

P05-033- Dean's Auto Sale

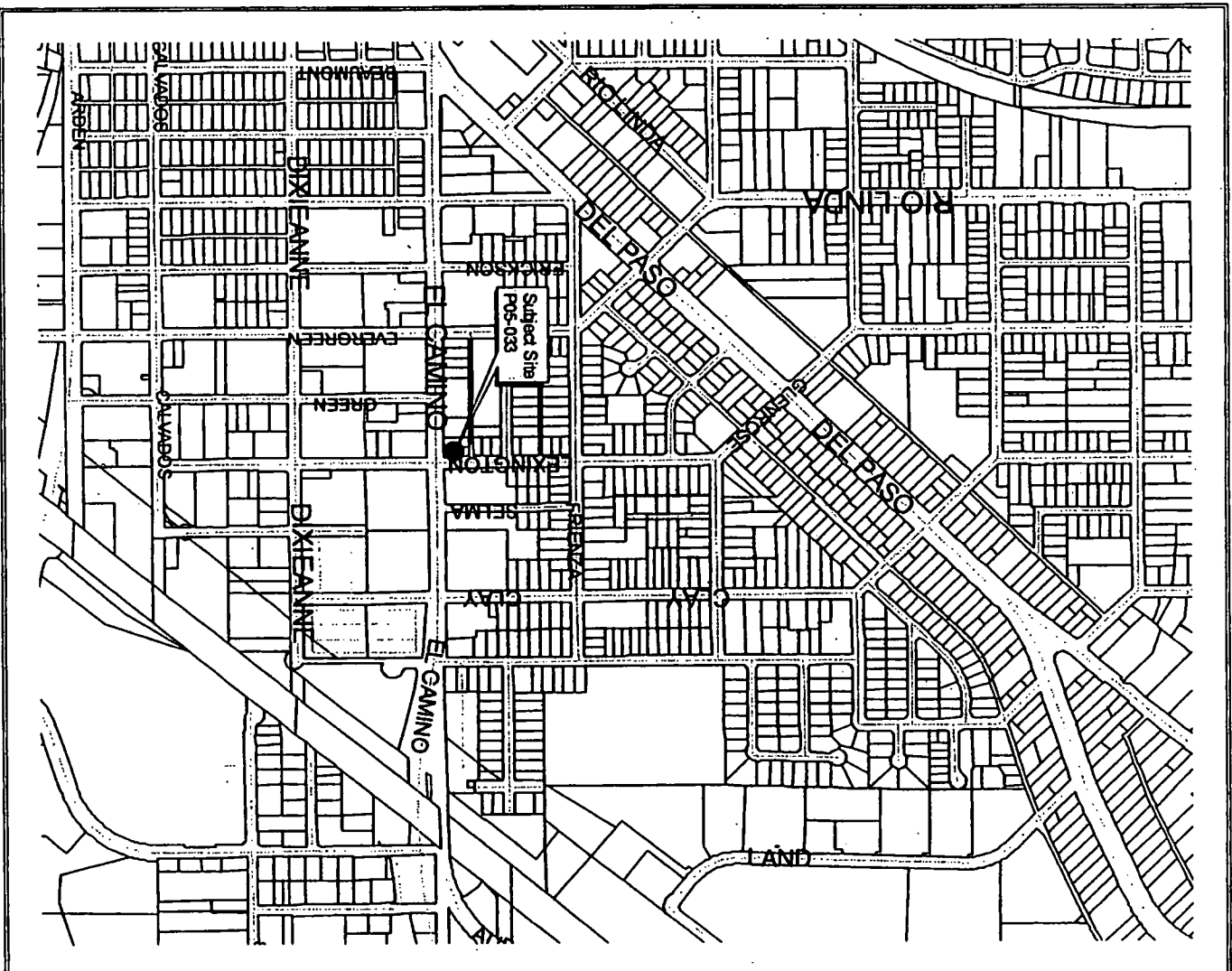
- REQUEST: A. **Environmental Determination:** Exempt 15301 and 15332
- B. **Special Permit** to develop an auto sales facility on 0.13± vacant acres in the General Commercial (C-2) zone within the North Sacramento Community Plan Area.

LOCATION: 1099 El Camino Avenue.
APN: 265-0324-015
Council District 2
North Sacramento

APPLICANT:	Bahaeddin Tabarsi 2531 Lexington Street Sacramento, CA 95815 (916) 224-2582
OWNER:	same
APPLICATION FILED:	March 4, 2005
STAFF CONTACT:	Kenny Wan, (916) 808-2222

SUMMARY:

The applicant is seeking entitlements to construct a used car lot with a small commercial building for use as a sales office on 0.13± vacant acres in the General Commercial (C-2) zone. The use is allowed in C-2 zone subject to a special permit approval. The project design has been approved by the Design Review Board on October, 2003. However, staff is recommending denial of the project since the use is not consistent with the City Commercial Corridor Revitalization Policy. Staff believes that the proposed use will negatively impact the viability of the commercial corridor, since the use is not pedestrian friendly and does not contribute to pedestrian activities in the commercial corridor. Therefore planning staff is recommending denial of the project.



Vicinity Map
P05-033

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff is recommending denial of the project. This recommendation is based upon the City's Commercial Corridor Revitalization Policy and Commercial Corridor Design Principles, as well as the North Sacramento Community Plan identifying Del Paso Road and El Camino Avenue as the primary level shopping district.

PROJECT INFORMATION:

General Plan Designation: Community Neighborhood Commercial and Offices

North Sacramento
Community Plan Designation: Retail General
Existing Land Use: Used auto sale (not legally established)
Existing Zoning of Site: General Commercial (C-2)
Surrounding Land Use and Zoning:

- North: Commercial/ C-2
- South: Commercial (car sale)/M-1
- East: Commercial (car sale)/C-2
- West: Vacant, parking lot/C-2

Property Dimensions:	50' x 120'
Property Area:	0.13+ net acres
Square Footage of Buildings:	384 s.f.
Height of Building (Existing)	12'-2" typical
Height Limit	45'
Lot Coverage	6.4%
Exterior Building Materials:	Plaster exterior, wood
Roof Material:	Membrane roofing behind parapet walls
Parking required:	2 spaces
Parking provided (on-site):	2 spaces
Topography:	Flat
Street Improvements:	Existing
Utilities:	Existing

OTHER APPROVALS REQUIRED: In addition to the entitlements requested, the applicant will also need to obtain the following permits or approvals, including, but not limited to:

<u>Permit</u>	<u>Agency</u>
Building Permit	Building Division
Off-site improvements	Development Services (Public Works)
Driveway Permit	Development Services (Public Works)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The applicant is proposing to legalize the use of an existing 0.13± acres lot for used auto sale facility. The site is undeveloped, no built structure but is parked with use automobiles. The project is in the North Sacramento Design Review District and it received Design Review Board approval on October 15, 2003 for the design of the facility. Up to that time, auto-related uses were allowed by right in the General Commercial (C-2) zone. The City later approved the Commercial Corridor Revitalization Ordinance on October 21, 2003 that requires all auto-related uses subject to Special Permit approval and all non-residential development in the C-2 Zone that requires a discretionary entitlement be subject to consistency with the Neighborhood Commercial Corridor Design Principles.

STAFF EVALUATION: Staff has the following comments:

A. Policy Considerations

1. General Plan

The City General Plan designated the site as Neighborhood Community Commercial and Office. The goal of the designation is to ensure that all areas of the City are adequately served by neighborhood/community shopping districts. Specifically, the plan provides policies to: 1) Maintain and strengthen viable shopping districts throughout the City; 2) Promote the rehabilitation and revitalization of existing commercial centers; and 3) Strengthen viable strip commercial development and discourage existing marginal strips from being extended.

Therefore, the City adopted the Commercial Revitalization Policy providing guidelines to revitalize marginal commercial strips and avoid uses that do not add to the viability of the corridor. Specifically, the policy identified auto-related uses such as auto sales, tire sales, RV sales or storage as incompatible to the revitalization goals.

Staff believes that approving this proposal would not strengthen the viability of the commercial strip because it does not add to the variety of the goods and services in this marginal strip and does not encourage new patronage and new businesses; therefore the proposal is contrary to revitalization goals.

2. North Sacramento Community Plan (NSCP)

The North Sacramento Community Plan designates El Camino Avenue as one of the four blighted major commercial strips in the community plan. Various issues and actions for the corridor were called out in the Community Plan. For example, the plan urges that commercial uses that are incompatible to neighborhood related commercial uses need to be restricted or eliminated; Storefront vacancies need to be reduced by attracting a complimentary mix of retail and office uses; and efforts need to be made to assure that local residents benefit from new jobs created in local businesses (NSCP page 17,18). Furthermore, the Community Plan designated the Del Paso – El Camino business district as the primary community level shopping place and further called for actions to revitalize and modernize the district to attract community shopping facilities.

Particularly, the community plan urged for a commercial revitalization project to speed up the process.

Staff believes that the proposed project does not support the following NSCP goals for commercial revitalization:

- 1) Provide for a range of commercial uses which meet daily needs and are within convenient access to North Sacramento resident.
- 2) Upgrade commercial area by eliminating land use conditions that contribute to blight.
- 3) Restrict commercial strip expansion consistent with General Plan Policies.
- 4) Eliminate excessive or inappropriately located commercially zoned land.
- 5) Encourage commercial revitalization efforts with private and public participation.
- 6) Attract new businesses that reduce storefront vacancies and create new jobs.
- 7) Encourage land uses which will enhance economic vitality of the community.

This portion of El Camino Avenue (between Del Paso and Capital City Freeway) is about eight to nine blocks, six to seven blocks are predominantly used as auto sales, RV-sales and storage. Typically, these uses do not generate much pedestrian activities and these businesses do not generate many new jobs opportunities nor provide daily needs of the residents. Staff believes that approval of the auto sale business will not strengthen the viability of the corridor and contradicts to the NSCP goals and visions.

3. Neighborhood Commercial Corridor Design Principles

One of the major design principles of the Neighborhood Commercial Corridor Design guideline mentions the importance of "Nodes". It states that "*Projects located in areas near major intersections, transit stations, or activity centers such as high activity businesses are areas referred to as nodes. At these locations designs should support the higher density, pedestrian and transit friendly goals that are appropriate for these areas.*" (Page 9)

An used auto sale lot is not compatible with this effort toward commercial development. The project is very low in density, does not encourage pedestrian activities and will contribute to an elongated strip of repetitive, one-dimensional retail streetscape. Staff believes that the proposed use is oriented primarily toward the passing automobile, and lacks the ability to create a "sense of place" in this street corner. Approving the use will hinder better use in this "Node" location and slow down mixed use development. The proposed development will not contribute to the revitalization of commercial activity along the Corridor and is inconsistent with the Principles.

3. Zoning

The project site is located in the General Commercial (C-2) zone. Auto sales are allowed in this zone subject to granting of a Special Permit by the Planning Commission. In order to approve a Special Permit, the Planning Commission shall find the following:

- 1) That the proposed project is consistent with the commercial corridor design principles.
- 2) That the proposed project is compatible with the goals, policies and recommendations contained in all applicable land use plans, urban design plans and other documents that address development in the commercial area in which the project is located.
- 3) That the proposed project complies with the development standard regarding outdoor storage and operating standards.

The project meets the finding #3 but will not meet the first two. Staff believes that the project does not serve the long term health and benefit of the community and is recommending the Planning Commission deny the request.

B. Special Perimt

1. Site and Building Design

The sale lot is 120' long by 50' wide located at the corner of Lexington Street and El Camino Avenue. A 348' sq.ft sale office is proposed to be located in the street corner. The building coverage is about 6.4% of the site and the rest of the lot is proposed to be the parking area for the used cars. A 5' by 12' planter in front of the building also depicts a vehicle parking at the street corner. In addition, a 86' screen wall consisting of stucco and metal is extended from the sale office to the northern edge of the site. The screen wall is 6' tall, visually "semi-permeable".

The project was subjected to review by the Design Review/Preservation staff. The project (DR03-168) was reviewed and approved by staff on October 15, 2003 and the approval will expire on October this year. Planning staff has no issue with the site design.

PROJECT REVIEW PROCESS:

A. Environmental Determination

The Environmental Services Manager has determined that the project, as proposed, is exempt from environmental review pursuant to CEQA Section 15301 and 15332.

B. Public/Neighborhood/Business Association Comments

The proposed project application was routed to the Robla Neighborhood Association, North Sacramento RAC and SHRA. Landowners within a 500-foot radius of the project site were also notified of the project proposal. Staff received concerns regarding the proposal from the North Sacramento Design Review Subcommittee (SHRA) as follow:

E-mail from Ya-yin Chiang, SHRA Redevelopment Planner:

On April 15, 2005, the North Sacramento Design Review Subcommittee met and reviewed this proposed Special Permit for auto sales facility at 1099 El Camino Avenue. The subcommittee members do not support this use at this location. Some of their comments include the following:

- * The community is currently working hard to build up the area, and this auto use is not consistent with what the neighborhood wants to see El Camino become.
- * The property is located near where a potential grocery store may be located and an auto sales use is not compatible.
- * The property is located close to the Swanston light rail station and an auto sales use is inconsistent with uses that support transit use.
- * The property is located within the proposed Swanston Station Transit Village Plan area that the City is currently working on bringing a consultant on board to develop the plan.
- * Committee members have noticed that the property owner currently does not take good care of the property and are therefore worried about how an auto sales use would be taken care of given the property owner's track record.

C. Summary of Agency Comments

The project has been reviewed by several City Departments and other agencies. Should the project be approved, sets of conditions would be added to the project Special Permits related to site.

PROJECT APPROVAL PROCESS: The Planning Commission has the authority to approve or deny all of the entitlements. The Planning Commission action may be appealed to the City Council. The appeal must occur within 10 days of the Planning Commission action.

RECOMMENDATION:

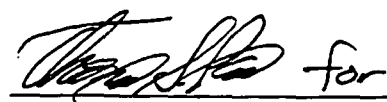
Staff recommends the Planning Commission take the following actions:

- A. Adopt the attached Notice of Decision and Findings of Fact which finds that the project is Exempt pursuant to CEQA Section 15301(a) and (d).
- B. Adopt the attached Notice of Decision and Findings of Fact denying the Special Permit to develop an auto sales facility on 0.13± vacant acres in the General Commercial (C-2) zone within the North Sacramento Community Plan Area.

Report Prepared By,


Kenny Wan, Associate Planner

Report Reviewed By,

 for
Jeanne Corcoran, Senior Planner

Attachments

Attachment 1	Notice of Decision & Findings of Fact
Exhibit 1	Site Plan
Exhibit 2	Building Elevations
Exhibit 3	Street Elevations
Attachment 2	Land Use & Zoning Map

Attachment 1
NOTICE OF DECISION AND FINDINGS OF FACT FOR
DEAN'S AUTO SALE LOCATED AT 1099 EL CAMINO AVENUE, SACRAMENTO,
CALIFORNIA IN THE GENERAL COMMERCIAL (C-2) ZONE.
APN 265-0324-015 (P05-033)

At the regular meeting of June 23, 2005, the City Planning Commission heard and considered evidence in the above-entitled matter. Based on verbal and documentary evidence at said hearing, the Planning Commission took the following actions for the location listed above:

- A. **Environmental Determination: Exempt 15301 and 15332**
- B. **Denied the Special Permit to develop an auto sales facility on 0.13± vacant acres in the General Commercial (C-2) zone within the North Sacramento Community Plan Area**

These actions were made based upon the following findings of fact and subject to the following conditions:

FINDINGS OF FACT

- A. **Categorical Exemption:** The City Planning Commission finds and determines that the proposed project is exempt from environmental review pursuant to Section #15301 and 15332 of the CEQA Guidelines.
- B. **The Special Permits** to develop an auto sales facility on 0.13± vacant acres in the General Commercial (C-2) zone within the North Sacramento Community Plan Area are hereby denied based upon the following Findings of Fact:
 - 1. The project is based not based upon sound principles of land use in that the use is pedestrian unfriendly and does not promote vital commercial activity along the corridor.
 - 2. The project will be detrimental to the public health, safety and welfare in that the project will likely slow down the commercial corridor revitalization process.
 - 3. The project is inconsistent with the City General Plan, North Sacramento Community Plan, Zoning Ordinance as well as the Neighborhood Commercial Corridor Design Principles.

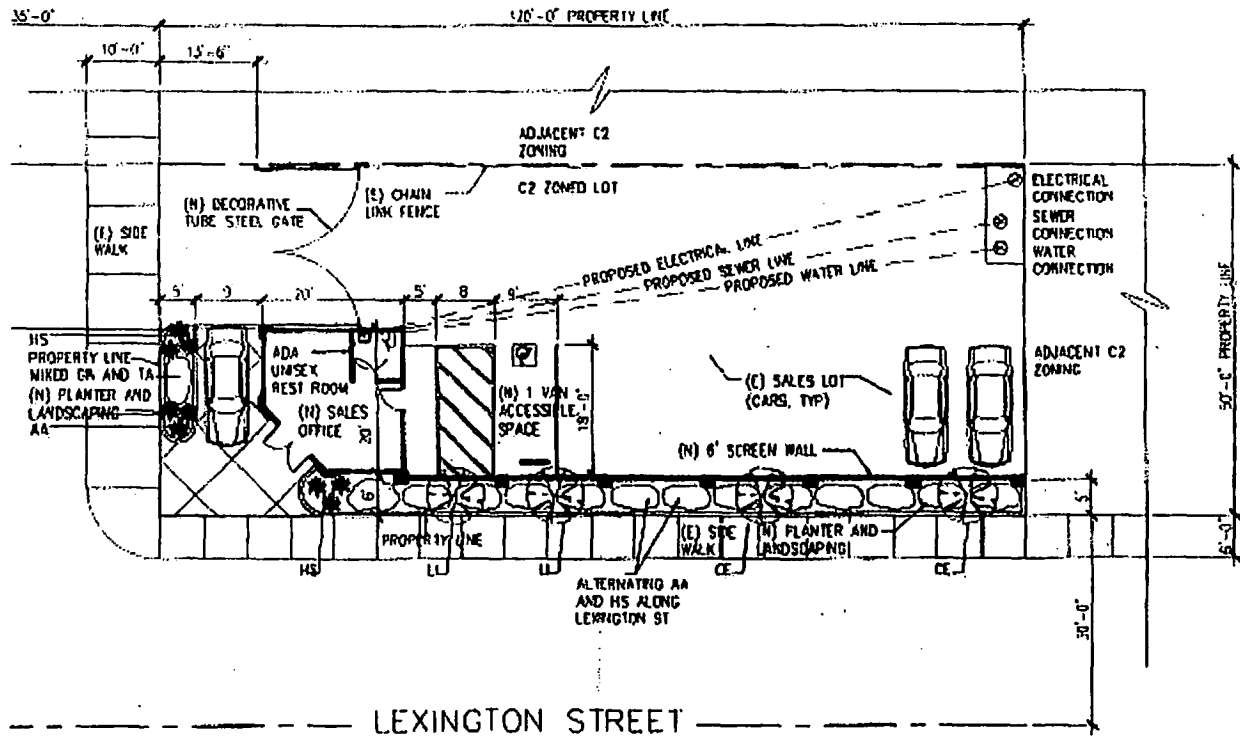
CHAIRPERSON

ATTEST:

SECRETARY TO CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

DATE

(P05-033)



PLANT LIST

KEY SIZE BOTANICAL NAME COMMON NAME

KEY SIZE	BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME
TREES:		
LI 15 GAL	LAGERSTROEMIA INDICA	CREPE MYRTLE
		"HATEPARLON PFD"
SHRUBS:		
AA 7 GAL	ACAPATHUS AFRICANUS	PETER PAN
MS 1 GAL	MENTRECALLIS STELLA CORO	DAY LILY (S)
GROUNDCOVER		
DA FLATS	GAZANIA, 12" O.C.	SUNRISE YELLOW
TA FLATS	TRACHELOSPERUM ANSICUM	ASIA JASMINE
	12" O.C.	
PALMS		
CE 15GAL	DYANMEROPS EXCELSA	WINDMILL PALM

SITE PLAN
SCALE: 1/16" = 1'-0"
1' 5' 10' 20'

NORTH

PLANTS SHALL BE IRRIGATED BY AN APPROVED DRIP IRRIGATION SYSTEM

VICINITY MAP
NOT TO SCALE

NORTH

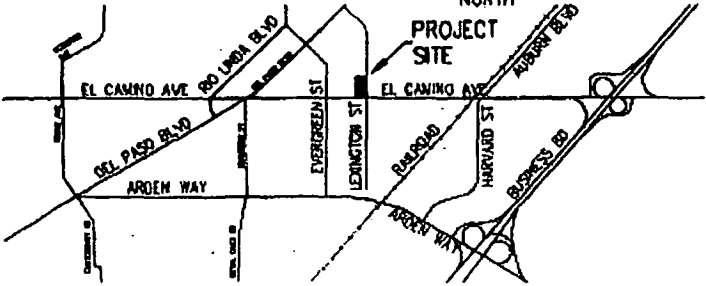
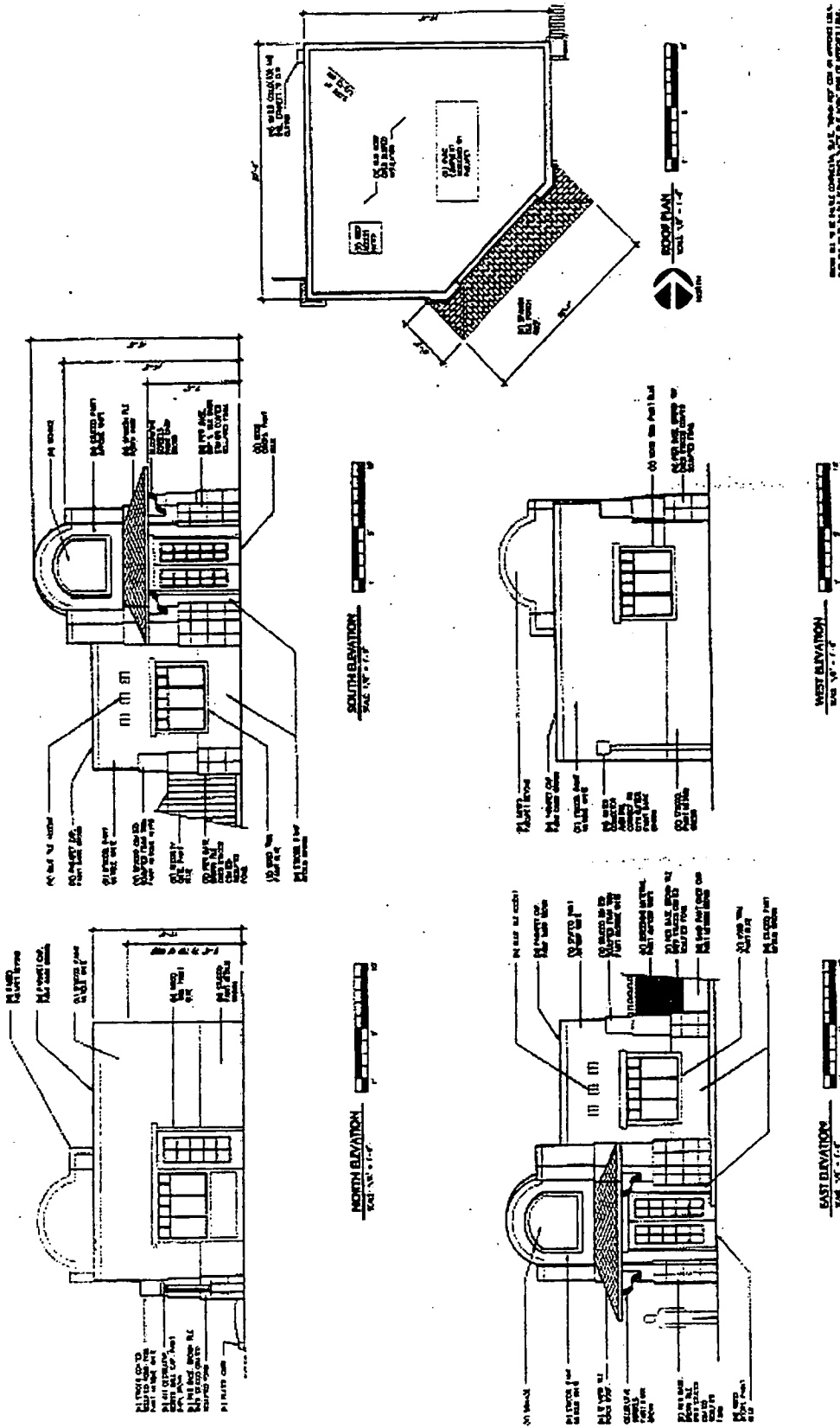


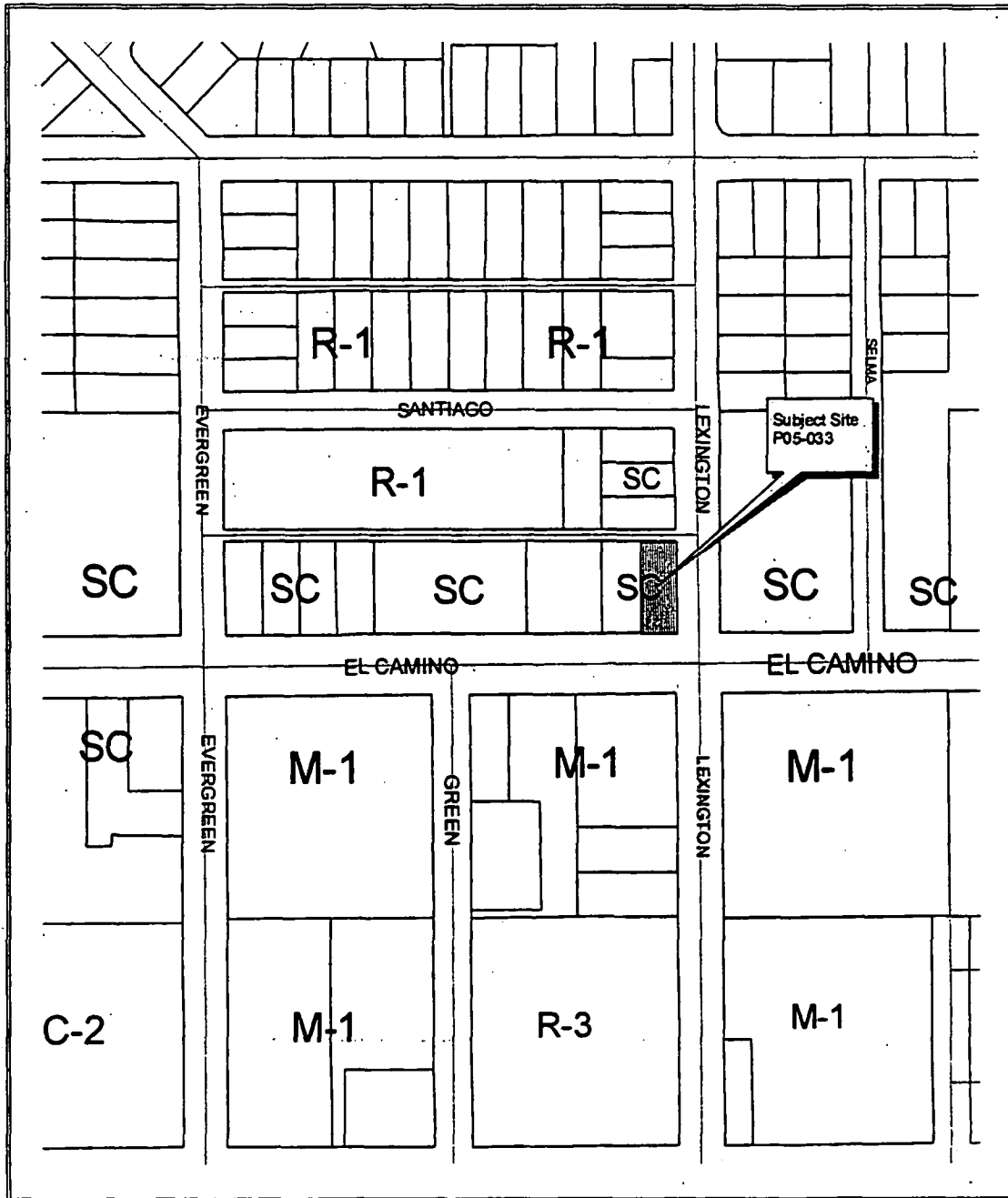
Exhibit 2

Building Elevations



NOTE: ALL DIMENSIONS ARE TO FACE UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.
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Attachment 2 Land Use & Zoning Map



Zoning Map
P05-033

