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Project in works for SLO's Marsh Street

Development at Nipomo Street would include commercial space, 4 lofts and 8 single-family homes

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A project that would revitalize a corner of Marsh and Nipomo streets in downtown San Luis Obispo is starting through the city approval process.

The proposed development, called the Marsh Street Commons, is a mixed-use project that would include 12 residential units and 8,000 square feet of commercial space.

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The developer, Mangano Homes, plans to build the commercial space on the ground floor topped with four two-bedroom residential lofts facing Marsh Street and eight small single-family homes that would be accessed by Nipomo Street.

The project, described as contemporary Craftsman, would include the use of "rich materials, colors and textures," according to the applicant.

The existing buildings, one-story, cinder-block structures that are vacant,

would be demolished.

Previous tenants included the Couch Potato furniture store and Global Wireless cellphone store. Those businesses have relocated.

The proposed project, 28,488 square feet in size, does not include any onsite parking for the commercial buildings or the loft units but does propose a two-car garage for each single-family home.

The developer would be required to pay the city "in-lieu fees" for any parking spaces it does not provide. Those fees are used by the city to offset parking needs, typically done with parking structures.

The development's four lofts will range in size from 1,254 square feet to 1,425 square feet. The mixed commercial and residential building facing Marsh Street is proposed not to exceed 32 feet in height.

The eight three-bedroom homes would range from 1,551 square feet to 1,779 square feet. The homes would be built behind the commercial/loft building.

A much larger project by Bermant Homes was approved for the area in 2006. At the time, 33 residential units and 6,200 square feet of commercial space were proposed.

The new developer downsized the project to make it more viable in the current economy, according to a city staff report.

Adjacent to the development and unaffected are several small commercial buildings, as well as the Foster's Freeze restaurant and McCarthy's Irish Pub at the intersection of Marsh and Nipomo streets.

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