR – Special Recreation Zone	Undeveloped Open Space
West	R1R (Restricted Residential) Zone FAR District I	Single-Family Residences
Project Site	R1R (Restricted Residential) Zone FAR District III	Vacant Land

Existing Conditions

Size: The property is 203,631 square-feet (SF), or 4.7 acres

Existing Characteristics: The property consists of one irregularly shaped lot located at the terminus of Swarthmore Drive with 48 feet of frontage. The site is currently undeveloped, has a steep topography and contains indigenous trees and secondary ridgeline areas. There are existing easements on-site for public utilities, water pipes, and easements for future streets that bisect the site and will be relinquished. There are also secondary ridgeline areas located on the site; however proposed construction is outside of these areas and they will not be altered.

Files Available for Review: All materials relative to Tentative Parcel Map GLN No. 1635 have been available for review in the Community Development Department, Planning Division, are available for review at this meeting, and are hereby incorporated herein as part of the record.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

The applicant is requesting approval of a vesting parcel map to subdivide an undeveloped 203,623 square-foot (SF) lot (4.7 acres) into three parcels for the development of three new single-family dwellings with attached garages in the R1R-III zone. The parcel areas will be 26,407 SF for Parcel A, 93,445 SF for Parcel B and 79,488 SF for Parcel C. The parcels will be accessible from a proposed 4,293 SF cul-

de-sac. The new cul-de-sac for the public road will require 10 cubic yards (CY) of cut and 440 CY of fill. The tentative map and conceptual plans show that the proposed development of the single-family residences on the new lots would consist of 6,782 cubic yards (CY) of cut and 3,940 CY of fill. The applicant's request is to subdivide one existing lot into three parcels for the development of three new single-family dwellings:

Parcel A: This proposed lot is irregular in shape and located at the southwesterly side of the property, with a lot width of 85.75 feet along Swarthmore Drive and an area of 26,407 SF. The site is currently undeveloped and features natural vegetation. Oak trees #1, 2, 3, and 4 are located on this parcel, with oak tree #1 proposed to remain and the other two will be removed as part of development of the site.

Parcel B: This proposed lot is irregular in shape and located at the southeasterly side of the property, with a lot width of 85.25 feet along Swarthmore Drive and an area of 79,488 SF. The site is currently undeveloped and features natural vegetation. Oak trees # 5, 7, and 8 are located on this parcel and will be removed as part of development of the site.

Parcel C: This proposed parcel is a flag lot and is centrally located on the property with a lot width of 20 feet along Swarthmore Drive and an area of 93,445 SF. The site is currently undeveloped and features natural vegetation. Oak tree #6 is located on this parcel and will be removed as part of development of the site.

Lot Size and Shape

The proposed lot areas are 26,407 SF for Parcel A, 79,488 SF for Parcel B, and 93,445 SF for Parcel C, with an average area of 66,447 SF. The average lot area for R1R-zoned properties within 500 feet of the site is 15,656 SF and in accordance with GMC Section 30.11.060, the average size for a parcel map in the R1R zone is 30,000 SF. All of the proposed lots exceed the average lot size within 500 feet, the average lot size for parcel maps in this zone, and all three lots meet the required minimum lot size for new R1R-zoned lots (12,000 SF).

In this zone, the minimum lot width requirement for lots adjacent to the bulb or terminus of a cul-de-sac street shall have a minimum width of 80 feet. Both Parcel A and Parcel B are located adjacent to the bulb or terminus of a cul-de-sac street and have a lot width of 85.75 feet and 85.25 feet respectively. A flag lot that is not contiguous to the stem of another flag lot is required to have a minimum width of 20 feet for the entire length of the stem. Parcel C is designed as a flag lot and maintains the minimum 20-foot width for the entire length of the stem. In comparison to the single-family developed lots in the immediate neighborhood, the existing and proposed lots are large and irregular in shape. While that is the case, the lot boundaries comply with the provisions of Section

16.08.200 which calls for property lines to be established in a logical manner that takes into account topography, proposed driveway locations, wall and fence locations, building locations, drainage facilities and street access.

Topography and Protected Trees

The terrain of the property features a steep topography that slopes down from the top of the mountain down towards Swarthmore and continues down to Mountain Street with an average current slope (ACS) of 59.5 percent. Development of the site for new single-family development and the necessary right of way improvements require grading to occur that will alter the existing topography. The ACS for Parcel A will be 55.8 percent, Parcel B will be 61.5 percent and Parcel C will be 61.4 percent. Due to the steep ACS, the maximum FAR for the site will be reduced to 30 percent of each parcel, and a minimum of 40 percent of each parcel will be required to be maintained as ungraded open space.

The project site contains several indigenous trees. An Indigenous Tree Report dated November 19, 2021 was prepared for this report and reviewed by the Public Works Urban Forestry Division staff. The site is large and only the indigenous trees located within the proposed development area of the site and its immediate vicinity were evaluated, while there are other indigenous trees located in the inaccessible portions of the site. Eight of the indigenous trees are located within or close to the construction and grading areas. These consist of two Coast Live Oak trees and six Scrub Oak Trees, with diameters ranging from 8 to 57 inches. Development of the project will require removal of five of these indigenous trees. The Public Works Urban Forestry Division has reviewed the proposal and supports the removal of the five trees provided there is a 1 for 1 replacement (condition No. 21 in attached motion). The owner will be required to obtain approval of an Indigenous Tree Permit prior to commencing construction and will be required to comply with the provisions of Chapter 12.44 of the Glendale Municipal Code which will require replacement scrub oaks to be planted on the project site with plant materials and watering components that are compatible with native trees. The applicant has included conceptual plans with the vesting parcel map proposal. Future single-family residential development of the lots will require approval by the Design Review Board.

Grading

Development of the site for new single-family development and the necessary right of way improvements require grading to occur that will alter the existing topography. In order to accommodate the public road and cul-de-sac, 10 CY of cut will be required and 440 CY of fill. Parcel A will require zero CY of cut and 3,695 CY of fill, Parcel B will require 4,190 CY of cut and zero CY of fill, and Parcel C will require 2,592 CY of cut and

245 CY of fill. The total amount of grading required for the development of the three parcels will be 6,782 CY of cut and 3,940 CY of fill. The Preliminary Geotechnical Engineering and Engineering Geology Investigation report, dated July 14, 2014 and updated reports dated March 6, 2017 and December 13, 2021 conclude that the site is suitable for the proposed construction and includes recommendations related to grading, foundations and construction that will be required to be incorporated into the construction plans.

Public Schools

Verdugo Woodlands Elementary School, Woodrow Wilson Middle School and Glendale High School serve the site. The applicant will be required to pay all applicable school fees upon construction of the new residence for each of the three lots for the purpose of funding the construction or reconstruction of school facilities.

Utilities and Services

The subject property is serviced by Glendale Water and Power (GWP). All utilities exist in the immediate vicinity and municipal services can adequately serve the existing and proposed parcels.

REQUIRED FINDINGS

Glendale Subdivision Code (GMC Section 16.24.010(D))

- A. *The proposed map is consistent with applicable general plans (GMC § 16.24.010 (D)(1)). The table below addresses the project's compliance and consistency with the General Plan.*

GENERAL PLAN ELEMENT	PROJECT COMPLIANCE WITH ELEMENT
Land Use	The Land Use Element designation of the project site is Low Density Residential. The recommended density for the Land Use designation of Low Density is one to eight units per acre. The applicant is requesting to subdivide the existing 4.7 acre site into three separate lots. The project includes the future development of a single-family residence on each lot, consistent with the surrounding neighborhood pattern. The intended use of the properties is consistent with the Land Use Element designation of the site.
Circulation	Swarthmore Drive is classified as a local street in the Circulation Element and is adequate to serve the

	residential needs of the immediate community. A cul-de-sac has been provided at the terminus of Swarthmore drive and will provide access to the three lots. The City's Public Works Engineering staff reviewed the proposal and a dedication for street use purposes will be required for the proposed cul-de-sac, in addition to a four-foot wide sidewalk dedication. With the addition of the cul-de-sac, the parcel map will be consistent with the Circulation Element.
Noise	The project site is located in an area where the ambient noise contour is 65 - 70 CNEL, as shown on the map of the 2030 Noise Contours, Exhibit 2 of the City's Noise Element. Table 1 of the Noise Element indicates that low density residential projects are "Conditionally Acceptable" in areas where the noise levels are 65-70 CNEL or over. Noise insulation features will be included in the design for interior living areas to comply with building and safety standards at permit issuance. The project is surrounded by other single-family uses, with a high school and community college nearby. It is not anticipated to generate noise in excess of limits contained in the Noise Element. A temporary periodic increase and ambient noise would occur during construction activities associated with the proposed project however construction associated with the project will be required to comply with the city of Glendale noise ordinance (GMC Chapter 8.36), to ensure that no significant impacts would occur. Therefore, this subdivision is consistent with the Noise Element.
Housing	The development contributes to the provision of a wide range of housing types to meet the needs of current and future residents (Goal 1), provides well designed residential neighborhoods (Goal 2), preserves oak trees and natural terrain and will be subject to the design review process to ensure the new buildings are of high quality, and provides increased opportunities for home ownership (Goal 3). The proposed parcel map will be consistent with the Housing Element and will assist with meeting the Glendale RHNA allocation.
Historic Preservation	No historical significance is associated with the project site. Therefore, this subdivision is consistent with the Historic Preservation Element.

Safety	<p>The project site is not located within a mapped liquefaction hazard zone. No known active faults cross the project site and the project site is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone. The project site is located within a mapped landslide prone area. The Preliminary Geotechnical Engineering and Engineering Geology Investigation report, dated July 14, 2014 and updated reports dated March 6, 2017 and December 13, 2021 concluded that the site is suitable for the proposed construction and includes recommendations related to grading, foundations and construction that will be required to be incorporated into the construction plans.</p> <p>The project site is located in a High Fire Hazard Area, as identified in the City of Glendale General Plan Safety Element. The Glendale Fire Department rates almost two-thirds of the city as highly susceptible to wildland fires, as the City's High Fire Hazard Area includes all areas with a medium, high, or extreme brush fire. California State law requires that fire hazard areas be disclosed in real estate transactions to ensure homeowners are informed of landscaping and structural requirements for fire safety. In order to minimize damage due to fire, the project would comply with applicable fire prevention, vegetation management, and construction requirements. No significant impacts related to safety have been identified and this request is consistent with the Safety Element.</p>
Recreation	<p>The property is located in the northerly portion Recreation Planning Area 10. The Recreation Element describes Recreation Planning Area 10 as including downtown east of Brand Boulevard and the Civic Center and notes the area is lacking in neighborhood parks. The area is served by two mini-parks totaling 0.75 acres: Wilson Mini Park and Piedmont Park. The project site is also in close proximity to the Glendale Sports Complex approximately 2.6 miles for the site. The project will be subject to the Parks Development Impact Fee which is used to fund parks and recreational facilities in the City.</p>
Open Space and Conservation	<p>No scenic vistas, as identified in the Open Space and Conservation Element (January 1993), exist within, or within view of the Project site. A portion of the site does</p>

	<p>contain a protected secondary ridgeline; however, the locations for future dwellings or proposed grading or landscaping on the newly created parcels will not be located on or near any designated ridgeline areas. The San Rafael Hills, where the site is located, are not identified as a Significant Ecological Area in the Open Space and Conservation Element. San Rafael parcels have a high degree of fragmentation resulting from urban expansion. Although deer, bobcat, and coyotes are presently found in the San Rafael Hills, as fragmentation continues, populations occupying these parcels will be reduced or eliminated. The lack of a clear corridor of open space with appropriate resources into these isolated parcels will impede re-colonization. Open Space and Conservation Element Map 4-10 indicates that the existing of chaparral located on the eastern portions of the site where development is not proposed. The proposal indicates that large portions of the three new parcels will be maintained as ungraded open space (83% for Parcel A, 95% for Parcel B, and 90% for Parcel C).</p>
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B. The design or improvement of the proposed subdivision is consistent with the applicable general and specific plans (GMC § 16.24.010(D)(2)).

The design or improvement of the proposed subdivision, which includes three new lots and the future development of single-family houses on each lot with related grading and retaining walls, is consistent with the General Plan as detailed in the table above. The lot sizes and shapes are acceptable under Glendale's Zoning Ordinance. The proposed homes on each of the lots will require the approval of the Design Review Board in order to ensure compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood, prior to the issuance of any building permits. The project plans have demonstrated general compliance with the Zoning Code development standards for the R1R zone, including setbacks, lot coverage, height, landscaping, and parking. The City's Hillside Development Review Policy establishes certain criteria that are to be considered in reviewing a proposal and supports the Comprehensive Design Guidelines requirements for hillside development. The criteria focus on conformity to the design objectives in the Zoning Code, hillside design guidelines, preservation of native vegetation and open space, minimizing land form alteration and architectural compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood. The project site is located in a residential zone and the proposal to subdivide the lot into three parcels to allow for the

construction of three new single-family residences is permitted under the Zoning Code. The grading proposed is necessary to facilitate the development of the sites, including the required cul-de-sac at the end of Swarthmore Road that will provide access to the three new lots as well as added public safety for fire and police services. The applicant has included conceptual plans with the vesting parcel map proposal to illustrate the possibility to develop each of the new lots, but approval of the parcel map will not constitute approval of the design. The final design of the future single-family residences will require approval by the Design Review Board for conformance with the hillside design guidelines, including neighborhood compatibility.

C. The site is physically suitable for the type of development (GMC § 16.24.010(D)(3)).

The site is physically suitable for this residential subdivision because the resulting three lots will each be developed with a single-family residence and that is compatible with the surrounding uses. There is a secondary ridgeline located on-site but the new houses are proposed to be constructed well outside of the ridgeline area. The project site is located within a mapped landslide prone area and the geotechnical studies concluded that the site is suitable for the proposed construction and includes recommendations related to grading, foundations and construction that will be required to be incorporated into the construction plans.

D. The site is physically suitable for the proposed density of development (GMC § 16.24.010(D)(4)).

The site is physically suitable for the proposed density of this residential subdivision because the applicant is requesting to subdivide the existing 4.7-acre site into three separate lots, where the Land Use designation allows for up to 8 units per acre. The subdivision has shown the site can accommodate three parcels with single-family houses while complying with the zoning requirements. The applicant has included conceptual plans with the vesting parcel map proposal. Future single-family residential development of the lots will require approval by the Design Review Board.

E. Design of the subdivision or the proposed improvements are not likely to cause substantial environmental damage or substantially and avoidable injure fish or wildlife or their habitat (GMC § 16.24.010(D)(5)).

The design of the subdivision is not likely to cause substantial environmental damage or substantially and avoidable injure fish or wildlife or their habitat. The

proposed Project would limit the development areas to less than one acre of the westerly portion of the 4.7-acre site, adjacent to the Swarthmore Drive access. The rest of the site will not be altered, and the existing native vegetation will remain. The secondary ridgeline areas are located on the easterly portions of the site where no development is proposed. The San Rafael Hills, where the site is located, is not identified as a Significant Ecological Area in the Open Space and Conservation Element. San Rafael parcels have a high degree of fragmentation resulting from urban expansion. Although deer, bobcat, and coyotes are presently found in the San Rafael Hills, as fragmentation continues, populations occupying these parcels will be reduced or eliminated. However as mentioned above, more than 80 percent of the site will remain in its natural state and development will be focused on the western portion of the site closest to the existing development on Swarthmore Road leaving the open area that may be used by existing fauna intact. Open Space and Conservation Element Map 4-10 indicates that the existing chaparral located on the eastern portions of the site where development is not proposed.

F. Design of the subdivision or the type of improvements is not likely to cause serious public health problems (GMC § 16.24.010(D)(6)).

The design of the subdivision will not cause serious public health problems and the proposed parcel map will allow for the construction of three new single-family houses which does not involve the use, routine transport, or disposal of hazardous materials. College View School is located on the abutting property to the north of the project site. This property extends easterly beyond the common boundary with the subject site and the school facility is located on this easterly extension and not immediately across from the subject site and separated by a mountain ridge. Glendale Community College is located to the north of the project site within one-quarter mile. This property sits at a lower elevation and is separated by East Mountain Street which is a 6-lane roadway.

G. The design of the subdivision or the type of improvements will not conflict with easements, acquired by the public at large, for access through or use of property within the proposed subdivision (GMC § 16.24.010(D)(7)).

There is an existing easement that bisects the site for the public service facilities and future street purposes. Development of the project will require this easement to be relinquished. A cul-de-sac has been provided at the terminus of Swarthmore drive will provide access to the three lots. The City's Public Works Engineering staff reviewed the proposal and a dedication for street use purposes

will be required for the proposed cul-de-sac, in addition to a four-foot-wide sidewalk dedication.

EXHIBITS

1. Location Map
2. Proposed Tentative Parcel Map
3. Preliminary Project Plans
4. Photos of the Site
5. Indigenous Tree Report, dated November 19, 2021
6. Hydrology Study, dated August 30, 2018 and September 9, 2014
7. Preliminary Geotechnical Engineering and Engineering Geology Investigation Reports