TO: HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: CITY MANAGER DEPARTMENT: PLANNING AND COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT

DATE: APRIL 7, 2008 CMR: 205:08

SUBJECT: COUNCIL CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSAL TO ASSIGN STAFF TO REVIEW POTENTIAL CHANGES TO THE PROCESS FOR ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD (ARB) REVIEW OF LARGE PROJECTS

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION
On January 22, 2008, the City Council voted to set for a future agenda discussion of whether to direct staff to review potential revisions to the Architectural Review Board (ARB) process (minutes attached). Staff’s understanding is that the intent of the review would be to provide Council policy overview of key planning issues for major projects in advance of detailed architectural review. Staff believes that potential solutions would encompass more than just ARB review, and has identified a few approaches that could be evaluated upon Council direction. Some alternatives, for threshold sized projects or sites, might include:

1. Developing a two-stage “conceptual plan” and “precise plan” process, with land use, density, and circulation patterns established at the “conceptual plan” review and detailed site design and architecture under review at the “precise plan” review.
2. Stipulating that review of any project involving a tentative subdivision map require a conceptual map review by Commission and Council prior to or simultaneous with architectural review.
3. Revising the review process to require Site and Design Review (ARB, Commission, and Council) for all threshold projects.

Staff anticipates that, if directed by Council, these and other potential revisions would be presented to the Planning and Transportation Commission and the Architectural Review Board prior to review by the City Council.
RESOURCE IMPACTS
Staff estimates that review of alternative approaches and processing necessary zoning amendments would require an estimated 120 hours of professional staff time and 40 hours of support staff time. Time would be required for analyzing and developing alternatives, public outreach meetings, preparing appropriate ordinance amendments, and at least two meetings each with the Architectural Review Board, Planning and Transportation Commission, and City Council. This effort would be redirected from other staff rezoning and project review priorities. Additional costs would be incurred for public notice. Impacts on the permit review timeline and potential project delays would be assessed as part of the analysis.

PREPARED BY: ___________________________________________________________________
CURTIS WILLIAMS
Assistant Director

DEPARTMENT HEAD: __________________________________________________________________
STEVE EMSLIE
Director of Planning and Community Environment

CITY MANAGER APPROVAL: __________________________________________________________________
EMILY HARRISON
Assistant City Manager

ATTACHMENT
Attachment A: January 22, 2008 Council Minutes (Excerpt)