



CITY OF CARSON

PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

PUBLIC HEARING: November 28, 2006

SUBJECT: Design Overlay Review No. 937-06; Zone Change Case No. 152-06; and General Plan Amendment No. 77-06

APPLICANT: Mr. Don Wilkins, Architect
22241 Pacific Coast Highway
Malibu, CA 90265

OWNER: Sid Moray (Properties, LLC)
9201 Wilshire Boulevard
Beverly Hills, CA 90210

REQUEST: To construct a 123,340 square foot mixed use building consisting of self storage and multi-tenant retail uses in the CN (Commercial, Neighborhood) zone and within the Merged and Amended Redevelopment Project Area. To change the General Plan from General Commercial to Light Industrial and the zoning from Commercial Neighborhood (CN) to Manufacturing Light – Design Overlay Review (ML-D).

PROPERTY INVOLVED: 101-155 E. Lomita Boulevard

COMMISSION ACTION

- Concurred with staff
- Did not concur with staff
- Other

COMMISSIONERS' VOTE

AYE	NO		AYE	NO	
		Cottrell –Chairperson			Saenz
		Pulido –Vice-Chairman			Tyus
		Faletogo			Verrett
		Graber			Wilson
		Hudson			

I. Introduction

Item No. 11B

I. Introduction

The applicant is requesting approval to construct a four-story, 123,340 square foot mixed-use building. The proposed building consists of self storage and multi-tenant retail uses on the first floor and self storage only use on the second, third and fourth floors. The proposed project is part of a commercial center which consists of two parcels. The proposed building will be located on the western portion of the site, while the eastern portion is currently occupied by a grocery store and retail shopping center. The proposed project contains 2.46 acres of the total 6.6 acre commercial center. Applicant proposes a lot line adjustment on the western parcel for the purpose of this development.

The subject property is located at 101-155 E. Lomita Boulevard, on the northeast corner of Lomita Boulevard and Main Street. The site is currently zoned CN (Commercial, Neighborhood) and is within the Merged and Amended Redevelopment Project Area. Self storage is not permitted in the CN zone; therefore, the project includes a request to change the zone designation for the western 2.46 acre parcel to ML-D (Manufacturing, Light – Design Overlay Review). Accordingly, a general plan amendment is also requested to change the same portion of the property from General Commercial to Light Industrial.

II. Background

The applicant will be required to do a lot line adjustment to adjust both parcels totaling 6.6 acres in order to accommodate the new development. The eastern parcel, APN 7406-025-028, will contain 4.14 acres and includes two existing commercial buildings totaling 50,748 square feet in floor area. The remaining vacant 2.46 acre parcel located to the west of the site, APN 7406-025-029, is where the proposed building will be located. The total floor area of the proposed new building is 123,340 square feet, including a covered walkway along the front of the retail shops. Thirteen retail tenant spaces totaling 16,530 square feet will face the parking area to the south of the building. A fourteenth space will be used as the self storage manager's office (960 square feet). The self storage area will be located on the north side of the building on the first floor and will encompass the entire second, third and fourth floors. The total area devoted to self storage will be 101,400 square feet with 765 storage units. A manager's residence will be located on the second floor at the southwestern corner of the building.

The development exceeds the City's parking requirement of 98 spaces, providing 115 parking spaces to accommodate the new four-story, mixed-use building. A vacant building pad area at the southwestern corner of the site will remain vacant. The applicant will be required to landscape the vacant corner pad with ground cover and irrigation until a tenant is found. Site improvements include new perimeter and interior landscaping around the parking area; removal of a section of chainlink fencing at the rear (north) side of the property and installation of a decorative masonry wall; refurbishing existing landscaping throughout the entire 6.6 acre site; asphalt slurry seal and re-striping the entire parking lot area; and the removal of one trash

enclosure unit to comply with minimum 26 foot wide driveway access behind the existing shopping center. A new 15 foot high monument sign is proposed along the side setback area, perpendicular to Main Street. The Carson Municipal Code allows a maximum 10 foot high monument sign. As such, a condition has been imposed to comply with the City's sign standards. The monument sign will contain the name of the center and two major tenants. Other signage proposed will be building mounted and is included in the sign program.

The project site is located in the southwestern portion of the city in a mostly industrial area. The city of Los Angeles is located to the south across Lomita Boulevard. The properties to the south are mixed residential and neighborhood commercial. A middle school is directly across Lomita Boulevard from the subject property. Other surrounding land uses include an industrial business park to the north, a church to the east and the Los Angeles County Sanitation District to the west across Main Street.

III. Operations

The applicant will be required to record a shared parking and driveway access agreement for both properties in order to allow access to both commercial buildings. The existing grocery store is open from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. and employs approximately 42 employees in staggered shifts throughout the day. Truck deliveries are typically done between 2 a.m. and 4 a.m. with random deliveries occurring during the day. The existing retail center typically operates from 9 a.m. until 8 p.m. and averages 2 employees per business. There are currently 11 retail businesses consisting of nail and barber salons, dental clinic, bakery, pizza restaurant and various other retailers. The eastern parcel contains 248 parking spaces, more than the required 191 parking spaces.

It is anticipated that the new retail uses will employ the same amount of employees and have the same operating hours as the existing retail shopping center to the east. The storage use will be accessible to patrons from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. with the business office open from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Storage is a very low trip generator, with four to five customers on site at any one given time. Current storage customers will enter their security code at a key pad when entering or leaving the building. This will allow them access to the building and will concurrently disarm the alarm on their specific unit. The key-in also provides a record of time and access. The interior of the building and perimeter will be equipped with a closed circuit monitoring/recording system.

IV. Analysis

Design Overlay Review

Site Plan and Design Review approval is required because the site is located within the Merged and Amended Redevelopment Project Area. Furthermore, the zone will be changed so that it will be within a Design Overlay Review district. After Planning Commission recommendation, the project will be forwarded to the Redevelopment Agency for final approval. Section 9172.23 (D) (1) states that a Site Plan and Design

Overlay Review application shall be submitted and recommended for approval if the project meets specified criteria as follows:

a. Compatibility with the General Plan, any specific plans for the area and surrounding uses.

The General Plan currently designates the subject property as General Commercial and the site is within the CN (Commercial, Neighborhood) zone. The proposed self storage land use is not allowed within the CN (Commercial, Neighborhood) zone and therefore an application for a Zone Change Case has been concurrently submitted to change the zoning to ML-D (Manufacturing, Light Design Overlay District) zone and a General Plan Amendment to Light Industrial to accommodate the project. The proposed self storage and retail uses adhere to the goals and policies described in the Land Use Element of the General Plan for the proposed Light Industrial designation and corresponding zone. The total site is approximately 6.6 acres in size and is located in the southwestern portion of the city in a mostly industrial area. The city of Los Angeles borders the property on the south. The land use to the north of the site is a light industrial park, zoned ML-D (Manufacturing, Light) with a General Plan land use designation of Business Park. Two properties immediately adjacent to the east of the shopping center are zoned CG-D (Commercial, General Design Overlay District) with a General Plan designation of General Commercial. These two sites are occupied by a Korean church with a parking lot for church members. The properties to the south are mixed residential and neighborhood commercial. A middle school is directly across Lomita Boulevard from the subject property. The Los Angeles County Sanitation District, located to the west of the site across Main Street, is zoned MH (Manufacturing, Heavy) with a General Plan designation of Heavy Industrial.

The proposed land use will be consistent with surrounding light industrial and commercial land uses. The proposed retail and self storage uses will provide the community added amenities and serve to upgrade a currently blighted, undeveloped site within an urbanized area.

b. Compatibility of architecture and design with existing and anticipated development in the vicinity, including the aspects of the site planning, land coverage, landscaping, appearance, scale of structures, open spaces, and other features relative to a harmonious and attractive development of the area.

The design and architecture of the proposed development conforms to all the applicable design and development standards of the City of Carson's Zoning Ordinance, including parking requirements. The total floor area of the proposed new building is 123,340 square feet, including a covered walkway along the front of the retail shops.

The project features a consistent Spanish Mediterranean building theme, including concrete tile roofing; stucco exterior; coordinated color patterns; pop-outs and projections; aluminum storefront windows and mounted light fixtures. The

development will be consistent with the existing shopping center and market architecture. Site upgrades will include new parking lot landscaping within the western parcel as indicated on the conceptual landscape plan, replacement of a section of chainlink fencing with a decorative masonry wall, refurbishment of entire landscaping throughout shopping center, asphalt slurry seal and restriping of the entire 6.6 acre parking lot area to comply with code and a new sign program for the new development. The development shall also make way for any required parkway trees under the direction of the Engineering Department.

The site has been vacant for many years. The proposed development will serve to enhance this shopping center by providing quality design, site upgrades and land uses that will cater to the surrounding neighborhood. As such, the project is compatible with the existing and anticipated development of the area.

c. Convenience and safety of circulation for pedestrians and vehicles.

The proposed development and existing market and retail shopping center to the east shall share common driveway access. The driveway entrance/exit easement agreements to be recorded by the applicant. The applicant shall record a shared parking and access agreement for both parcels.

The project layout incorporates handicap and pedestrian accessibility from the sidewalk into the proposed development. Customer parking areas provide adequate and safe circulation of vehicles and pedestrians on site. Staff had recommended that the applicant relocate the truck loading area to the rear of the shopping center to avoid loading conflicts with the proposed development. The applicant states that the truck loading door could not be relocated due to the market's internal floor plan logistics. As such, the walkway between both buildings has been redesigned to allow safe pedestrian passage to the rear parking lot area. Truck deliveries are typically done from 2 a.m. to 4 a.m. daily, with infrequent deliveries during the day. There are typically no more than four to five storage area patrons at any one time on site. As such, truck loading should not conflict with the storage area loading doors.

Staff has conditioned that self closing wrought iron gates be installed at both ends of the open passage way to allow employees and patrons secured access to the rear parking lot area. A photometric plan showing adequate lighting within the open passage walkway and throughout the entire 6.6 acre site shall be required prior to the issuance of a building permit. In addition, staff recommends that applicant install two security monitoring cameras, one at each end of the passage walkway, to provide added security to this area.

Parking located in the rear of the proposed development will primarily serve the storage area patrons who drop off or pick up personal goods. It is anticipated that the retail patrons will park in the front of the new shopping center.

Main Street and Lomita Boulevard are major thoroughfares that can easily accommodate the proposed development. The proposed storage area is a low trip generator and is not expected to significantly increase traffic patterns to the subject

site. Furthermore, the City's Traffic Engineer has reviewed the proposed project and has determined that the use will not create significant traffic impacts to the area and that adequate street access and traffic capacity exists.

d. Attractiveness, effectiveness and restraint in signing, graphics and color.

The applicant proposes a 15 foot high monument sign placed along Main Street to accommodate the new development. The code permits a maximum 10 foot high monument sign which staff is conditioning. The sign shall incorporate the building architectural theme and contain the name of the shopping center, along with two major tenants. The 13 retail spaces will contain individual signage consistent with the existing retail center signage of individual channel letters. Two 84 square foot "Extra Space Storage" logo signs will be placed at the tower of the new building, facing Main Street and Lomita Boulevard. The sign program shall comply with the sign regulations of the Municipal Code.

e. Conformance to any applicable design standards and guidelines, which have been adopted pursuant to Section 9172.15.

Pursuant to the Redevelopment Plan for the Merged and Amended Project Area, future development within such Project Area includes an emphasis on the abatement of unwanted, conflicting and blighted land uses. The proposed project will facilitate the redevelopment of a currently blighted, vacant lot and allow for the development of a new commercial center, which will provide increased tax revenue, jobs to the community and showcase a new contemporary development. The proposed development is consistent with the general intent of the Redevelopment Plan for the area.

Zone Change Case and General Plan Amendment

While the entire site is 6.6 acres, only the western 2.46 acre parcel will undergo a zone change from CN (Commercial, Neighborhood) to ML-D (Manufacturing, Light Design Overlay District) and a General Plan Amendment from General Commercial to Light Industrial. The remaining 4.14 acre eastern parcel will remain in the CN (Commercial, Neighborhood) zone with a General Plan land use designation of General Commercial.

Pursuant to CMC Section 9172.13, the Planning Commission is required to formulate a written recommendation to the City Council which includes the reasons for the recommendation and specification of the relationship of the proposed ordinance to the General Plan. The California Government Code requires consistency between the Zoning Ordinance and the General Plan.

The General Plan currently designates the site as General Commercial with a zoning designation of CN (Commercial, Neighborhood) which does not allow for the development of self storage uses. With approval of General Plan Amendment No. 77-

06 and Zone Change Case No. 152-06, the proposed project will be consistent with the land use and zoning for the 2.46 acre site.

The proposed project is also consistent with several goals and objectives contained within the General Plan:

1. Goals/Objective 1 of the Land Use Element states that the City shall:

Allow each land use type sufficient area to develop to the fullest extent indicated by the economy and general welfare.

The development of the 2.46 acre site with retail and self storage use would be economically feasible for the applicant and would provide added retail services and self storage uses for the surrounding neighborhood. Thus, the proposed project is responsive to both the economy and general welfare of the community.

2. Goal/Objective 2 of the Land Use Element seeks to:

...replace substandard buildings and prevent deterioration of residential, commercial and industrial neighborhoods.

The property, which has been vacant for many years, is prone to flooding during the rainy season and is unattractive to neighboring land uses. The proposed mixed-use retail/self storage development will be consistent with the existing market and retail shopping center to the east side of the site and would be an upgrade to the existing deteriorated lot. The development will trigger overall site improvements which would also benefit the existing neighborhood.

3. Goal/Objective 8 of the Land Use Element, under Mixed Use Developments states:

Promote mixed use development where appropriate which provide a variety of uses, including retail, office and limited industrial.

The proposed mixed-use project will be consistent with this goal by providing the community with a variety of retail and self storage amenities in an otherwise under-marketed area. Construction operations will comply with all City, county, and state requirements including best management practices to minimize impacts to adjacent properties.

V. Environmental Review

An Initial Study was prepared for this project in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Staff has determined that this project will not impose significant impacts on the environment and has prepared a Negative Declaration.

VI. Conclusion

The proposed development is consistent with the requirements set forth in the Municipal Code for the approval of Design Overlay Review, Zone Change Case and General Plan Amendment. The proposal is compatible with the existing commercial, light industrial and residential uses in the area. The self storage and retail uses are anticipated to feature tenants which will serve the community and will enhance this corner site. In addition, the use, architectural style and design of the proposed project serves as a protocol to promote the upgrade of adjacent land uses. The project is consistent with existing and anticipated development of the area and represents a significant upgrade of the existing site.

The proposed project's relationship to the goals and objectives stated in the General Plan includes, but is not limited to, the protection and enhancement of property values, providing the community with additional retail and self storage uses, and development of an underutilized property which, as a vacant property, deteriorates from the character of the neighborhood.

VII. Recommendation

That the Planning Commission:

- **APPROVE** the Negative Declaration
- **WAIVE** further reading and **ADOPT** Resolution No._____, entitled “A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF CARSON RECOMMENDING APPROVAL OF DESIGN OVERLAY REVIEW NO. 937-06 TO THE CARSON REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY AND RECOMMENDING APPROVAL OF ZONE CHANGE CASE NO. 152-06 AND GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT NO. 77-06 TO THE CITY COUNCIL.”

VIII. Exhibits

1. Land Use Map
2. Proposed Resolution
3. Proposed Plans (Submitted under separate cover)

Prepared by: _____
Rocio Lopez, Planner

Reviewed by: _____
John F. Signo, AICP, Senior Planner

Approved by: _____
Sheri Repp, Planning Manager