



CITY OF SIGNAL HILL

2175 Cherry Avenue ♦ Signal Hill, CA 90755-3799

THE CITY OF SIGNAL HILL
WELCOMES YOU TO A REGULAR
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
July 14, 2015

The City of Signal Hill appreciates your attendance. Citizen interest provides the Planning Commission with valuable information regarding issues of the community. Meetings are held on the 2nd Tuesday of every month.

Meetings commence at 7:00 p.m. There is a public comment period at the beginning of the regular meeting, as well as the opportunity to comment on each agenda item as it arises. Any meeting may be adjourned to a time and place stated in the order of adjournment.

The agenda is posted 72 hours prior to each meeting on the City's website and outside of City Hall and is available at each meeting. The agenda and related reports are available for review online and at the Community Development office and Library on the Friday afternoon prior to the Commission meeting. Agenda and staff reports are also available at our website at www.cityofsignalhill.org.

During the meeting, the Community Development Director presents agenda items for Commission consideration. The public is allowed to address the Commission on all agenda items. The Chair will announce when the period for public comment is open on each agenda item. The public may speak to the Commission on items that are not listed on the agenda. This public comment period will be held at the beginning of the public portion of the meeting. You are encouraged (but not required) to complete a speaker card prior to the item being considered, and give the card to a City staff member. The purpose of the card is to ensure speakers are correctly identified in the minutes. However, completion of a speaker card is voluntary, and is not a requirement to address the Commission. The cards are provided at the rear of the Council Chamber. Please direct your comments or questions to the Chair. Each speaker is allowed three minutes make their comments.

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

CHAIR FALLON
VICE-CHAIR AUSTIN
COMMISSIONER BENSON
COMMISSIONER MURPHY
COMMISSIONER RICHÁRD

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Chair will lead the audience in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR ON ITEMS NOT LISTED ON THIS AGENDA

PUBLIC HEARING

1. Amendment to Conditional Use Permit for Costco Gas Station at 2200 E. Willow Street

Summary: The applicant, Costco Wholesale, is requesting approval to extend gas station hours of operation to 5:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. seven days a week. The project's Conditional Use Permit currently restricts hours of operation at the gas station to 6:00 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. Monday through Friday and 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on weekends.

Recommendation: Waive further reading and adopt a resolution recommending City Council approval of an amendment to Conditional Use Permit 13-01.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR REPORTS

2. Water Conservation & Options for Turf Replacement on Residential Properties

Summary: Drought conditions in Southern California are recurring events. The State is in the fourth year of current drought conditions. Water conservation and water quality are a continued priority for the City. Recently the Governor issued an executive order mandating a further reduction in water use and the City has declared a level 2 water supply shortage. Data shows that more than half of outdoor water is used for turf, therefore many residents are replacing their turf with lower water use landscape materials. Staff will review the current code requirements for landscape and hardscape in residential yards and present options for regulating the proportions of hardscape to landscape materials.

Recommendation: Provide direction as deemed appropriate.

3. Conformity Report - Revisions to the BMW Dealership at 1660 E. Spring Street

Summary: The purpose of this report is to advise the Planning Commission of building elevation and floor plan modifications for the BMW automobile dealership which is currently under construction at 1660 E. Spring Street. The changes include addition of a 495 sq. ft. appraisal room at the west side of the building and other minor architectural changes. Staff reviewed the changes and determined that they do not result in significant changes in the appearance of the development and do not need review at a public hearing.

Recommendation: Receive and file.

CONSENT CALENDAR

The following Consent Calendar items are expected to be routine and non-controversial. Items will be acted upon by the Commission at one time without discussion. Any item may be removed by a Commissioner or member of the audience for discussion.

4. Minutes of the Following Meeting

Regular Meeting of June 9, 2015

Recommendation: Approve.

5. City Council Follow-up

Summary: Attached for review is a brief summary on the City Council's action from the June 16, 2015 and July 7, 2015 meetings.

Recommendation: Receive and file.

6. Development Status Report

Summary: Attached for review is the monthly Development Status Report which highlights current projects.

Recommendation: Receive and file.

7. In the News

Summary: Articles compiled by staff that may be of interest to the Commission.

Recommendation: Receive and file.

COMMISSION NEW BUSINESS

COMMISSIONER RICHÁRD
COMMISSIONER MURPHY
COMMISSIONER BENSON
VICE-CHAIR AUSTIN
CHAIR FALLON

ADJOURNMENT

Adjourn tonight's meeting to the next regular meeting to be held Tuesday, August 11, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers located at City Hall.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

If you need special assistance beyond what is normally provided to participate in City meetings, the City will attempt to accommodate you in every reasonable manner. Please call the City Clerk's office at (562) 989-7305 at least 48 hours prior to the meeting to inform us of your particular needs and to determine if accommodation is feasible.

JULY 7



Costco Gas Station at
2200 E. Willow Street

CITY OF SIGNAL HILL

2175 Cherry Avenue ♦ Signal Hill, CA 90755-3799

PROCEDURES RELATIVE TO PUBLIC HEARINGS/WORKSHOPS

1. At the request of the Mayor/Chair, the City Clerk/Secretary reports on the Form of Notice given:
 - a. Notice was published in the *Signal Tribune* newspaper on July 3, 2015 per Gov't Code §65091(a)(4).
 - b. Notice was posted in accordance with Signal Hill Municipal Code Section 1.08.010 on July 3, 2015.
 - c. Notice was mailed to property owners within a 300' radius on July 3, 2015.
2. Mayor/Chair asks for a staff report, which shall be included in written materials presented to the City Council/Commission so that they can be received into evidence by formal motion.

In addition, the staff report shall include the following:

- a. Summarize the resolution/ordinance;
- b. The specific location of the property, and/or use, the surrounding properties;
- c. The criteria of the Code which applies to the pending application; and
- d. The recommendation of the Council/Commission and/or other legislative body of the City and staff recommendation.

3. Mayor/Chair declares the public hearing open.
4. Mayor/Chair invites those persons who are in favor of the application to speak.
5. Mayor/Chair invites those persons who are in opposition to the application to speak.
6. Applicant or their representative is provided a brief rebuttal period.
7. Mayor/Chair declares the public hearing closed.
8. Discussion by Council/Commission only.
9. City Attorney reads title of resolutions and/or ordinances.
10. City Clerk/Secretary conducts Roll Call vote.



CITY OF SIGNAL HILL

2175 Cherry Avenue • Signal Hill, CA 90755-3799

July 14, 2015

AGENDA ITEM

**TO: HONORABLE CHAIR
AND MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION**

**FROM: SELENA ALANIS
ASSOCIATE PLANNER**

**SUBJECT: PUBLIC HEARING – AMENDMENT TO CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT
FOR COSTCO GAS STATION AT 2200 E. WILLOW STREET**

Summary:

The applicant, Costco Wholesale, is requesting approval to extend gas station hours of operation to 5:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. seven days a week. The project's Conditional Use Permit currently restricts hours of operation at the gas station to 6:00 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. Monday through Friday and 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on weekends.

Recommendation:

Waive further reading and adopt the following resolution, entitled:

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF SIGNAL HILL, CALIFORNIA, RECOMMENDING CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL OF AN AMENDMENT TO CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT 13-01, A REQUEST TO EXTEND THE HOURS OF OPERATION FOR THE GASOLINE SERVICE STATION AT 2200 E. WILLOW STREET IN THE SP-1, TOWN CENTER EAST SPECIFIC PLAN, ZONING DISTRICT

Background:

In 1986, the City approved plans for an 114,400 sq. ft. Price Club on an approximately 10.7-acre parcel on Willow Street, west of Junipero Avenue. At the time, Price Club was a big box/warehouse store pioneer distinguished by its membership and cash-and-carry (cash only) business model. The project served as the anchor tenant for the Town Center East retail center when it opened on November 24, 1986.

In 1993, Price Club merged with Costco. In that same year, the City approved a 1,256 sq. ft. addition providing a food service kitchen and outdoor dining area. These improvements were completed in March, 1994.

In 1996, the City approved a 22,040 sq. ft. addition providing additional retail floor area and relocating the delivery truck loading area. These improvements were completed in February, 1997.

On June 11, 2013, the Planning Commission conducted a public workshop to review preliminary plans for the gas station (Attachment A). After discussion, the Commission instructed staff to augment future noticing efforts by including the adjacent tenants at Town Center East and to schedule the item for a future public hearing. The vote was 4/0, with Commissioner Murphy recusing herself from participation as her residence is within close proximity of the project.

On August 13, 2013, the Planning Commission conducted a public hearing for the project (Attachment B). The Commission approved the Site Plan and Design Review for the project and recommended City Council approval of the related Mitigated Negative Declaration, Zoning Ordinance Amendment and Conditional Use Permit with a 3/0 vote. Commissioner Benson was absent and Commissioner Murphy again recused herself.

On September 3, 2013, the City Council conducted a public hearing for the project (Attachment C). Notice was distributed to property owners within 300 feet of the subject site as well as nearby tenants at Town Center East. Seven members of the public commented on the project; six were in support and one was against the project. The City Council approved the related Mitigated Negative Declaration, Zoning Ordinance Amendment and Conditional Use Permit with a 4/0 vote. Council Member Hansen was absent. Conditions of note contained in the Conditional Use Permit included:

- **Condition #14 – Traffic/Circulation Re-evaluation.** To address concerns about congestion Costco was required to perform a traffic evaluation after one year of operations to review internal circulation, queue and the main driveway function and make changes to improve conditions, if warranted.
- **Condition #15 – Circulation Signage.** Costco was required to provide directional signage to direct traffic towards the gas station entrance and reduce vehicles from using the drive aisle directly in front of the Town Center East businesses.
- **Condition #18 – Community Meeting.** An annual meeting to ensure the neighbors have a forum to comment on impacts from the gas station or other operations and to provide Costco with an opportunity to respond in advance of the annual review of the Conditional Use Permit.

On May 20, 2014, construction of the gas station began. On August 21, 2014, the gas station opened for business. On November 17, 2014, the annual inspection was

completed and the facility was found to be operating consistent with the conditions of the Conditional Use Permit.

On February 12, 2015, six months after the gas station opened, a community meeting was held at the Willow Ridge Condominiums. Fourteen residents along with City and Costco staff attended the meeting. Items discussed included:

- Costco's traffic engineer reported that the trip generation and circulation patterns at the gas station were observed as required by the Conditional Use Permit and that the facility was operating as expected. She noted that improvements could be made at the gas station exit at the Dawson driveway and that the improvements would be installed by Costco in the near future (since completed).
- No specific feedback about gas station operations was received.
- Several comments related to the warehouse operations were voiced:
 - Litter concerns especially along Junipero Avenue; and
 - Noise complaints related to the parking lot sweeper, tree trimming, tire center and temporary construction (since completed).

At the community meeting, Costco staff indicated they would like to extend hours of operation to 5:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. seven days a week as the company was seeking to harmonize gas station hours nationally. The residents at the meeting did not express any objections at the time. City staff indicated that an amendment to the Conditional Use Permit would be required.

Analysis:

When the Conditional Use Permit application for the gas station was processed, Costco elected to limit hours of operation to weekdays 6:00 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. and weekends 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. The intent was to demonstrate that the operations would not negatively affect neighbors before seeking to expand hours of operations to the corporate standards.

Based on the lack of concerns voiced at the community meeting, Costco is proposing to expand hours of operation to 5:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. seven days a week. The hours of operation will now be consistent with other Costco gas stations in the region. The amendment would change Condition #8 to read:

8. *The gas station hours of operation shall be from 5:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m. seven days a week.*

Staff mailed a notice of the public hearing to property owners within 300 feet of the subject site along with tenants of Town Center East. No comments have been received. No other operational changes or amendments to the Conditional Use Permit are proposed. It is also important to note that the conditions regarding Costco's obligations

Public Hearing - Costco Fuel Facility

Revised Hours of Operations

July 14, 2015

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to monitor circulation at the Dawson Avenue driveway and conduct an annual community meeting have been retained.

Approved:

Scott Charney

Attachments



Attachment A
Attachments to Staff Report
not provided

CITY OF SIGNAL HILL

2175 Cherry Avenue • Signal Hill, CA 90755-3799

June 11, 2013

AGENDA ITEM

**TO: HONORABLE CHAIR
AND MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION**

**FROM: SCOTT CHARNEY
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR**

SUBJECT: WORKSHOP – COSTCO GAS STATION AT 2200 E. WILLOW STREET

Summary:

The applicant, Costco Wholesale, is requesting a workshop review of preliminary plans to add a gas station at the existing Costco retail store located at 2200 E. Willow Street in the SP-1, Town Center Specific Plan zoning district. The 16 pump facility is proposed on the western portion of the site (Attachment A).

Recommendation:

Receive public comment and provide direction as deemed appropriate.

Background:

The Planning Commission has not reviewed the gas station proposal.

In 1986, the City approved plans for a 114,400 sq. ft. Price Club on an approximately 10.7-acre parcel on Willow Street, west of Junipero Avenue. At the time, Price Club was a big box/warehouse store pioneer that was distinguished by its membership and cash-and-carry (cash only) business model. The project served as the anchor tenant for the Town Center East retail center when it opened on November 24, 1986.

In 1993, Price Club merged with Costco. In that same year, the City approved a 1,256 sq. ft. addition providing a food service kitchen and outdoor dining area. These improvements were completed in March, 1994.

In 1996, the City approved a 22,040 sq. ft. addition providing additional retail floor area and relocating the delivery truck loading area. These improvements were completed in February, 1997.

Analysis:

Costco's business model has evolved over time. The company's current format features a larger floor area and a wider variety of accessory services such as gas stations than currently provided at the Signal Hill store. For comparison, the Costco in Lakewood is over 160,000 sq. ft. in size, approximately 14 percent larger than the 137,696 sq. ft. facility in Signal Hill. The applicant believes offering a full array of services is critical to the success of the local store. In addition, the City's sales tax consultant has indicated that Costco's with gas stations have 15-18 percent higher sales than those without gas stations (increase is attributable to sales of fuel and incremental increase in store sales).

It is important to note that expansion of the Signal Hill store is limited by a variety of constraints including:

- Steep slopes to the south;
- Previously abandoned oil wells scattered throughout the site;
- Multi-family residential to the east (Willow Ridge condominiums); and
- Need to maintain adequate parking.

The applicant has expressed interest in adding a gas station in the past but could not find an appropriate location given the constraints. However, Costco recently reached an agreement with the adjacent retail center to use a portion of their property to accommodate a gas station between the Wells Fargo stand-alone ATM at Town Center East and the main Costco driveway at Dawson Avenue.

The applicant has provided a letter summarizing the proposal (Attachment B). Key design features include:

- Four fueling islands with eight fuel dispensers providing 16 fueling positions.
- 32' x 120' canopy covering the fueling islands.
- Three underground fuel storage tanks (30,000-gallon capacity each).
- One underground additive storage tank (1,500-gallon capacity).
- 6' x 12' equipment control room.
- Four externally illuminated signs (one on each canopy elevation).

Key operational features include:

- Members-only access – membership card required to activate pumps.
- One-way traffic flow – all traffic will enter from the west and exit to the east.
- Self-service format – cashless operation (credit and debit cards only).

- No ancillary services – no repair bays, maintenance services or convenience store.
- Limited hours of operation – proposed weekday hours are 6:00 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. and weekend hours are 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
- Minimum of one staff person at all times to meet customer service needs as well as Americans with Disabilities Act and safety considerations.

Current Zoning

Gas station is not listed as a permitted use in the SP-1, Town Center Specific Plan. Accordingly, the applicant is proposing a zoning ordinance amendment to list gas station as a conditionally permitted use. The use has already been approved nearby at a high profile location in the Town Center West retail center (Chevron at 2599 Cherry Avenue operating subject to Conditional Use Permit 99-01).

Parking

Costco currently has parking for 642 vehicles and Town Center East has 801 parking spaces. The gas station will result in the removal of 119 parking spaces – 79 on the Costco site and 40 at the Town Center East site. Replacement parking is proposed on the Costco site – 72 new spaces will be provided resulting in a net loss of 7 spaces. The location of replacement spaces is called out on sheets C1 and C3 of the plans included with this report. No replacement parking is proposed for the Town Center East site. Although there is a loss of spaces at each site, the number of spaces provided meets or exceeds the City's requirement as shown below:

Site	Number of Required Spaces	Number of Existing Spaces	Number of Proposed Spaces
Costco	551	642	635
Town Center East	761	801	761

Traffic and Circulation

The applicant is currently preparing a traffic impact analysis for the project (to be distributed at the proposal's public hearing). However, the applicant has shared a number of traffic reports prepared for similar projects that demonstrate that Costco gas stations function a bit differently than traditional gas stations. Distinguishing characteristics include:

- Limited customer pool - membership restriction.
- Internal capture trips – a significant proportion of customers shop at the store and use the gas station during the same trip.
- Unique trip generation profile – warehouse-style format facilitates larger volume/lower frequency visits.

The City's Traffic Consultant has reviewed the site plan for circulation concerns. He has concluded that adequate traffic flow is provided although congestion is inevitable at the main driveway where traffic exiting the gas station will be concentrated. No feasible circulation alternatives were determined to be viable given site constraints.

Landscaping

Several islands of landscaping in the Costco parking lot will be eliminated to make way for replacement parking. The City's Landscape Consultant has reviewed the preliminary landscape plan (separate sheet contained with plans included with this report). He has prepared comments for Commission consideration (Attachment C). The primary concern is loss of relatively mature trees near the store entrance.

Neighborhood Outreach

Staff mailed a notice of the workshop to property owners within 300' of the subject site. One letter of support was received (Attachment D).

Interim Development Standards

There was a previously abandoned oil well in the vicinity of the proposed gas station. In accordance with the City's Interim Development Standards, the applicant located the well, surveyed its location and conducted a leak test. The well was not found to be leaking and a vent cone was installed which allows the project to move forward. The survey documents that the nearest structure to the well, the equipment room, is 50' away. This exceeds the minimum separation requirement of 10'.



Attachment B
Attachments to Staff Report
not provided

CITY OF SIGNAL HILL

2175 Cherry Avenue • Signal Hill, CA 90755-3799

August 13, 2013

AGENDA ITEM

**TO: HONORABLE CHAIR
AND MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION**

**FROM: SCOTT CHARNEY
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR**

**SUBJECT: PUBLIC HEARING – ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT AND
CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT FOR COSTCO GAS STATION AT 2198 E.
WILLOW STREET**

Summary:

The applicant, Costco Wholesale, is requesting approval to add a gas station at the existing Costco retail store located at 2200 E. Willow Street in the SP-1, Town Center Specific Plan zoning district. The 16 pump facility is proposed on the western portion of the site (Attachment A). The proposal requires the following entitlements:

- Zoning Ordinance Amendment – listing gas station as a conditionally permitted use in the SP-1 zoning district.
- Conditional Use Permit – regulating operations at the gas station.
- Site Plan and Design Review – for the pump placement, canopy design and canopy signs.

Recommendations:

- 1) Waive further reading and adopt the following resolutions, entitled:

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF SIGNAL HILL, CALIFORNIA, RECOMMENDING CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL OF MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION 08/02/13(1), RELATIVE TO ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT 13-03 CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT 13-01, AND SITE PLAN AND DESIGN REVIEW 13-03 FOR A COSTCO GAS STATION

2) Waive further reading and adopt the following resolutions, entitled:

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF SIGNAL HILL, CALIFORNIA, RECOMMENDING CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL OF ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT 13-03 AMENDING CHAPTER 20.40 SP-1 TOWN CENTER EAST SPECIFIC PLAN TO INCLUDE "GASOLINE SERVICE STATION" AS A CONDITIONALLY PERMITTED USE

3) Waive further reading and adopt the following resolutions, entitled:

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF SIGNAL HILL, CALIFORNIA, RECOMMENDING CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL OF CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT 13-01, A REQUEST TO OPERATE A GASOLINE SERVICE STATION AT 2198 E. WILLOW STREET IN THE SP-1, TOWN CENTER EAST SPECIFIC PLAN, ZONING DISTRICT

4) Waive further reading and adopt the following resolutions, entitled:

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF SIGNAL HILL, CALIFORNIA, APPROVING SITE PLAN AND DESIGN REVIEW 13-03, FOR A 16 PUMP RETAIL GAS STATION LOCATED AT 2198 E. WILLOW STREET ON THE WESTERN PORTION OF THE EXISTING COSTCO RETAIL STORE SITE

Background:

In 1986, the City approved plans for a 114,400 sq. ft. Price Club on an approximately 10.7-acre parcel on Willow Street, west of Junipero Avenue. At the time, Price Club was a big box/warehouse store pioneer that was distinguished by its membership and cash-and-carry (cash only) business model. The project served as the anchor tenant for the Town Center East retail center when it opened on November 24, 1986.

In 1993, Price Club merged with Costco. In that same year, the City approved a 1,256 sq. ft. addition providing a food service kitchen and outdoor dining area. These improvements were completed in March, 1994.

In 1996, the City approved a 22,040 sq. ft. addition providing additional retail floor area and relocating the delivery truck loading area. These improvements were completed in February, 1997.

On June 11, 2013, the Planning Commission conducted a public workshop on preliminary plans (Attachment B). Two members of the public spoke in support of the project and none in opposition. After discussion, the Commission directed the applicant to prepare plans for a public hearing with a 4-0 vote. Commissioner Murphy had

recused herself from participation as her residence is within close proximity of the project.

Analysis:

Costco has made the following minor revisions to the plans since the previous workshop:

- Mitigation measures related to traffic impacts.
- Incorporated infiltration devices to address water quality impacts.

Traffic and Circulation

The applicant prepared a traffic impact analysis for the project (included as attachment to Mitigated Negative Declaration). The analysis was prepared by applying a 2% growth factor to the existing traffic volumes in addition to the expected site generated traffic. Findings of note include:

- All of the study intersections continue to operate at an acceptable level of service, with the exception of the Willow Street/Cherry Avenue intersection. The Willow Street/Cherry Avenue intersection was found to drop to a Level of Service "E" during the weekday p.m. peak hour under 2014 total traffic conditions.
 - A mitigation measure requires payment of a fee for future striping of dual northbound left-turn lanes at the Willow Street and Cherry Avenue intersection. The improvement will allow more time to be allocated to the southbound left-turn movement.
- The Willow Street and Dawson Avenue intersection was found to operate at an acceptable level of service, however, mitigation measures are included to increase the efficiency of the intersection by:
 - Minimizing the existing "dip" and grade differential by re-grading the Costco driveway access approach and drive aisle.
 - Increase driveway capacity by re-striping to designate three lanes – one lane for incoming traffic and two for outbound traffic (an exclusive left-turn lane and a shared through/right-turn lane on Willow Street).

Some parking spaces will be removed on-site to accommodate the gas station. However, additional parking spaces are proposed to be added in other locations on the site. Overall, there will be a net loss of 11 parking stalls on site. The parking spaces that will be lost are currently designated as compact and the replacement parking will be standard sized. Although there is a loss of parking spaces at the site, the number of spaces provided still meets or exceeds the City's requirement therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

Water Quality

In December 2012, the Regional Water Quality Board adopted a new MS4 Permit, which requires projects to retain on-site the Stormwater Quality Design Volume. However, since the project is a gas station and hazardous substances are stored underground, pollutant mobilization is a concern and infiltration is technically infeasible. Therefore, the fueling area will be up graded to prevent the run-on of stormwater, covered by a canopy that extends beyond the fueling area grade breaks and will drain into a separate line that goes through an oil water separator and then into the sewer.

To comply with Low Impact Development standards and the new MS4 stormwater regulations, a Filterra Stormwater Bioretention Filtration System is proposed for the parking lot areas (Attachment C). The Filterra system has been used at EDCO and Applebee's. In this case, a minimum of two devices will be installed to capture incoming runoff, which goes through a series of filters and chambers to remove nitrate, copper, zinc, oils and grease, bacteria, total suspended solids and turbidity before it outflows.

Zoning Ordinance Amendment

Gas station is not listed as a permitted use in the SP-1, Town Center Specific Plan. Accordingly, the applicant is proposing a zoning ordinance amendment to list gas station as a conditionally permitted use. The use has already been approved nearby at a high profile location in the Town Center West retail center (Chevron at 2599 Cherry Avenue operating subject to Conditional Use Permit 99-01).

Conditional Use Permit

Proposed CUP conditions include:

- Self-service format – cashless operation (credit and debit cards only).
- No ancillary services – no repair bays, maintenance services or convenience store.
- Limited hours of operation – proposed weekday hours are 6:00 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. and weekend hours are 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
- Minimum of one staff person at all times to meet customer service needs as well as Americans with Disabilities Act and safety considerations.
- The area surrounding the gas station, including the parking lot, shall be kept free of weeds and trash.
- The business operation shall meet all code requirements of the City of Signal Hill, Los Angeles County Fire Department, South Coast Air Quality Management District Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, Environmental Programs Division and all other applicable agencies.

Neighborhood Outreach

Staff mailed a notice of the public hearing to property owners within 300 feet of the subject site. Two letters were received after the public workshop, raising concerns primarily focused on traffic impacts (Attachment D). A representative of Costco did contact Mr. Decker to discuss his concerns.

Integrating pedestrian access from the Costco store to the adjacent Town Center East development was analyzed. Encouraging pedestrians to walk from the Costco store, across the loading dock area where large trucks routinely maneuvering, would create a safety hazard and is not considered feasible. Pedestrian walkways to the site from Willow and sidewalks along Willow are currently provided.

Attachments



Attachment C
Attachments to Staff Report
not provided

CITY OF SIGNAL HILL

2175 Cherry Avenue • Signal Hill, CA 90755-3799

September 3, 2013

AGENDA ITEM

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR
AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: SCOTT CHARNEY
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: PUBLIC HEARING – INTRODUCTION OF A ZONING ORDINANCE
AMENDMENT AND CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT FOR COSTCO GAS
STATION AT 2198 E. WILLOW STREET

Summary:

The applicant, Costco Wholesale, is requesting approval to add a gas station at the existing Costco retail store location at 2200 E. Willow Street in the SP-1, Town Center Specific Plan zoning district. The 16 pump facility is proposed on the western portion of the site (Attachment A). The proposal requires the following entitlements:

- Zoning Ordinance Amendment – listing gas station as a conditionally permitted use in the SP-1 zoning district.
- Conditional Use Permit (CUP) – regulating operations at the gas station.

Recommendations:

- 1) Waive further reading and adopt the following resolution, entitled:

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SIGNAL HILL, CALIFORNIA, APPROVING MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION 08/02/13(1), RELATIVE TO ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT 13-03, CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT 13-01, AND SITE PLAN AND DESIGN REVIEW 13-03 FOR A COSTCO GAS STATION

2) Waive further reading and introduce the following ordinance, entitled:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SIGNAL HILL, CALIFORNIA, APPROVING ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT 13-03 AMENDING CHAPTER 20.40 SP-1 TOWN CENTER EAST SPECIFIC PLAN TO INCLUDE "GASOLINE SERVICE STATION" AS A CONDITIONALLY PERMITTED USE

3) Waive further reading and adopt the following resolution, entitled:

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SIGNAL HILL, CALIFORNIA, APPROVING CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT 13-01, A REQUEST TO OPERATE A GASOLINE SERVICE STATION AT 2198 E. WILLOW STREET IN THE SP-1, TOWN CENTER EAST SPECIFIC PLAN, ZONING DISTRICT

Fiscal Impact:

The proposed gas station will generate sales tax paid annually to the City's general fund. The City's sales tax consultant has indicated that Costco stores with gas stations have 15-18 percent higher sales than those without gas stations (increase is attributable to sales of fuel and incremental increase in store sales).

Background:

In 1986, the City approved plans for a 114,400 sq. ft. Price Club on an approximately 10.7-acre parcel on Willow Street, west of Junipero Avenue. At the time, Price Club was a big box/warehouse store pioneer distinguished by its membership and cash-and-carry (cash only) business model. The project served as the anchor tenant for the Town Center East retail center when it opened on November 24, 1986.

In 1993, Price Club merged with Costco. In that same year, the City approved a 1,256 sq. ft. addition providing a food service kitchen and outdoor dining area. These improvements were completed in March, 1994.

In 1996, the City approved a 22,040 sq. ft. addition providing additional retail floor area and relocating the delivery truck loading area. These improvements were completed in February, 1997.

On June 11, 2013, the Planning Commission conducted a public workshop on preliminary plans for the gas station. Notice had been distributed to property owners within 300 feet of the subject site consistent with provisions of the Municipal Code. One letter of support was received in response to the notice (Attachment B). At the workshop, two members of the public spoke in support of the project and none in opposition. After discussion, the Commission instructed staff to augment future noticing efforts by including the adjacent tenants at Town Center East and to schedule the item

for a future public hearing. The vote was 4-0, with Commissioner Murphy recusing herself from participation as her residence is within close proximity of the project.

On August 13, 2013, the Planning Commission conducted a public hearing on the project. Notice was distributed to property owners within 300 feet of the subject site as well as nearby tenants at Town Center East. Two letters were received from Willow Ridge residents identifying concerns about the proposal (Attachments C and D). The issues identified included:

- Traffic;
- Environmental concerns;
- Impacts to nearby businesses; and
- Loss of trees and landscaped islands to make way for replacement parking spaces.

One of the authors, Mr. Decker, spoke during the public hearing. In addition, Mr. Jeffrey, also a Willow Ridge resident, spoke about traffic conflicts in the center turn lane on Junipero Avenue pitting customers turning left out of the Costco driveway against residents turning left into the Willow Ridge driveway. After consideration of the distance between the gas station and the condominiums and proposed conditions, the Commission approved the Site Plan and Design Review for the project and recommended City Council approval of the related Mitigated Negative Declaration, Zoning Ordinance Amendment and Conditional Use Permit with a 3-0 vote. Commissioner Benson was absent and Commissioner Murphy again recused herself.

At the City Council meeting on August 20, 2013, Mr. Decker spoke about his concerns regarding the project during public business from the floor (Attachment E).

Analysis:

Costco's business model has evolved over time. The company's current format features a larger floor area and a wider variety of accessory services such as gas stations than currently provided at the Signal Hill store. For comparison, the Costco in Lakewood is over 160,000 sq. ft. in size, approximately 14 percent larger than the 137,696 sq. ft. facility in Signal Hill. The applicant believes offering a full array of services is critical to the success of the local store.

It is important to note that expansion of the Signal Hill store is limited by a variety of constraints including:

- Steep slopes to the south;
- Previously abandoned oil wells scattered throughout the site;
- Willow Ridge condominiums to the east; and
- Need to maintain adequate parking.

The applicant has expressed interest in adding a gas station in the past but could not find an appropriate location given the constraints. However, Costco recently reached an agreement with the adjacent retail center to use a portion of their property to accommodate a gas station between the Wells Fargo stand-alone ATM at Town Center East and the main Costco driveway at Dawson Avenue.

Key design features include:

- Four fueling islands with eight fuel dispensers providing 16 fueling positions;
- 32' x 120' canopy covering the fueling islands;
- Three underground fuel storage tanks (30,000-gallon capacity each);
- One underground additive storage tank (1,500-gallon capacity);
- 6' x 12' equipment control room; and
- Four externally illuminated signs (one on each canopy elevation).

Key operational features include:

- Members-only access – membership card required to activate pumps;
- One-way traffic flow – all traffic will enter from the west and exit to the east;
- Self-service format – cashless operation (credit and debit cards only); and
- Maximizing parking opportunities – the gas station will result in the removal of 110 parking spaces – 70 on the Costco site and 40 at the Town Center East site. 57 replacement spaces are proposed on the Costco site resulting in a net loss of 13 spaces. No replacement parking is proposed for the Town Center East site. Although there is a loss of spaces at each site, the number of spaces on the Costco parcel will exceed City standards and that at Town Center East will meet the standard as shown below.

Site	Number of Required Spaces	Number of Existing Spaces	Number of Proposed Spaces
Costco	551	639	626
Town Center East	761	801	761

Zoning Ordinance Amendment

Gas station is not listed as a permitted use in the SP-1, Town Center East Specific Plan. Accordingly, the applicant is proposing a Zoning Ordinance Amendment to list gas station as a conditionally permitted use. The use has already been approved nearby at a high profile location in the Town Center West retail center (Chevron at 2599 Cherry Avenue operating subject to CUP 99-01).

Conditional Use Permit

The Planning Commission has recommended conditions including:

- No ancillary services – no repair bays, maintenance services or convenience store.
- Limited hours of operation – proposed weekday hours are 6:00 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. and weekend hours are 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
- Minimum of one staff person at all times to meet customer service needs as well as Americans with Disabilities Act and safety considerations.
- The area surrounding the gas station, including the parking lot, shall be kept free of weeds and trash.
- The business operation shall meet all code requirements of the City of Signal Hill, Los Angeles County Fire Department, South Coast Air Quality Management District, Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, Environmental Programs Division and all other applicable agencies.

It is important to note that current retail operations are not regulated by a CUP.

Responses to Public Comments

Costco and City staff have worked together to address the public's concerns. Many of the issues were addressed at the Planning Commission level (included as Site Plan & Design Review conditions of approval or as mitigation measures). Since the Planning Commission public hearing, Costco has agreed to 5 new CUP conditions to further address outstanding concerns as described below (new CUP conditions are in bold below).

Traffic	
Issue	Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Congestion at the Willow Street and Dawson Avenue driveway entrance/exit.	<p>A traffic impact analysis has been prepared for the project (included as attachment to Mitigated Negative Declaration) and mitigation measures include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Removal of the existing “dip” and grade differential at the Willow Street and Dawson Avenue driveway to increase the efficiency of the intersection.• Increase the driveway capacity by re-striping to designate three lanes – one lane for incoming traffic and two for outbound traffic (an exclusive left-turn lane and a shared through/right-turn lane on Willow Street).

Traffic (cont.)	
Issue	Response
	<p>New CUP Condition #14: On or around one year after the opening of the gas station facility, Costco shall perform a traffic evaluation by a traffic engineer that reviews internal circulation, queue and the main driveway function. The traffic study will be reviewed by the Public Works Director and all reviews shall be placed in the file as a public document.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Conflicting movements between customers turning left out of the Costco driveway onto Junipero Avenue and residents exiting the Willow Ridge condominiums.	<p>The traffic impact analysis did not identify significant impacts related to the Costco driveway and Junipero Avenue or Combellack Drive. The concerns raised are existing conditions and the City's Public Works Department verified the conditions and has agreed to make improvements including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">A new striping plan for Junipero Avenue to address any conflicting turn movements at the Costco driveway and Junipero Avenue.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Increased traffic on Combellack Drive.	<p>The concerns raised are existing conditions and the City's Public Works Department verified the conditions and has agreed to make improvements including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Additional red curb striping along Combellack Drive to increase visibility.
Environmental Concerns	
Issue	Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Air quality - vapor emissions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Guidelines in the California Air Resource Board Handbook suggest avoiding the location of a major gas station within 300 feet of any residential uses because of toxic air exposure risks. Willow Ridge is over 700 feet away from the gas station exceeding the CARB guidelines and will include a vapor recovery system. It is not likely that evaporative vapor emissions would be carried more than 300 feet.

Environmental Concerns (cont.)	
Issue	Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air quality - idling vehicles. 	<p>The CARB and the South Coast Air Quality Management District are responsible to developing clean air plans and guidelines. CARB does not have guidelines pertaining to vehicles idling at a gas station.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noise. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The noise generated from the gas station is considered normal business activity and noise will be minimized given the distance between the gas station and Willow Ridge. In addition, to minimize noise from warehouse store employees before and after business hours Costco employees will be encouraged to park to the west and behind the warehouse store.
Impacts to Nearby Businesses	
<p>In response to the public notice staff received an inquiry from the owner of Encore Hair Studio. Staff met on-site with the business owner to review her concerns.</p>	
Issue	Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in traffic in the drive aisle in front of her salon. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New CUP Condition #15: Costco has included directional signage at the first drive aisle to direct traffic towards the gas station entrance and reduce vehicles from using the drive aisle directly in front of the businesses.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of direct pedestrian connectivity between Costco and Town Center East. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The most direct pedestrian route between Costco and Town Center East is in front of the loading area. Due to the grade changes, drive aisles and loading dock area locations there are limited options to dedicate a pedestrian path of travel connecting the Costco store and adjacent Town Center East businesses. Adding a pedestrian path across loading docks increases the chance of an accident between trucks and pedestrians and is not recommended. It is important to note, there is an existing sidewalk along Willow Street that pedestrians may use to get to the Town Center East parking lot and businesses.

Impacts to Nearby Businesses (cont.)	
Issue	Response
• Loss of parking.	• Some parking spaces will be removed on-site to accommodate the gas station. However, additional parking spaces are proposed to be added in other locations on the site. The parking spaces that will be lost are currently designated as compact and the replacement parking will be standard sized. Although there is a net loss of 13 parking spaces at the sites the number of spaces provided still meets or exceeds the City's requirement.
Loss of Landscaping	
Issue	Response
• Loss of trees and landscaped islands to make way for replacement parking spaces.	• New CUP Conditions #16 & 17: Costco has modified the landscape plans to include additional diamond planters with trees and increase the size of some of the existing planters and trees to make them more viable. The changes to the landscape plan will result in a zero net loss of trees.

In addition, Costco has agreed to a condition allowing the City to coordinate an annual community meeting to provide the public with a forum to comment on impacts from the gas station or other operations and give Costco the opportunity to respond in advance of the annual review of the CUP (**new CUP Condition #18**).

Approved by:

Kenneth C. Farfsing

Attachments

RESOLUTION NO. _____

**A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF
THE CITY OF SIGNAL HILL, CALIFORNIA,
RECOMMENDING CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL OF AN
AMENDMENT TO CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT 13-01, A
REQUEST TO EXTEND THE HOURS OF OPERATION
FOR THE GASOLINE SERVICE STATION AT 2200 E.
WILLOW STREET IN THE SP-1, TOWN CENTER EAST
SPECIFIC PLAN, ZONING DISTRICT**

WHEREAS, the applicant, Costco Wholesale, submitted an application to amend Conditional Use Permit 13-01, for the gasoline service station at 2200 E. Willow Street to extend the hours of operation to 5:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. seven days a week; and

WHEREAS, in 1986, the Planning Commission approved the site plan review for a 114,400 sq. ft. Price Club building on an approximately 10.7-acre parcel on Willow Street and Cherry Avenue, which was subsequently expanded; and

WHEREAS, in 2013, the City Council approved Conditional Use Permit 13-01, Zoning Ordinance Amendment 13-03, and related Mitigated Negative Declaration to amendment to the Town Center East Specific Plan (SP-1) to include gasoline service station as a conditionally permitted use and the Planning Commission approved the Site Plan and Design Review to construct 16 fueling positions, a canopy, three 30,000-gallon underground gasoline storage tanks, a 1,500 gallon additive tank and controller enclosure; and

WHEREAS, in August of 2014, construction of the gas station was completed and the gas station opened for business for customer use; and

WHEREAS, in January of 2015, a traffic study was completed and found that the gas station operated as expected during the non-peak and peak periods; and

WHEREAS, on February 12, 2015, six months after the gas station opened, a community meeting was held to discuss the gas station operations. Fourteen residents along with City and Costco staff attended the meeting. At the meeting, Costco indicated they would like to extend hours of operation to 5:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. seven days a week. The residents at the meeting did not express any objections to extending the gas station hours of operation; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Signal Hill Municipal Code Chapter 20.64, entitled "Uses Subject to Conditional Use Permits," the proposed revisions to hours of operations at the gas station is properly a matter for Planning Commission review and recommendation to the City Council for approval; and

WHEREAS, on July 3, 2015, notice of a Planning Commission public hearing to be held on July 14, 2015 regarding the subject project was mailed to all property owners within 300 feet of the subject property, was published in the Signal Tribune newspaper and was posted in accordance with S.H.M.C. Section 1.08.010; and

WHEREAS, on July 14, 2015, the Planning Commission held a duly noticed public hearing and all interested parties were given an opportunity to be heard regarding the project; and

WHEREAS, the project is Categorically Exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to Section 15301, Existing Facilities of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines; and

WHEREAS, the City has incorporated all comments received and responses thereto.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Planning Commission of the City of Signal Hill, California, does hereby find as follows:

1a. The proposed project, subject to the attached conditions, is in conformance with the zoning ordinance, other ordinances and regulations of the City, and the following Goals and Policies of the City of Signal Hill's General Plan Element:

LAND USE ELEMENT GOAL 1 – Manage growth to achieve a well-balanced land use pattern that accommodates existing and future needs for housing, commercial, and industrial land, open space, and community facilities and services, while maintaining a healthy, diversified economy adequate to provide future city revenues.

Land Use Policy 1.7 – Broaden the City's tax base by attracting commercial and industrial development to the City which will provide economic and employment benefits to the community while ensuring compatibility with other general plan goals and policies.

Finding regarding Policy 1.7 – Extending the hours of operation for the gas station will allow for additional sales tax to be collected attributed to sales of fuel and an incremental increase in store sales.

Land Use Policy 1.8 – Focus major commercial activity into economically viable and attractive centers. Concentrate retail, office and complementary uses in or near the City's Town Center. Support the Spring Street corridor as secondary commercial location.

Finding regarding Policy 1.8 – The Costco gas station facility is located within Town Center East and complements the existing Costco warehouse retail facility.

LAND USE ELEMENT GOAL 3 – Assure a safe, healthy, and aesthetically pleasing community for residents and businesses.

Land Use Policy 3.1 – Mitigate traffic congestion and unacceptable levels of noise, odors, dust and glare which affect residential areas and sensitive receptors.

Finding regarding Policy 3.1 – The gas station is located away from Willow Ridge, the adjacent residential development, to mitigate traffic, noise, odor, dust and glare impacts to sensitive receptors.

Land Use Policy 3.13 – Reinforce Signal Hill's image and community identity within the greater Long Beach Metropolitan area.

Finding regarding Policy 3.13 – The gas station complements the other retail and commercial uses in the center, surrounding neighborhood and City as a whole. The gas station reinforces

Signal Hill's image as a destination for a variety of nationally recognized retail establishments.

1b. The site for the proposed use is adequate in size and shape to accommodate operation of a gas station.

2. The streets surrounding the site for the proposed use and related to the Streets and Highways Element of the General Plan are adequate in width and pavement type to carry the quantity and type of traffic generated by the proposed use.

3. The expanded hours of operation will have no adverse effect on abutting property or the permitted use with the implementation of the annual public community meeting to discuss operations of the gas station and warehouse facility and conditions attached hereto.

4. The conditions attached hereto are deemed necessary to protect the public health, safety, and general welfare.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Planning Commission of the City of Signal Hill, California, does hereby recommend City Council approval of amendment to Conditional Use Permit 13-01, subject to the Conditions of Approval attached hereto (Attachment A).

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED, at a regular meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Signal Hill on this 14th day of July, 2015.

JANE FALLON
CHAIR

ATTEST:

SCOTT CHARNEY
COMMISSION SECRETARY

STATE OF CALIFORNIA)
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES) ss.
CITY OF SIGNAL HILL)

I, SCOTT CHARNEY, Secretary of the Planning Commission of the City of Signal Hill, California, hereby certify that Resolution No. _____ was adopted at a regular meeting of the Planning Commission held on the 14th day of July, 2015 by the following vote.

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

SCOTT CHARNEY
COMMISSION SECRETARY

AMENDED CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT 13-01
Recommended Conditions of Approval

Project: **GASOLINE SERVICE STATION WITHIN TOWN CENTER EAST
IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE EXISTING COSTCO WAREHOUSE**

Location: **2200 E. WILLOW STREET**

Applicant: **COSTCO WHOLESALE**

1. The applicant shall agree to defend, indemnify and hold harmless, the City of Signal Hill, its agents, officers and employees from any claim, action or proceeding against the City of Signal Hill or its agents, officers or employees to attach, set aside, void or annul, an approval of the City of Signal Hill, its legislative body, advisory agencies, or administrative officers concerning subject approval. The City of Signal Hill will promptly notify the applicant of any such claim, action or proceeding against the City of Signal Hill and the applicant, or owner, will either undertake defense of the matter and pay the City's associated legal costs, or will advance funds to pay for defense of the matter by the City Attorney. If the City of Signal Hill fails to promptly notify the applicant of any such claim, action or proceeding, or fails to cooperate fully in the defense, the applicant shall not thereafter be responsible to defend, indemnify or hold harmless the City of Signal Hill. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the City retains the right to settle or abandon the matter without the applicant's consent, but should it do so, the City shall waive the indemnification herein, except the City's decision to settle or abandon a matter following an adverse judgment or failure to appeal, shall not cause a waiver of the indemnification rights herein.
2. Approval shall be null and void if the structures associated with the subject Conditional Use Permit are not constructed within 540 days, starting from the date of issuance of the first building, grading or demolition permit unless a request for extension is requested and granted. The Conditional Use Permit shall become null and void if the Site Plan and Design Review approval expires.
3. The Community Development Department shall inspect the subject premises and report to the City Council on an annual basis regarding the applicant's compliance with these conditions. The City may add additional conditions, if necessary, or if any violations of these conditions have occurred, the Conditional Use Permit can be scheduled for revocation pursuant to Signal Hill Municipal Code 20.64.120 or other appropriate action.
4. The business operation shall meet all code requirements of the City of Signal Hill, Los Angeles County Fire Department, South Coast Air Quality Management District, Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, Environmental Programs Division, Los Angeles County Department of Weights and Measures and all other applicable agencies. No advertising material or signs shall be

painted, installed, erected or displayed related to this use without first obtaining the approvals required by Chapter 20.58 of the Signal Hill Municipal Code.

5. The area surrounding the gas station, including the parking lot, shall be kept free of weeds, debris and trash. The landscaped medians and plants in the NPDES devices shall be maintained and in good first class condition. Any missing, dead or damaged landscaping shall be replaced on a regular basis.
6. The operator shall provide trash receptacles at the pump islands. The number of receptacles shall be sufficient to meet demand and the applicant shall agree to provide additional receptacles if overflow conditions routinely occur.
7. Prior to the installation of any pay phones, vending machines or newspaper racks outside of the building, the applicant shall submit plans for Community Development Department review and approval.
8. The gas station hours of operation shall be from **5:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. seven days a week** ~~6:00 a.m. – 9:30 p.m. Monday through Friday and 6:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.~~
9. A trained "Costco Gasoline" employee shall be on the gas station site during all hours of operation.
10. Gas pumps shall be a self-serve format, allowing customers to directly operate the pumps using debit or credit cards (electronic pay point system) at the pump.
11. There shall be no ancillary services such as service bays, maintenance repairs or sundry sales at the gas station.
12. Downlights at the gas station canopy shall be recessed or flush with the canopy ceiling and maintained in working condition.
13. Costco store and gas station employees shall utilize the parking spaces located behind the warehouse store (to the south and west) to maintain customer use of the parking spaces in front of the store.
14. After six months, on or around one year after the opening of the gas station facility, Costco shall perform a traffic evaluation by a traffic engineer that reviews internal circulation, queue and the main driveway function. The traffic study will be reviewed by the Public Works Director and all reviews shall be placed in the file as a public document.
15. The Costco shall install and maintain directional signage for incoming traffic at the Dawson Avenue driveway to encourage customers to use the first drive aisle to get to the gas station, subject to the satisfaction of the Director of Community Development.

16. The Costco shall install and maintain landscaping consistent with the landscape plans reviewed by the Planning Commission. In addition, the applicant shall replace, install and maintain the diamond planters and trees to be consistent with the location, size and type of existing trees on-site (Exhibit A).
17. The landscaping shall be reviewed one year after installation. Landscaping must be maintained to the satisfaction of the Director of Community Development and the City's Landscape Architect. Any trees that are a part of the project that have died or are significantly damaged shall be replaced by Costco.
18. After six months, and on or around one year after the opening of the gas station facility, and annually thereafter, Costco shall hold a public community meeting to discuss operations of the gas station and warehouse facility and obtain input from the public regarding any impacts the facility may have on the community, or any other public concerns related to the facility. Should any member of the public provide a written request to the Director of Community Development for an additional public community meeting, which cannot be resolved by the Director and which in the opinion of the Director merits a public review process, then Costco shall hold an additional meeting. Costco shall hold at least one community meeting in any 12-month period. The Costco Warehouse Manager (or the Manager's designee) and the City's Director of Community Development (or the Director's designee) shall attend all such meetings. Issues discussed at such meetings shall be presented to the City Council as part of the CUP annual review, and the written report of same shall be kept in the City's files as a publicly available record.

The City shall prepare and issue the public notice for all such community meetings. The notice shall be mailed not less than ten days before the date set for the meeting to the Willow Ridge Homeowners Association and the adjacent property owner for the Town Center East. The HOA and adjacent property owner are responsible for notifying all interested parties and tenants of the upcoming meeting.

19. The applicant shall be furnished with this list of conditions and shall sign an acknowledgment of the fact that should they default on the above Conditions, the default shall constitute a violation of the permit and shall be cause for its revocation.

End of Conditions.

JULY 2



CITY OF SIGNAL HILL

2175 Cherry Avenue ♦ Signal Hill, CA 90755-3799

July 14, 2015

AGENDA ITEM

**TO: HONORABLE CHAIR
AND MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION**

**FROM: COLLEEN DOAN
SENIOR PLANNER**

**SUBJECT: DIRECTOR'S REPORT – WATER CONSERVATION & OPTIONS FOR
TURF REPLACEMENT ON RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES**

Summary:

Drought conditions in Southern California are recurring events. The State is in the fourth year of current drought conditions. Water conservation and water quality are a continued priority for the City. Recently the Governor issued an executive order mandating a further reduction in water use and the City has declared a level 2 water supply shortage. Data shows that more than half of outdoor water is used for turf, therefore many residents are replacing their turf with lower water use landscape materials. Staff will review the current code requirements for landscape and hardscape in residential yards and present options for regulating the proportions of hardscape to landscape materials.

Recommendation:

Provide direction as deemed appropriate.

Background:

Current Water Restrictions

In response to recurring water conservation and water quality concerns the City has adopted the following regulations and guidelines:

Year	Regulations/Guidelines	Description
2009	Water Conservation Program	Establish a water conservation and supply shortage program
2009	Water Conservation in Landscaping regulations	New development and large landscape regulations
2013	Low Impact Development (L.I.D.) regulations	Reduce stormwater runoff and protect water quality
2014	Level 1 Water Supply Shortage Reinstated	Restricts watering in outdoor landscape areas and excessive runoff
2014	Parkway Landscape Guidelines	Replacement of turf within the public right-of-way
2015	Level 2 Water Supply Shortage	Further restricts watering in outdoor landscape areas and excessive runoff

Analysis:

Landscape and Hardscape Regulations

The City's residential development regulations typically require a 20' building setback from the front property line, creating a large front yard. The front yard is required to be fully landscaped with the exception of driveways and walkways. The regulations do not specify the type of landscaping materials, but the overwhelming public preference has been turf. Driveways have minimal regulations but are typically located in the front setback and provide access to either a one or two car garage.



Setback = Front Yard



Typical Front Yards

Residential Regulations (including specific plans) – Turf not required

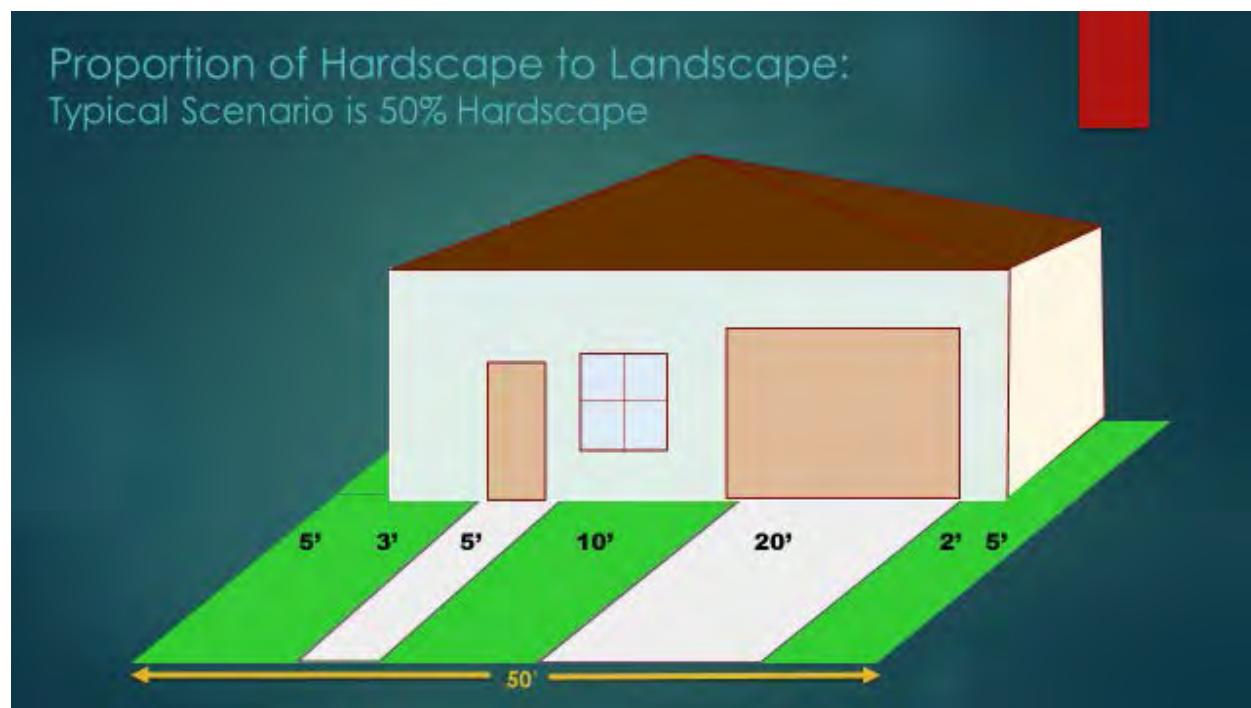
- 20 foot setbacks
- Shall be fully landscaped and irrigated
- No hardscape standards

Driveways (Residential and Commercial) – Allowed in setbacks and yards

- Yards shall extend the full depth and width of the lot and shall be open from ground to sky, however driveways and walkways are an exception
- No standards for driveway length or width
- No standards for permeable versus non-permeable materials

Proportion of Landscape to Hardscape

A typical residential property has a 50' wide frontage with a two car driveway and a walkway to the front door. Driveways and walkways are usually made of non-permeable hardscape material such as cement and make up approximately 50% of the property frontage.



The most extreme alternative for replacing turf in front yards is to replace the entire landscape area with non-permeable hardscape. This is not the most aesthetically pleasing alternative and it increases stormwater runoff. A more common scenario is to replace turf with a mix of alternative landscape and hardscape materials.

At the meeting staff will present the following topics for discussion:

- An overview of alternative landscape materials (plants, mulch, rock).
- An overview of hardscape materials (permeable and non-permeable).
- Scenarios for a mix of landscape and hardscape materials.
- Options for limiting the maximum allowed area for hardscape.

Approved:

Scott Charney

JULY 3



CITY OF SIGNAL HILL

2175 Cherry Avenue ♦ Signal Hill, CA 90755-3799

July 14, 2015

AGENDA ITEM

TO: HONORABLE CHAIR
AND MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

FROM: SELENA ALANIS
ASSOCIATE PLANNER

SUBJECT: CONFORMITY REPORT – REVISIONS TO THE BMW DEALERSHIP AT
1660 E. SPRING STREET

Summary:

The purpose of this report is to advise the Planning Commission of building elevation and floor plan modifications for the BMW automobile dealership which is currently under construction at 1660 E. Spring Street. The changes include addition of a 495 sq. ft. appraisal room at the west side of the building and other minor architectural changes. Staff reviewed the changes and determined that they do not result in significant changes in the appearance of the development and do not need review at a public hearing.

Recommendation:

Receive and file.

Background:

On April 8, 2014, the Planning Commission approved the Site Plan & Design Review for the new BMW automobile dealership at 1660 E. Spring Street. The plans included a 77,180 sq. ft. building for the sales area, showroom, parts storage, enclosed service area, repair shop and 338 parking spaces (Attachment A).

Analysis:

The applicant, AHT Architects for Sonic Automotive, proposed modifications to the previously approved elevations and floor plans (Attachment B). The modifications include:

- Addition of 495 sq. ft. drive-thru appraisal room at the west side of the building. The building materials and colors match the main building.
- New Appraisal sign above the drive-thru.
- Removal of 5 display car parking spaces at the west side of the building.
- Other minor architectural changes due to the plan check and construction process (Attachment C).

The appraisal room is a drive-thru facility where customers can drive their leased or pre-owned vehicle in and have it appraised by a sales person. The concept is that the interaction between the customer and the dealership is much improved when appraisals are conducted person-to-person rather than when the vehicle is driven away from the customer to conduct an appraisal. The applicant has indicated that the appraisal rooms have been successful at other dealerships, as it gives the customer the sense that they are part of the process.

Approved:

Scott Charney

Attachments



CITY OF SIGNAL HILL

2175 Cherry Avenue ♦ Signal Hill, CA 90755-3799

April 8, 2014

AGENDA ITEM

TO: HONORABLE CHAIR
AND MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

FROM: SELENA ALANIS
ASSISTANT PLANNER

SUBJECT: PUBLIC HEARING – NEW BMW DEALERSHIP AT 1660 E. SPRING STREET

Summary:

Sonic Automotive, Inc. is proposing to construct a BMW automobile sales and service facility at an approximate 5-acre site at the southeast corner of Spring Street and Walnut Avenue (Attachment A). The project will be located on the vacant parcel between the existing Nissan and Honda dealerships.

Recommendations:

- 1) Waive further reading and adopt the following resolution, entitled:

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF SIGNAL HILL, CALIFORNIA, ADOPTING NEGATIVE DECLARATION 03/14/14(1), RELATIVE TO SITE PLAN AND DESIGN REVIEW 14-01, ASSOCIATED WITH THE BMW AUTOMOBILE SALES AND SERVICE FACILITY AT 1660 E. SPRING STREET

- 2) Waive further reading and adopt the following resolution, entitled:

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF SIGNAL HILL, CALIFORNIA, APPROVING SITE PLAN AND DESIGN REVIEW 14-01, A REQUEST TO CONSTRUCT A 77,810 SQUARE FOOT AUTO SALES, SHOWROOM AND SERVICE FACILITY ON AN APPROXIMATE 5-ACRE SITE

LOCATED AT 1660 E. SPRING STREET IN THE SP-4, AUTO CENTER SPECIFIC PLAN, ZONING DISTRICT

Background:

In 1989, the Auto Center Specific Plan was adopted. The purpose was to guide the physical development of the Signal Hill Auto Center for factory-authorized automobile, truck and motorcycle sales and service facilities.

On November 14, 2006, the City Council and Redevelopment Agency approved a Disposition and Development Agreement (DDA) with CarMax Auto Superstores regarding the construction of an auto sales and service facility at the subject site.

On February 19, 2008, the Planning Commission held a public hearing and approved the Site Plan & Design Review for the CarMax dealership which consisted of a 20,470 sq. ft. building, car wash, fuel station and 600 parking spaces. The site plan was configured slightly differently than traditional dealerships, the sales display lot faced Spring Street, but customers could only gain access to the display lot by entering the site on Walnut Avenue or 29th Street, parking in the rear and then going through the showroom (Attachment B).

On March 18, 2008, the City Council approved two Zoning Ordinance Amendments and the Negative Declaration associated with the project:

- ZOA to change the designation from “GI, General Industrial” to the “SP-4, Auto Center Specific Plan” zoning district
- ZOA to listed *nationally franchised or operated* automobile, truck, motorcycle and other vehicle sales, service and related facilities as permitted uses in the Auto Center Specific Plan, consistent with CarMax’s business model (the previous code language referred to factory-authorized dealerships, CarMax focused on used cars and did not have any agreements with auto manufacturers).

The CarMax project was never constructed due to the economic downturn. Currently, the property is under the control of the City’s Successor Agency and Sonic Automotive has submitted an application for a new BMW dealership at the site.

Analysis:

Viable automobile dealerships have an adequate vehicle inventory on-site, with the goal being that a customer can arrive at the dealership, select a vehicle for purchase and drive-off the lot with it in the same day. Sonic Automotive operates the BMW and MINI dealerships at 2998 Cherry Avenue. The new dealership at 1660 E. Spring Street will allow BMW and MINI to expand their operations and vehicle inventory, as each manufacturer would have a dedicated site with expanded inventory. The expansion of the Auto dealerships will ensure long-term success of the Auto Center. The Auto Center is a cornerstone of the City’s economic development and vitality.

Site Plan

The project is consistent with the development standards of the Auto Center Specific Plan. The plans include:

- A 77,180 sq. ft. building
 - 31,996 sq. ft. of sales area and showroom
 - 10,656 sq. ft. of parts storage area
 - 35,158 sq. ft. of enclosed service/repair shop and car wash area
- 338 parking spaces
 - 176 parking spaces for sales vehicle display and vehicle inventory
 - 162 parking spaces for service, customers, and employees
- Future two-story parking structure and service area roof parking
 - 48,888 sq. ft. parking structure area
 - 169 approximately parking spaces within parking structure
 - 110 approximately parking spaces on the service area roof

Design Guidelines were established for the Auto Center to establish visual unity among the separate dealerships in the Auto Center. Several elements of the site plan incorporate features found throughout the Auto Center:

- Palm trees in the setbacks
- Decorative brick pavers on sidewalk along Spring Street (standard concrete sidewalk on Walnut Avenue and on 29th Street)
- Parking lot light fixtures matching those at the rest of the dealerships

Existing dealerships in the Auto Center use natural turf and palms in the landscaped setbacks. BMW is proposing the use of synthetic turf in part of the landscaped setbacks. Staff feels that use of synthetic turf may detract from the uniformity of the Auto Center when compared to the turf at other nearby dealerships. Staff has added Condition #11, requiring that the synthetic turf be changed to natural turf and that the final landscape plans meet the City's water conservation criteria. The City's Landscape Architect has completed a preliminary review of the proposed change to natural turf and found that the plans would still meet the City's water conservation criteria.

Design

The architectural treatment is a contemporary design which represents BMW's latest prototype building and is consistent with the design guidelines established for the Auto Center. Building features include:

- White smooth cement plaster finish
- Clear glass with grey tint windows on the front and side elevations
- Bone white metal coping and trim along the top of the building
- Solar shading louver panels to match the building
- Green design features (Attachment C)

Large-scale colored elevation and materials board will be available for review at the public hearing.

Signage

The sign program includes:

- One 25' tall pylon sign near the corner of Spring Street and Walnut Avenue. The background panel is white with an illuminated BMW logo on the top panel and Long Beach BMW and Signal Hill lettering on the bottom panel which will have decorative up lights
- One 2.5' x 30' internally illuminated wall sign on the front elevation with the BMW logo, 'i' electric vehicle logo, and Long Beach BMW lettering
- One 2' x 12.5' internally illuminated wall sign above the roll-up doors leading to the service bays identifying the service center with BMW logo

Sign locations are shown on Sheet 1.6 of plans and details are contained on Sheets 1.6 a, b, and c. The signage is subject to discretionary approval of the Commission. The precedent established for the signs approved at other dealership is that any reference to Long Beach must have a 'comparable' reference to Signal Hill or Signal Hill Auto Center. As proposed, the pylon sign includes a reference to Signal Hill, but the wall sign does not. Staff is recommending approval of the proposed signage, as the proposal is consistent with the Mercedes sign program (monument sign references Signal Hill Auto Center, but wall sign does not).

Environmental Review

The City prepared a Negative Declaration that identifies potential impacts, but the impacts are below the level significance. A traffic study was prepared by Gibson Transportation Consulting and indicated that with the future conditions (year 2016) and the operations of the project that the project is not anticipated to have a significant impact at any of the three study intersections and therefore no traffic mitigation measures are required.

Approved:

Scott Charney

Attachment B



① 3D Perspective View 1

LONG BEACH BMW

APPRAISAL ROOM STUDY
1660 SPRING ST. SIGNAL HILL, CA 90755

AHT
ARCHITECTS INC.

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06-22-2015



1 3D Perspective View 2


LONG BEACH BMW

APPRAISAL ROOM STUDY
1660 SPRING ST. SIGNAL HILL, CA 90755

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06-22-2015



PROJECT
LONG BEACH
BMW
NEW FACILITY
SUPPLEMENTAL

1660 SPRING ST.
 SIGNAL HILL, CA 90755

ARCHITECT

AHT
 ARCHITECTS INC.

2120 Wilshire
 Boulevard
 Suite 200
 Santa Monica
 California 90403
 310.453.4431

CONSULTANTS

CLIENT
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 6425 IDLENO ROAD
 BLDG. SUITE 205
 CHARLOTTE, NC 28212
 TEL: (704) 566-3980

ARCHITECT
 AHT ARCHITECTS
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 2120 WILSHIRE BLVD. SUITE 200
 SANTA MONICA, CA 90403
 TEL: (310) 453-4431
 FAX: (310) 829-5296

GENERAL CONTRACTOR
 KUNZIK AND SARA CONSTRUCTION
 ATTN: MIKE GOODJOHN
 1699 LA COSTA MEADOWS DR.
 SUITE 100
 SAN MARCOS, CA 90278
 TEL: (760) 591-310

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER
 GRIMM AND CHEN STRUCTURAL
 ATTN: JEFF CHEN
 17900 SKY PARK CIRCLE
 SUITE 100
 IRVINE, CA 92614
 TEL: (949) 250-3150

CIVIL ENGINEER
 THE CIVIL ENGINEERS
 ATTN: SUKE AGHANI
 14348 FIRESTONE BLVD.
 LA MIRADA, CA 90638
 TEL: (714) 521-4811

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT
 TROLLER MAYER ASSOCIATES, INC.
 ATTN: JEFF MAYER
 1403 KENNETH ROAD, SUITE B
 GLENDALE, CA 91201-1421
 TEL: (818) 956-8101

MECHANICAL ENGINEER
 RPM ENGINEERS, INC.
 ATTN: MAURICE YEE
 102 DISCOVERY
 IRVINE, CA 92618
 TEL: (949) 450-1229 X 205

ELECTRICAL ENGINEER
 RPM ENGINEERS, INC.
 ATTN: LAN DISCOVERY
 IRVINE, CA 92618
 TEL: (949) 450-1229 X 203

PLUMBING ENGINEER
 RPM ENGINEERS, INC.
 ATTN: CHITAI CHUNG
 102 DISCOVERY
 IRVINE, CA 92618
 TEL: (949) 450-1229 X 209

REVISIONS

NO.	DESCRIPTION	DATE
	PLAN CHECK SUBMITTAL	12/18/13
	ISSUE FOR BID	5-14-14
⚠	ADDENDUM	5-23-14
	PLAN CHECK RESUBMITTAL	6-30-14
⚠	PROGRESS COORDINATION	8-20-14
⚠	PROGRESS COORDINATION	10-29-14
⚠	PROGRESS COORDINATION	12-04-14
⚠	PERMIT AMENDMENT SUBMITTAL	07-01-15
⚠	PROGRESS COORDINATION	TBD

STAMP + SIGNATURE



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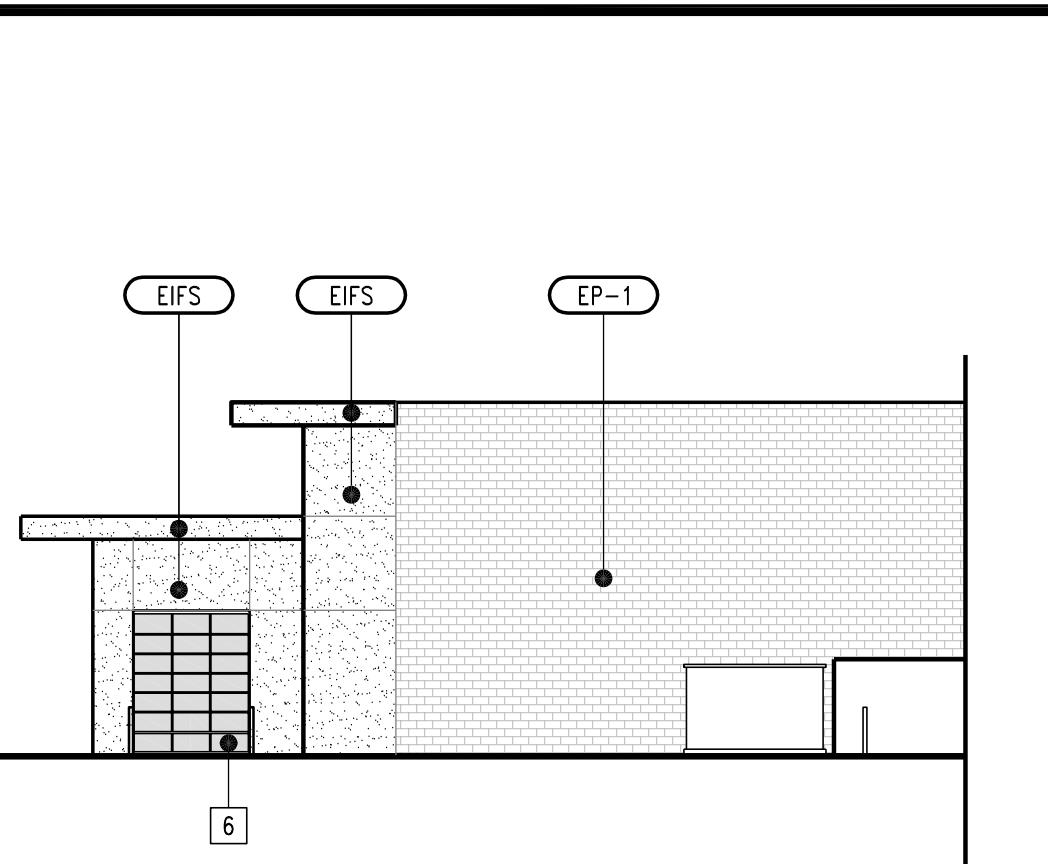
SHEET TITLE

APPRAISAL ROOM
ELEVATIONS

DATE: 11/19/13
 SCALE: AS NOTED
 DRAWN BY: AHT
 PROJECT NUMBER: 13040.00

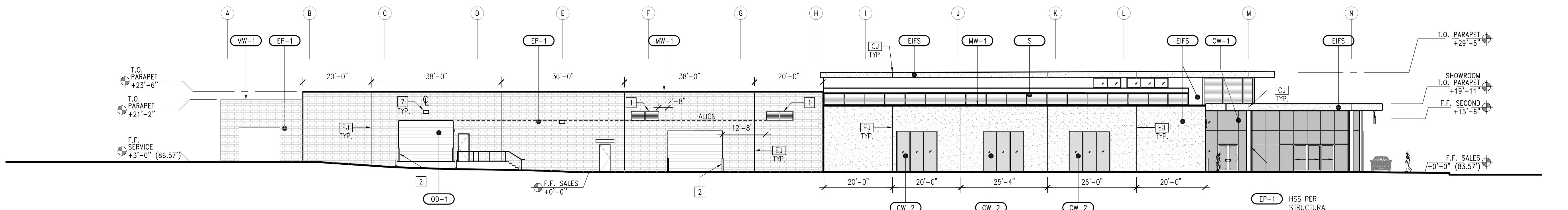
A11.0a

7/6/2015 12:14 PM by Jason Imilo @ P:\13040



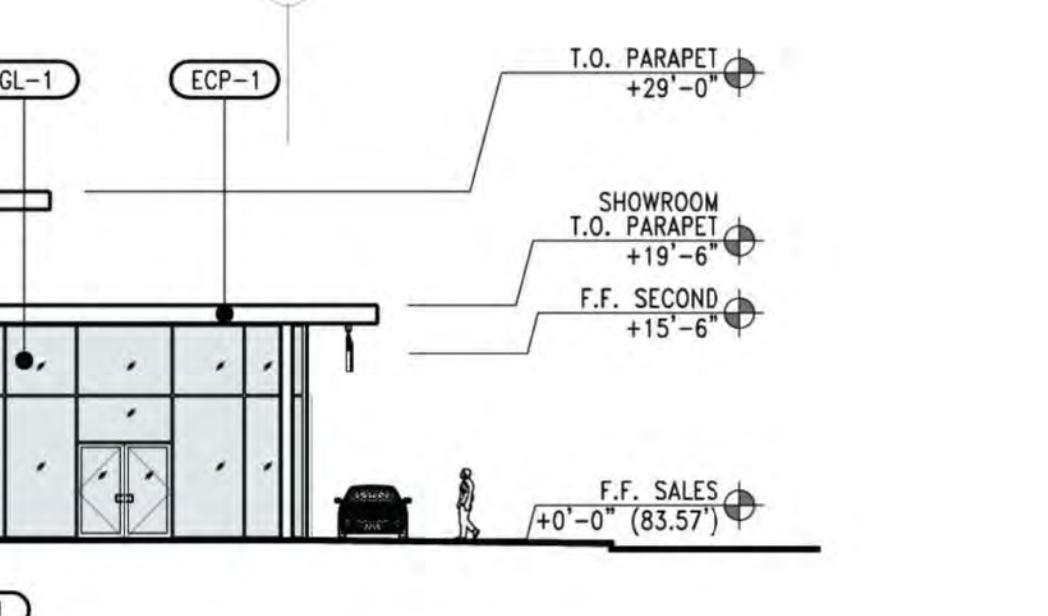
SOUTH ELEVATION (PROPOSED) **10b**

SCALE 1/16" - F'-0"



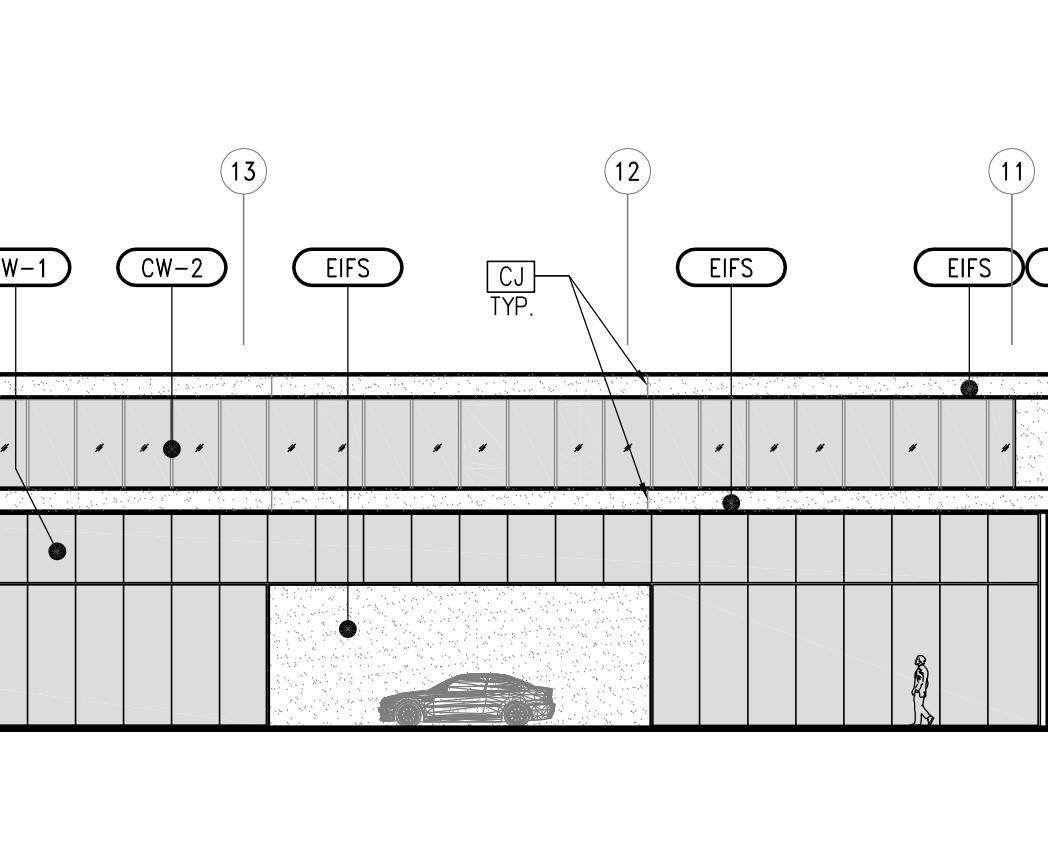
EAST ELEVATION (PROPOSED) **8b**

SCALE 1/16" - F'-0"



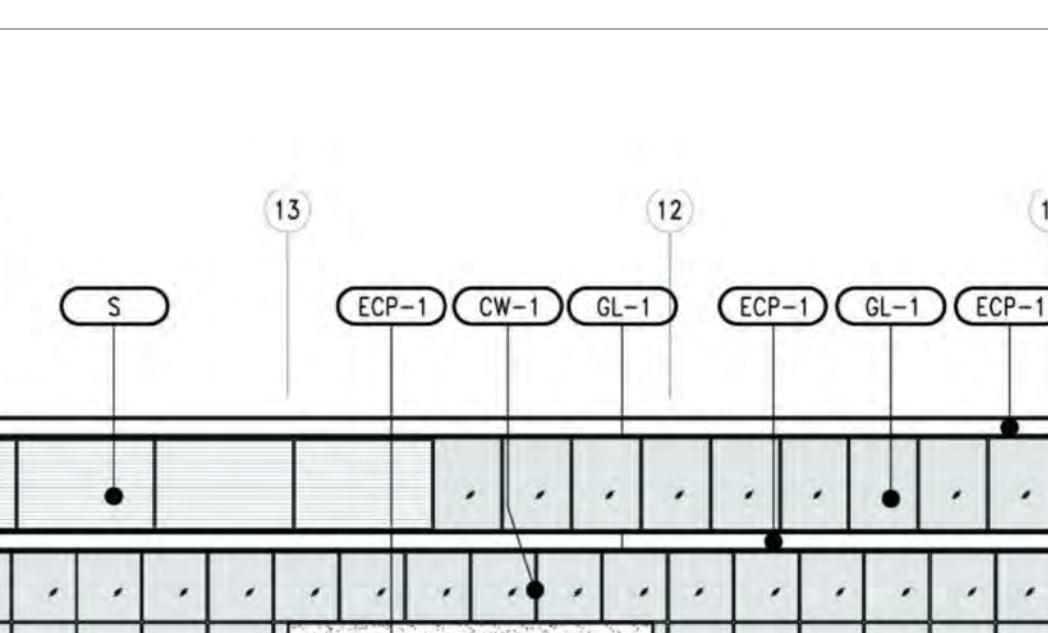
EAST ELEVATION (APPROVED) **8a**

SCALE 1/16" - F'-0"



WEST ELEVATION (PROPOSED) **21b**

SCALE 1/16" - F'-0"



NORTH ELEVATION (PROPOSED) **1b**

SCALE 1/16" - F'-0"



NORTH ELEVATION (APPROVED) **1a**

SCALE 1/16" - F'-0"

ACTUAL SIZE OF THIS SHEET IS 30" X 47"

WEST ELEVATION (APPROVED) **21a**

ACTUAL SIZE OF THIS SHEET IS 30" X 47"

A H T A R C H I T E C T S I N C

2120 Wilshire Blvd Suite 200 ■ Santa Monica, California 90403 ■ Telephone 310.453.4431

1660 SPRING ST. SIGNAL HILL, CA 90755 - LONG BEACH BMW

To whom it may concern,

Enclosed you will find a list of the changes that occurred during construction which varied from the original approved elevations. Please see attached exhibit for more information.

North Elevation

1. Changed Painted Metal Overhead Rollup doors to Anodized Aluminum Overhead Glass Sectionals on North Side of Service Drive.
2. Changed Curtain Wall Mullion spacing.
3. Added Appraisal Room onto west side of showroom. Matched adjacent previously approved finishes.

South Elevation

1. Changed Anodized Aluminum Overhead Glass Sectionals to Overhead Coiling Painted Metal at Wash/Detail Bays
2. Changed Single man door to double door at oil/compressor room.

West Elevation

1. Added appraisal room
2. Changed Overhead Coiling PT Metal to Overhead Glass Sectionals at New Vehicle Delivery.
3. Moved Electrical Switchgear to exterior near loading area.
4. Added CMU Trash Enclosure in Loading Area, paint to match adjacent.
5. Added metal awning above loading overhead door.
6. Changed Storefront configuration into tech breakroom and added door.
7. Added Metal Awnings over man doors into service building.
8. Added Mechanical Louvers.

East Elevation

1. Changed swinging doors into showroom to sliding doors on West and East elevations.
2. Changed mullion spacing at service reception and showroom curtain wall.
3. Removed windows on second floor east elevation into conference room. (Behind Mechanical screen and not seen on elevations)
4. Added Mechanical louvers for ventilation to exterior of Service building. Painted to match adjacent finishes.
5. Added Stairs and landing to service building man door access per plan check requirement.

Thank You,
Jason Imada

JULY 4



CITY OF SIGNAL HILL

2175 Cherry Avenue ♦ Signal Hill, CA 90755-3799

July 14, 2015

AGENDA ITEM

**TO: HONORABLE CHAIR
AND MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION**

**FROM: SCOTT CHARNEY
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR**

SUBJECT: MINUTES

Summary:

Attached for your review and approval are the minutes of last month's regular meeting.

Recommendation:

Approve.

**A REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY OF SIGNAL HILL
PLANNING COMMISSION**
June 9, 2015
7:00 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Chair Fallon called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

ROLL CALL

The Commission Secretary conducted roll call.

Present: Vice-Chair Jane Fallon
 Commissioner Devon Austin
 Commissioner Shannon Murphy
 Commissioner Rose Richárd

Excused Absence: Chair Benson

Staff present:

- 1) Community Development Director Scott Charney
- 2) Associate Planner Colleen Doan
- 3) Assistant Planner Selena Alanis
- 4) Assistant City Attorney David Kwon
- 5) Sr. Engineering Technician II Anthony Caraveo

In addition, there were 4 people in attendance.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Benson led the audience in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

There was no public business from the floor.

OATHS OF OFFICE FOR REAPPOINTED COMMISSIONERS

The Commission Secretary administered the oaths of office for reappointed Commissioners Jane Fallon and Rose Richárd to serve on the Planning Commission (terms to expire on 5/31/2019). The Commissioners took their oaths aloud and thanked the City Council for their reappointment.

REORGANIZATION

The Commission Secretary stated that nominations for the Chair were now open. Commissioner Richárd nominated Commissioner Fallon. Commissioner Fallon accepted the nomination and thanked her fellow Commissioners.

The following Roll Call vote resulted:

AYES:	COMMISSIONERS AUSTIN, FALLON, MURPHY AND RICHÁRD
NOES:	NONE
ABSENT:	COMMISSIONER BENSON
ABSTAIN:	NONE

Commission Secretary Scott Charney turned the meeting over to Chair Fallon.

Chair Fallon called for nomination for Vice-Chair. Commissioners Fallon and Murphy nominated Commissioner Austin. Commissioner Austin accepted the nomination.

The following Roll Call vote resulted:

AYES:	COMMISSIONERS AUSTIN, FALLON, MURPHY AND RICHÁRD
NOES:	NONE
ABSENT:	COMMISSIONER BENSON
ABSTAIN:	NONE

PUBLIC WORKSHOP

1. Revised Plans for a New Single-Family Dwelling at 1995 St. Louis Avenue

Community Development Director Scott Charney read the form of notice and gave an introduction, and Assistant Planner Selena Alanis gave the staff report.

Chair Fallon opened the public workshop.

The following members of the public spoke regarding the project:

- 1) Lyn Hutchison, Signal Hill resident, expressed concerns about construction noise. She felt the design was still not in character with the neighborhood and resembled a box. She was concerned that her view of the fireworks from the Queen Mary would not be visible with the new house.
- 2) Seth Sor, project designer, introduced himself to the Commission.

Commissioner Murphy stated she was not in favor of the new front covered balcony and noted the square footage had only been reduced by 115 sf because the library was converted to a bedroom. She also asked about financing for the project.

Mr. Sor stated the covered balcony in the front was added to protect the house from weather elements, that the bathrooms on the second floor were the owner's preference, and he estimated cost of construction is \$350,000 and would take approximately 8 months. He indicated the property owner had funds available to complete construction.

Chair Fallon asked what the pillar on the north elevation is.

Mr. Sor explained the pillar is an architectural feature to break up the blank wall that is a stairway in the interior of the house. The feature will also serve as a tool storage area with a small door and have an exterior light.

Vice-Chair Austin asked if the trees that are visible in the view photos would be removed.

Mr. Sor indicated the majority of the trees would be removed. However, the mature trees seen in the view photos are actually on the adjacent neighbor's property.

Chair Fallon asked Mr. Sor if landscape plans were in process and would like to see drought tolerant landscaping. She also did not see the need for the second washer and dryer.

Mr. Sor said he can look at the landscape plans again. He also explained that the owner wanted a washer and dryer for her elderly parents on the first floor and a washer and dryer for herself on the second floor.

Commissioner Richárd asked if there would be drought tolerant landscaping. She was also concerned that there had only been a reduction of 115 sf and did not like the front covered balcony.

There being no further public testimony, Chair Fallon closed the public workshop.

Vice-Chair Austin stated the design still resembles a box, but liked the new colors. She thought the house was still large in comparison to the neighborhood, but was not sure what could be done to improve it.

Commissioner Murphy stated she was not in favor of the new front covered balcony or the floor plans. She would like the bathroom on the second floor to connect to the bedrooms.

Chair Fallon stated the configuration of the bathrooms in the hallway was odd and that the design of the house as a whole was still large.

The property owner then came forward to speak. Chair Fallon reopened the public workshop.

- 3) Kimberly Ly, the property owner, requested that the bathrooms on the second floor remain open to the hallway. She explained that she does not want the people who clean her house to go into the bedrooms to clean the bathrooms and that she has a strong personal preference that bathroom #3 not be connected to bedroom #4.

There being no further public testimony, Chair Fallon closed the public workshop.

Commissioner Murphy stated the design should be amended to remove the front balcony.

It was moved by Commissioner Richárd and seconded by Vice-Chair Austin for staff to work with applicant regarding the design and to prepare the project for a public hearing.

Motion carried 4/0.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

2. Study Session for Water Conservation and Options for Turf Replacement

Associate Planner Colleen Doan and Community Development Director Scott Charney gave the staff report.

Chair Fallon asked about maintenance for a grass grid parking and paver driveway included in the presentation. Staff clarified that they are sometimes difficult to maintain and have been removed from approved projects, but that they are not problematic for vehicle access including fire trucks.

Commissioner Murphy stated she had noticed improper maintenance for xeriscaped areas. Staff responded that when the code is amended they will also look at clarifying the property owners' obligations for maintenance.

Vice-Chair Austin asked if the City could offer a rebate as an incentive for property owners to maintain their yards. Staff advised that currently there are no City funded rebates for turf removal or maintenance, but residents can participate in the BeWaterWise rebate for replacement of turf. In addition, the City Council has requested that the City's water agency study to see if it would be feasible to offer a City rebate as a supplement to the BeWaterWise rebate. Staff will forward the suggestion to the water department.

Vice-Chair Austin asked if there was a minimum or maximum standard for artificial turf. Staff advised that at the Landscape Parkway Workshop last year, community

members who participated indicated a general approval for artificial turf. Although standards have not been established, in the future ordinance artificial turf will be required to be water permeable and of high quality.

Commissioner Murphy stated that the landscaping with just rocks was not appealing. She suggested more varieties of plants and different sizes of rocks. Staff offered to create a display board with examples of possible appropriate and inappropriate standards for other types of landscapes and hardscapes.

Commissioner Richárd asked if, given the ongoing drought conditions, staff had considered having another workshop similar to the parkway workshop that was held last year. Staff confirmed that a workshop for landscaping on private property could be scheduled and would promote the workshop in several ways.

Chair Fallon asked if there were guidelines for landscaping and turf replacement in the parkway. Staff advised there are guidelines for parkway areas and that a no fee permit is required only for the parkway.

Vice-Chair Austin said it is important that we also ensure that irrigation systems are adjusted when water tolerant plants were installed to make sure there is no overwatering or overspray. Staff advised that design guidelines should also look at preferred methods of irrigation.

Chair Fallon asked if at the Concerts in the Park series materials might be available at the Sustainable City Committee booth to provide water conservation information to the public. Staff affirmed there will be information and flyers available.

Chair Fallon also complimented the Public Works Department in their quick response and assistance provided to residents with water run-off issues.

Staff advised that when we are changing the Code alternatives to turf will be encouraged, which may assist both individuals and members of homeowners associations. The City has promoted information to the public about water conservation in the *City Views* and in the *Signal Tribune*.

Commissioner Murphy asked why sandbags have been placed at hillsides and drill sites. Staff advised that they are best management practices for oil operators to help control sediment running into the stormdrains during rain events. Staff also advised that similar measures would be included in the Vacant Parcel Ordinance that is in the process of being developed.

The Commission directed staff to begin planning a public workshop to engage the community about landscaping on private property versus the parkway and to obtain feedback before developing an ordinance amendment.

Motion carried 4/0.

CONSENT CALENDAR

It was moved by Commissioner Richárd and seconded by Commissioner Murphy to receive and file Consent Calendar Items 3 to 7.

The motion carried 4/0.

COMMISSION NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Murphy advised she will not be able to attend the Planning Commission meeting in July.

Chair Fallon stated the American Liver Foundation would be holding its Life Liver Walk in Orange County on June 27, 2015 to raise funds for liver disease. If anyone is interested in joining their team (The Liver Spots Team) they may contact Gary Dudley at (310) 710-9693.

It was moved by Commissioner Richárd and seconded by Vice-Chair Austin to adjourn to the next regular meeting of the Planning Commission to be held on Tuesday, July 14, 2015.

The motion carried 4/0.

Chair Fallon adjourned the meeting at 9:01 p.m.

JANE FALLON
CHAIR

ATTEST:

SCOTT CHARNEY
COMMISSION SECRETARY

JULY 5



CITY OF SIGNAL HILL

2175 Cherry Avenue ♦ Signal Hill, CA 90755-3799

July 14, 2015

AGENDA ITEM

**TO: HONORABLE CHAIR
AND MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION**

**FROM: COLLEEN DOAN
SENIOR PLANNER**

SUBJECT: CITY COUNCIL FOLLOW-UP

Summary:

Below for your review is a brief summary on the City Council's action from the previous month.

Recommendation:

Receive and file.

Background and Analysis:

- 1) At the June 16, 2015 City Council meeting, the Community Development Department provide a staff report on the Green City 2014 Annual Progress Report and recognized sustainable achievements made in the last year.
- 2) At the July 7, 2015 City Council meeting, there were no Community Development Department items.

Approved by:

Scott Charney

JULY 6



CITY OF SIGNAL HILL

2175 Cherry Avenue ♦ Signal Hill, CA 90755-3799

July 14, 2015

AGENDA ITEM

**TO: HONORABLE CHAIR
AND MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION**

**FROM: SCOTT CHARNEY
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR**

SUBJECT: DEVELOPMENT STATUS REPORT

Summary:

Attached for your review is the monthly Development Status Report which highlights current projects.

Recommendation:

Receive and file.

City of Signal Hill
Community Development Department
Development Status Report
July 14, 2015

Residential

Address	Project Description	Application	REVIEW			SPDR			CTL			Status
			<u>Director</u> <u>approval</u>	<u>PC</u> <u>approval</u>	<u>CC</u> <u>approval</u>	Expires	1 st Ext.	2 nd Ext.	Expires	1 st Ext.	2 nd Ext.	
2357 Lewis Avenue	Repairs to a fire damaged single-family dwelling Applicant: California Construction	Administrative Review	✓	N/A	N/A	Building Permit Issued 2/13/15	N/A	N/A	2/8/16			Demolition in process (4/15). Home rebuild begun, rough plumbing and electrical complete (5/15). Drywall and stucco begun (6/15). Stucco complete (7/15). SA/JH
1790 E Burnett St.	Renovation of existing house and construction of new 4-car garage with roof deck, workshop and parking court Applicant: Gary Severns	Administrative Review	✓	N/A	N/A	Building Permit Issued 02/13/14	N/A	N/A	N/A			Approved change to composite roof for reduced maintenance. New color board and rock samples submitted. Installation of rock band underway. Revised window design for front (9/14). Rear grade too steep, grade reworked, garage foundation and framing begun (1/15). Rough plumbing, electrical and HVAC complete (3/15). Garage roof and interior underway (5/15). Built wall on City property w/o permit. Public Works requires removal of wall and any landscaping in ROW (6/15). Plans for wall to be submitted (7/15). JH/CTD

City of Signal Hill
Community Development Department
Development Status Report
July 14, 2015

Residential

Address	Project Description	Application	REVIEW			SPDR			CTL			Status
			<u>Director</u> <u>approval</u>	<u>PC</u> <u>approval</u>	<u>CC</u> <u>approval</u>	Expires	1 st Ext.	2 nd Ext.	Expires	1 st Ext.	2 nd Ext.	
3240 Cerritos Ave.	New permit issued for interior drywall, plumbing and electrical for remainder of interior of existing house Applicant: Jim Trevillyan	Administrative Review	✓	N/A	N/A	Building Permit Issued 03/3/15	N/A	N/A	02/26/16			Rough plumbing, electrical and mechanical completed (7/15). JH
2477 Gaviota Ave.	Rehabilitation of the existing single-family dwelling and new 2-car garage Applicant: Rama Singhal	Administrative Review	✓	N/A	N/A	In progress						Preliminary plans submitted for review (5/15). A Historic Preservation Easement and Lien Release were approved by City Council on 6/2/15. 2 nd building plan check submitted on 7/6/15 including a new garage. SA
2132 Ohio Ave.	New drywall, repipe kitchen and bathroom and upgrade electrical panel Applicant: Nicholas Hrebien	Administrative Review	✓	N/A	N/A	Building Permit Issued 3/12/15	N/A	N/A	N/A			Inspections made to ensure project is per permit (6/15). Convert 2 electrical meters to single service to preclude conversion into separate dwelling units (7/15). JH

City of Signal Hill
Community Development Department
Development Status Report
July 14, 2015

Residential

Address	Project Description	Application	REVIEW			SPDR			CTL			Status
			Director approval	PC approval	CC approval	Expires	1 st Ext.	2 nd Ext.	Expires	1 st Ext.	2 nd Ext.	
2518 Willow St.	New front entry electronic gate with stone veneer pilasters and update to guard shack Applicant: Willow Ridge Homeowners Association	Administrative Review	✓	N/A	N/A	In progress						Plans submitted for plan check and returned to the applicant with corrections (6/15). JH/SA
2311 Ocean View	Add/expand second story decks and "trainhouse" in side and rear yard of existing single-family home Applicant: M/M Hughes	SPDR 08-05	N/A	07/14/09	N/A	Building Permit Issued 08/16/13	N/A	N/A	08/11/14	9/30/14	03/03/15 	The first extension granted by Director until 9/30/14 (50 days). A second extension granted until 3/03/15. The project is an active Code Enforcement case (7/15). Stucco is in progress and staff is monitoring (7/15). SA/JH
2799 21 st St.	A two-story 3,629 sf SFD and 3 car garage Applicant: Vivir Properties/ Silva Family	SPDR 13-05	N/A	01/14/14	N/A	Building Permit Issued 07/21/14	N/A	N/A	01/12/16	N/A	N/A	Project complete. Certificate of Occupancy issued 6/18/15. JH
924 E Vernon St.	Demolition of existing dwelling and detached garage for construction of a new two story 3,230 sf duplex and 4-car garage	SPDR 14-02	N/A	06/10/14	N/A	06/10/15	12/10/15					Applicant working with SCE and Public Works on alley improvements (10/14). Plan are approved. Issuance pending approval of grading and fire department plans. SPDR extended to 12/10/15.

City of Signal Hill
Community Development Department
Development Status Report
July 14, 2015

Residential

Address	Project Description	Application	REVIEW			SPDR			CTL			Status
			<u>Director</u> approval	<u>PC</u> approval	<u>CC</u> approval	Expires	1 st Ext.	2 nd Ext.	Expires	1 st Ext.	2 nd Ext.	
	Applicant: LLG Construction											SA
3360 Lemon Ave.	A 1,207 sf 2 nd unit over a four-car garage at the rear of a property with a SFD	SPDR 14-03	N/A	07/08/14	N/A	07/08/15	01/08/16					SPDR approved, signed conditions received. Plan check is complete. Applicant is preparing grading plans for submittal to Public Works and submittals for LA County Fire (6/15). SPDR extended to 1/08/16. CTD
	Applicant: Jason Shorrow											
3347 Brayton Ave.	Remodel of the front SFD to include a 271 sf addition and new 1-car garage on the first floor and a 731 sf second story addition Applicant: Reginald McNulty	SPDR 15-02	N/A	4/14/15	N/A	4/14/16						Site Plan & Design Review valid until 4/14/16. Awaiting submittal of building plans for plan check (7/15). SA
	Applicant: Santana Investors	SPDR	N/A	Required	N/A							Leak test passed, vent cone was not installed (2/15). Staff has reviewed preliminary plans. Applicant is working on well survey, access exhibit and plans (7/15). SA
2260 Walnut Ave.	A proposal for a new two story 1,894 sf SFD with attached 2-car garage on a vacant lot Applicant: Santana Investors											

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Residential

Address	Project Description	Application	REVIEW			SPDR			CTL			Status
			<u>Director</u> <u>approval</u>	<u>PC</u> <u>approval</u>	<u>CC</u> <u>approval</u>	Expires	1 st Ext.	2 nd Ext.	Expires	1 st Ext.	2 nd Ext.	
1995 St. Louis Ave.	A proposal to demolish existing dwelling and detached garage for a new two story 3,187 sf SFD with attached 3-car garage Applicant: Seth Sor for Kimberly and Phat Ly	SPDR	N/A	Required	N/A							View Notice sent on 8/4/14. Story poles installed on 8/5/14. PC Workshop #1 on 10/14/14. Applicant revised plans (3/15). View notice sent on 3/31/15. New story poles installed on 4/1/15. PC workshop #2 on 6/9/15. The property owner is reviewing the Commissions direction and looking into options to modify the plans (7/15). SA
2085 Freeman Ave.	A proposal for a new two story 3,746 sf SFD with attached 3-car garage on a vacant lot Applicant: RPP Architects	SPDR	N/A	Required	N/A							Leak test passed and vent cone installed (2/15). The applicant has submitted plans for Planning review and preliminary comments (3/15). Applicant is working on preparation of the Well Assessment Report (7/15). SA/CD

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Residential

Address	Project Description	Application	REVIEW			SPDR			CTL			Status
			<u>Director</u> <u>approval</u>	<u>PC</u> <u>approval</u>	<u>CC</u> <u>approval</u>	Expires	1 st Ext.	2 nd Ext.	Expires	1 st Ext.	2 nd Ext.	
<u>Large Subdivisions (5 or more lots) and Multi-family Developments</u>												
Crescent Square	25 three-story detached single-family dwellings at the N/E corner of Walnut and Crescent Heights Street	SPDR 14-04 ZOA 14-03 VTTM 72594	N/A	8/12/14	9/2/14	9/2/15						SPDR approved on 8/12/14. Grading plan has been submitted for plan check (3/15). CC&Rs submitted for review (4/15). Well Assessment Report plan check comments provided on 7/1/15. Awaiting submittal of building plans for plan check (7/15). SC/SA
Walnut/ Crescent Heights St.	Applicant: SummerHill Homes/Signal Hill Petroleum											
Gundry Hill	Development of 72 multiple-family, affordable units, three and four stories in height and a community building, community garden, tot lot and courtyard with on-site management	SPDR for Administrative Review and approval by the Director of Community Development	Approved 2/18/15	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A				Disposition and Development Agreement approved by the Housing Authority on 2/17/15. Pre-plan check meeting with architect and applicant (6/15). The project was granted California Tax Credits. Per tax credit requirements, a building permit must be issued by December 2015 (7/15). SC/SA
1500 E Hill St.	Applicant: Meta Housing											

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Residential

Address	Project Description	Application	REVIEW			SPDR			CTL			Status
			<u>Director</u> <u>approval</u>	<u>PC</u> <u>approval</u>	<u>CC</u> <u>approval</u>	Expires	1 st Ext.	2 nd Ext.	Expires	1 st Ext.	2 nd Ext.	
2599 Pacific Coast Highway	Residential SP-10 1 st concept plan had 14 attached units 2 nd concept plan had 12 attached units 3 rd concept plan had 10 detached units 4 th concept plan has 9 units	Preliminary review PC Workshop 8/14/12 PC Workshop 9/9/14 SPDR	N/A	Required	Required							Staff met w/owner who reported unsuccessful lot consolidation out-reach effort (9/12). Staff met w/applicant to review a new concept plan on 9/13. Revised design (10 detached units) more closely met the intent of SP-10. Access and guest parking revised (6/14). Commission requested design changes. Applicant's revised conceptual plans (9 units) were previewed and met most of the development standards. Due to proposed height / view policy, applicant to proceed with view analysis outreach (9/14). Revised plans submitted for conceptual review. Proposal has one less unit, setbacks now meet the code, but some buildings still exceed height limit and view policy outreach is pending. Rough grading to be submitted to review options to reduce heights (5/15). Staff met with applicant and agent to review revised plans and will prepare a timeline for submittal (6/15). CTD
	Applicant: Mike Afiuny											

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Residential

Address	Project Description	Application	REVIEW			SPDR			CTL			Status
			<u>Director</u> <u>approval</u>	<u>PC</u> <u>approval</u>	<u>CC</u> <u>approval</u>	Expires	1 st Ext.	2 nd Ext.	Expires	1 st Ext.	2 nd Ext.	
1939 Temple Avenue	Potential sale of the property for development of residential homes (existing non-conforming industrial buildings on site)	Leak Test of Abandoned Oil Wells Applicant: High Rhodes/Anglers										DOGGR maps indicate 2 wells in the vicinity of the property. Applicant is trying to locate wells, but have been unsuccessful to date. The wells are expected to be under the existing buildings. A demolition permit was issued to demolish some of the building in preparation of Well Discovery (7/15). JH

City of Signal Hill
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July 14, 2015

Commercial-Industrial

<u>Address</u>	<u>Project Description</u>	<u>Application</u>	REVIEW			SPDR/CUP			CTL			<u>Status</u>
			Director approval	PC approval	CC approval	Expires	1st Ext.	2nd Ext.	Expires	1st Ext.	2nd Ext.	
1798 E Willow St.	Tenant Improvements to replace existing restaurant with a new sushi restaurant	Administrative Review	✓	N/A	N/A	Building permit issued 06/17/15	N/A	N/A	N/A			Permits purchased and working on interior TI (7/15). JH
2653 Walnut Ave.	An approximate 8,000 sf warehouse/office building	Administrative Review	✓	N/A	N/A	Building permit issued 04/13/11	N/A	N/A	Prior to CTL			Exterior complete. Working on Public Works conditions of approval (4/15). TI plans returned to applicant with corrections on 6/30/15. JH
2H Construction	Applicant: 2H Construction											
1680 E. Hill St.	31,739 sf TI for additional classrooms	Administrative Review	✓	N/A	N/A	Building permit issued 04/17/14	N/A	N/A	07/15/15  0 Permit			No progress (3/15). AUHS contacted staff to advise they will begin project very soon (4/15). Notified applicant of permit expiration (7/15). JH
AUHS	Applicant: American Univ. of Health Sciences											

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Commercial-Industrial

Address	Project Description	Application	REVIEW			SPDR/CUP			CTL			Status
			Director approval	PC approval	CC approval	Expires	1st Ext.	2nd Ext.	Expires	1st Ext.	2nd Ext.	
2701 Cherry Avenue	ADA parking lot improvements Applicant: Best Buy	Administrative Review	✓	N/A	N/A	Building permit issued 06/01/15	N/A	N/A	N/A			Sidewalk and curb completed (7/15). JH
2162 E. Willow St.	1,106 sf TI for new restaurant Applicant: WaBa Grill	Administrative Review	✓	N/A	N/A	Building permit issued 4/28/15	N/A	N/A	10/19/16			Underground plumbing begun (5/15). Sign building permit issued 6/3/15. Framing and drywall in process (6/15). TI near completion (7/15). CTD/JH
3355 Olive Avenue	Proposal for new 5,000 sf warehouse and office building Applicant: Roger Vititow	Administrative Review	✓	N/A	N/A	In progress						2 nd building plan check comments returned to applicant. Methane Mitigation Plans submitted for review (6/15). Corrections to methane plan needed (7/15). SA

City of Signal Hill
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July 14, 2015

Commercial-Industrial

Address	Project Description	Application	REVIEW			SPDR/CUP			CTL			Status
			Director approval	PC approval	CC approval	Expires	1st Ext.	2nd Ext.	Expires	1st Ext.	2nd Ext.	
2650-2690 and 2700-2730 Cherry Ave.	Leak testing for previously abandoned wells on the property Applicant: City of Signal Hill Successor Agency	Well Discovery Permit	✓	N/A	N/A	Permit Issued						2 wells discovered, tested, and vent cones installed. 3 rd well discovered but could not be tested due to deterioration. Backfilled and compacted (7/15). JH
1400 E Spring St.	Leak testing for previously abandoned wells on the property Applicant: City of Signal Hill Successor Agency	Well Discovery Permit	✓	N/A	N/A	Permit Issued						2 wells discovered, leak tests completed and vent cones installed. Backfilled and compacted (7/15). JH
3201-3225 Pacific Coast Highway Quality Inn	Tentative Parcel Map to subdivide an existing 1.8-acre lot into two lots Applicant: William Suh	71592, extension granted	N/A	11/08/11	N/A	11/8/13	11/8/14	11/8/15	N/A	N/A	N/A	3 rd ext granted per State law. TPM valid until 11/8/15. Property has new owner. Staff has prepared a letter to inquire about future intent for subdivision from new property owner (2/15). CTD
2200 E. Willow St.	Amendment to CUP 13-01 to extend the gas station hours of operation to 5 am- 10pm seven days a week. Applicant: Costco Wholesale	Amendment to CUP	N/A	Required	Required	N/A/	N/A	N/A				Community meeting held (2/15). Planning Commission public hearing to extend gas station hours of operation scheduled for 7/14/15. SA

City of Signal Hill
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July 14, 2015

Commercial-Industrial

Address	Project Description	Application	REVIEW			SPDR/CUP			CTL			Status
			Director approval	PC approval	CC approval	Expires	1st Ext.	2nd Ext.	Expires	1st Ext.	2nd Ext.	
845 E. Willow St.	A 18,994 sf medical/office building	SPDR 13-02	N/A	07/09/13	N/A	Building permit issued 02/25/14	N/A	N/A	2/15/16			Conformity Report went to the Planning Commission on 12/09/14. Parking lot asphalt complete (1/15). Exterior steel complete and exterior finish started (2/15). Plans approved for redesign of front/glass curtain wall. Review of stairway plan in process. Rough plumbing and electrical complete. Stucco has begun (4/15). Finish stucco and windows in process. Stairway and greenscreen fencing approved (5/15). Windows and facade in process (6/15). Internal stairway installed (7/15). JH
2H Construction	Applicant: 2H Construction											

City of Signal Hill
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Commercial-Industrial

Address	Project Description	Application	REVIEW			SPDR/CUP			CTL			Status
			Director approval	PC approval	CC approval	Expires	1st Ext.	2nd Ext.	Expires	1st Ext.	2nd Ext.	
995 E. 27 th St.	A 2,205 sf religious center at the NW corner of California and 27th Street	SPDR 13-04 CUP 13-02	N/A	10/08/13	10/15/13	Building permit issued 10/31/13	N/A	N/A	4/30/15	7/20/15 		PC recommended finishing the project as approved (no additional parking to add floor area). Any changes will be reviewed by the PC. Rough plumbing and electrical is complete (1/15). Methane venting, drainage filtration systems installed. 60 day CTL exp ltr sent (3/15). Drywall complete, parking lot partially paved, façade in process (4/15). Elec. conduit to building and stucco/scratchcoat complete. (5/15). Applicant wants to complete in time for the holiday, but requested interior/exterior design revisions do not meet parking code and all require Commission review (5/15). Stucco, windows, doors, AC installed (6/15). Ceiling T-bar and rough mechanical complete. CTL extension expires on July 20, 2015. The applicant has submitted a 2 nd ext request letter but they expect to complete their project under the 1 st ext. time frame (7/15). CTD/JH
LBIC Center	Project Manager: Tarak Mohamed Applicant: Abdel Alomar											

City of Signal Hill
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Commercial-Industrial

Address	Project Description	Application	REVIEW			SPDR/CUP			CTL			Status
			Director approval	PC approval	CC approval	Expires	1st Ext.	2nd Ext.	Expires	1st Ext.	2nd Ext.	
1660 E. Spring St. BMW Dealership	A 77,810 sf showroom, sales, and service facility and display area for automobile sales Applicant: Sonic/BMW	SPDR 14-01	N/A	4/8/14	N/A	Building permit issued 9/16/14	N/A	N/A	09/5/16			<p>Foundation and retention basin started (10/14). Street improvements and utilities underway (11/14). Methane barrier complete (12/14).</p> <p>Masonry complete (2/15). Slab and roof on garage completed. Show-room steel, slab poured (3/15).</p> <p>Street improvements completed on Spring (4/15). Sidewalks on Walnut and 29th completed (5/15).</p> <p>Framing almost complete. MEPs in process. Applicant projects that construction will be completed at the end of July (6/15).</p> <p>Applicant projects that construction will be completed in August (7/15).</p> <p>Conformity Report for architectural changes and appraisal room to Planning Commission on 7/14/15.</p> <p>JH/SA</p>

City of Signal Hill
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Commercial-Industrial

Address	Project Description	Application	REVIEW			SPDR/CUP			CTL			Status
			Director approval	PC approval	CC approval	Expires	1st Ext.	2nd Ext.	Expires	1st Ext.	2nd Ext.	
2953 Obispo Ave.	A request to allow indoor soccer as a conditionally permitted use in the City.	ZOA CUP	N/A	Required	Required							Deposit submitted to begin coordination of workshops w/HOAs (7/14). Applicant has requested to temporarily postpone request (12/14). Applicant intends to proceed w/ CUP request but no application has been submitted to date (7/15). CTD
Futsal Indoor Soccer	Applicant: Mike Biddle											

City of Signal Hill
Community Development Department
Development Status Report
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Commercial-Industrial

Business Licenses and Permit Summary

- Planning Department staff reviewed and approved 7 business licenses.
- Building Department staff issued 26 permits including 3 residential solar permits. The valuation of the projects is approximately \$229,000 with permit revenues at \$3,400.

Training/Forums

- Staff attended the 2015 California Visionary Leaders Series with the Honorable Senator Janet Nguyen.
- Staff attended training for Caselle software, a new accounting system.
- Staff attended a regional tour with the Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy hosted by Southern California Association of Governments. Their goal is to develop a long-range vision regarding traffic congestion, housing, air quality, green and open spaces, and public health.

Current Projects

- Solar Permitting Ordinance is in process and will be provided to Sustainable City Committee on 7/28/15.
- Staff will co-hosted with the Public Works Department a Workshop on Community Preferences for Alternatives to Turf on 7/14/2015.

Ongoing / Upcoming Projects

- Vacant Parcel Ordinance.
- Oil Well Inspections.
- Meeting with Mercedes Benz regarding expansion opportunities.
- Smoking and E-cigarette regulations.

City of Signal Hill
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Wireless Telecommunications Facilities

Address	Project Description	Application	REVIEW			SPDR			CTL			Status
			Director approval	PC approval	CC approval	Expires	1st Ext.	2nd Ext.	Expires	1st Ext.	2nd Ext.	
2411 Skyline Dr.	A request to add 1 new Tower Dish to the Cell Tower as allowed by CUP 99-05 Applicant: Crown Castle	Administrative to modify CUP 99-05	✓	N/A	N/A	Building permit issued 10/2/14	N/A	N/A				Crown Castle has new management and is working to resolve interference issues w/ 2 residents. Plans approved and permit issued for 1 new dish for Clearwire 10/2/14. An interference study has been completed and staff met with Crown Castle to facilitate installation of interference devices and review CUP conditions of approval (12/14). Interference resolution and compliance with 1 CUP condition is pending (2/15). The interference problem has been corrected and current tenants have current business licenses. An updated audit of equipment and tenants is pending (7/15). CTD
1855 Coronado rooftop facility	Replacing 56" panel with 72" panel antennas, screen box in sector A & B will be increased by 3' Applicant: Core Dev.	Administrative to modify CUP 08-03	✓	N/A	N/A		N/A	N/A				Plans ready for permit issuance (4/15). Reminder sent to applicant (6/15). SA

City of Signal Hill
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Wireless Telecommunications Facilities

Address	Project Description	Application	REVIEW			SPDR			CTL			Status
			Director approval	PC approval	CC approval	Expires	1st Ext.	2nd Ext.	Expires	1st Ext.	2nd Ext.	
2201 Orange Ave. T-Mobile on Crown Castle Monopalm	A request to add 3 new 8' panel antennas and relocate 3 existing antennas on 3 arms of the existing monopalm	Administrative to modify CUP 07-04	✓	N/A	N/A	Building permit issued 6/24/15	N/A	N/A				Staff provided comments for the applicant (2/15). Corrected plans submitted, building permit issued (7/15). CTD/JH
2652 Gundry Avenue T-Mobile	Adding (1) 2' microwave dish to an existing wireless communication monopalm	Administrative to modify CUP 10-01	Under Review			Building permit issued 5/28/15						Planning Department approved change 4/29/15. Permit issued 5/28/15. SA
2525 Cherry Avenue Sprint	Removing and replacing the 3 existing antennas	Administrative to modify CUP 02-01	Under Review									Planning Department approved plans to go into building plan check (6/15). SA
2633 Cherry Avenue AT&T	Rooftop Wireless Telecommunication Facility for AT&T Applicant: Core Dev.	CUP	N/A	Required	Required							Staff met with the applicant to review preliminary plans for the rooftop facility and suggested revisions to elevations and plans for aesthetics (5/14 and 7/14). Applicant preparing plans and expects to resubmit (5/15). SA

JULY 7



CITY OF SIGNAL HILL

2175 Cherry Avenue ♦ Signal Hill, CA 90755-3799

July 14, 2015

AGENDA ITEM

**TO: HONORABLE CHAIR
AND MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION**

**FROM: SCOTT CHARNEY
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR**

SUBJECT: IN THE NEWS

Summary:

Articles compiled by staff that may be of interest to the Commission include:

- Green Infrastructure Grows Up
- New Rules for Regulating Cell Towers
- Stormwater Capture Rules Gain New Urgency as Drought Lingers
- Stacking the Deck – Prefabricated Modules
- Designing for High-Traffic Outdoor Spaces
- To Encourage Californians to Conserve, a Tweak in Wording Can Help

Recommendation:

Receive and file.

Green Infra- structure Grows UP

GOING BEYOND STORMWATER SYSTEMS
TO INCLUDE ROADS, PARKS, AND MORE.



Water-filtering
bioswales and other
features of Bagby
Street in Houston take
green infrastructure to
a whole new level.

BOTTOM PHOTO: COURTESY
DESIGN WORKSHOP;
THINKSTOCK/GETTYIMAGES

By

REBECCA
LEONARD
AICP, LEED AP,
CNU-A

LET'S FACE IT: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE HAS OUTGROWN ITS ORIGINAL DEFINITION as a stormwater management tool. As the "infrastructure" portion of its name implies, green infrastructure embraces the notion that roads, transit, and parks can operate in a way that better aligns ecosystem needs and human needs.

While we're at it, let's include civil needs such as better public health, economic development, and community spirit. **GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE ADVANCES HAVE BEEN MADE AT A BIG SCALE**; the Copenhagen Accord in 2009 called for an additional four percent of the world's land mass to be protected by 2020. And at a small scale, there is a growing enthusiasm for rain barrels, green roofs, recycling programs, and greenways. **GIVEN THE PREVALENCE OF ITS USE ACROSS THE NATION, GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE FEELS LIKE IT IS HERE TO STAY**. But is that true? How can planners encourage the use of green infrastructure in areas where development comes at the expense of the ecosystem? There are some clear trends that can be credited with sending green infrastructure viral.

The power of policies

Policies can advance the use of green infrastructure across a community, state, or region. In November 2010, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Deputy Administrator Bob Perciasepe formed a Green Infrastructure Steering Committee and Work Group, with representatives from each EPA region, to encourage and support the implementation of green infrastructure solutions. One result: a memo calling for the protection of water quality via green infrastructure in EPA water permitting and enforcement programs.

Many states and local governments have adopted green infrastructure policies such as green streets or rainwater harvesting codes. Although no comprehensive catalogue of these policies exists, a simple Google search turns up numerous compilations of case studies.

These case studies illustrate policy commitments to use green infrastructure in demonstration projects, street retrofits, and other local capital projects. In addition, since communities regulate the green treatment of stormwater (either requiring or at least allowing it) they often have policies for both stormwater fees and incentives. Finally, many policies address education and outreach.

Adopting a variety of green infrastructure policies may be an effective approach in communities where there is political support and general acceptance of the benefits of green infrastructure.

New certifications

The number of third-party validation programs that include a green infrastructure incentive has increased rapidly in recent years, as has the number of project types covered by these programs. Where LEED Building Design + Construction was once the only certification program for the limited purpose of certifying buildings, new programs certify a broader range of project

types, including Greenroads for roads, SITES for site design and development, and Star Communities for cities.

These diverse programs have appeared in the last decade. Each awards points for green stormwater management, tree canopy, and other open space—and those green infrastructure points count for a lot. SITES offers 78 points for green infrastructure out of a total of 200 possible points (only 70 are needed to be certified). Greenroads offers 18 points for green infrastructure out of 32 total points needed to be certified. And LEED for Neighborhood Development offers at least 28 points for green infrastructure out of a total of 110 (with 40 points minimum for certification).

Because certification programs are intended for both public and private construction projects, encouraging or requiring a variety of certifications (or requiring the project to be built to these specifications even if the certification is not sought) may be a way for communities to persuade the private sector that green infrastructure has benefits even to them.

Tactical urbanism

Tactical urbanism or "DIY urbanism" has become a cost-effective method for making improvements to public space and addressing real or perceived shortages in outdoor space. National or international efforts such as PARK(ing) Day have generated publicity for green infrastructure across the globe. PARK(ing) Day is an annual worldwide event where artists, designers, and citizens transform metered parking spots into one-day temporary public parks.

Other programs like Guerrilla Gardening (gardening on land the grower has no legal rights to use, such as a street right-of-way or an abandoned parcel) or Open Streets (a grassroots act of closing streets for the sole use of bicycles and pedestrians) have gone a long way to building support for projects that increase wild landscapes, provide communal food sources, create opportunities for local artists, and offer outdoor recreational spaces. These programs





THE VILLAGE
BUILDING
CONVERGENCE
villagebuilding
convergence
.com/hands-on
-projects
SOURCE: CITY REPAIR
PROJECT

VIDEO



The City Repair Project adds beauty, opens up public space, and builds connections in Portland.

have popped up in communities across the U.S. and the globe.

Tactical urbanism can be a game-changing approach to green infrastructure. It provides support, resources, and opportunities to help diverse communities reconnect places with their cultural and environmental contexts. The City Repair Project, a Portland-based nonprofit, claims to facilitate artistic and ecologically oriented placemaking through projects that honor the interconnection of humans and their environments. The group helped create artistic intersection improvements at Share-it Square and Sunnyside Plaza in that city.

Another Portland organization called Depave promotes the removal of unnecessary pavement from urban areas to create community green spaces, mitigate stormwater runoff, and “overcome the social and environmental impacts of pavement.” Action-oriented educational events, community stewardship, and advocacy also help to reconnect people with nature and inspire others.

A series of smartphone apps allow average citizens to use social media to make changes in the world. Neighborland lets users express what they would like to see in their neighborhoods, then aggregates input and ideas from public installations, SMS, Twitter, and its own application onto a project page that can be viewed in a variety of reports.

There are many augmented reality applications that allow people to visualize changes to the built environment, whether it be animated street art (4D street ART) or zombies (Zombies Everywhere!). These imagination tools can help citizens to reimagine their communities in ways that fulfill their social and environmental needs. They also put real-time information at the fingertips of the users to ensure that they are making decisions with the timeliest information, the theory being that if people understood all

of the impacts of their actions, they would choose green infrastructure.

Even some agencies are riding the tactical urbanism wave. “Pavement to Parks” is a collaborative effort between the San Francisco Planning Department, the Department of Public Works, and the Municipal Transportation Agency. This program seeks to test the potential of some of the more underused portions of streets by converting them quickly and cheaply into new pedestrian spaces.

Tactical urbanism efforts have led to more permanent installations of green infrastructure as well, making them a great choice for communities that want to employ greener infrastructure or for planners who must prove the efficacy of small projects before a larger policy can be put in place.



ANNIE
STREET
PLAZA
pavement-
toparks
.sfplanning.org
/annie
_alley.html
SOURCE:
PAVEMENT TO
PARKS PROJECT,
SF PLANNING
DEPARTMENT

Tactical urbanism in progress (above) and as a smashing success (opposite) in Annie Street Plaza in San Francisco, where TINY, a story about small houses, was screened.

Prototypes and pilots

Many communities have implemented prototypes so that they can prove the benefits of a particular green infrastructure method before allowing, requiring, or funding it throughout a community.

An interesting partnership has emerged in support of the Sustainable DC initiative, which calls for Washington, D.C., to use 75 percent of its landscape to capture and filter stormwater by 2032. That initiative includes the city's moves toward implementing stronger stormwater management regulations and DC Water's at-

PLANNING PRACTICE





The Bagby Street rain gardens in Houston proclaim how many gallons of water are treated during storm events. As the curbs dry, the recessed letters retain that water, emphasizing the text.

tempts to pilot green infrastructure techniques as part of its agreement with the EPA. Also in the mix is the American Society of Landscape Architects, which has enlisted its members to create a national model for future development in Washington, D.C. and throughout the U.S.

Most notable is ASLA's green streets pilot project at its headquarters in Chinatown, in the heart of Washington, D.C. Funding for the project came from the EPA's Greening America's Capitals program. The demonstration project, which kicked off in June 2014, will include the design and installation of innovative stormwater management technologies and the beautification of the public right-of-way in the Chinatown neighborhood. The master plan will be complete by the end of the year with the hopes that the first phase of construction will occur in summer 2016.

Green infrastructure became a good choice in New Orleans as well. After Hurricane Katrina in 2005, the city decided to rebuild in a more sustainable and resilient manner. The Make It Right Foundation's Lower Ninth Ward Sustainable Infrastructure Project is a toolkit for sustainable green infrastructure. It has been used over the last five years to develop a playground and community gardens, as well as to repair a street.

The Make It Right Foundation had a section of pervious concrete road poured in the Ninth Ward neighborhood to test the feasibility of using it more widely. After the road held up well to both regular traffic and the reconstruction traffic in the neighborhood, the city of New Orleans began pouring pervious roads throughout the neighborhood. (Another major effort that forwards green infrastructure, the *Greater New Orleans Urban Water Plan*, recently received a National Planning Excellence Award for Environmental Planning from APA.)

On a much larger scale, the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission is planning infrastructure improvements as pilot projects

in each of the city's eight distinct watersheds. This effort is part of the city's Sewer System Improvement Program, a 20-year, multibillion dollar project. In phase one, SFPUC will construct, monitor, and evaluate eight green infrastructure projects to manage stormwater before it enters the combined sewer system in each of San Francisco's urban watersheds. The pilots include new or improved plazas, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, rain gardens, permeable pavement, green alleys, green bulb-outs, and stream restoration.

A pilot implementation and monitoring program is a key element of New York City's adaptive management approach to implementing green infrastructure. Lessons learned are used to guide future planning, design, and construction efforts. Since 2010, more than 30 green infrastructure installations have been constructed and monitored as part of this pilot program. These include right-of-way green infrastructure features like enhanced tree pits, rooftop practices like blue roofs—which store water—and green roofs, subsurface detention systems with open bottoms for infiltration, porous pavements, and bioretention.

In general, the purpose of the monitoring effort is to evaluate the effectiveness of various green infrastructure practices at managing a one-inch rainfall event, and provide data that will allow the city to extrapolate the runoff reduction benefits on a broad scale. Additional background information on the specific design and monitoring plans for these installations can be found in New York City's *Green Infrastructure Plan 2011 Update*.

Financial proof

Data is building on the economic and community benefits of green infrastructure. As more proof of its effectiveness is distilled from existing green infrastructure, the case for its future development is easier to make.

Houston offers an example. In 2012, voters there approved a referendum to fund \$160 million in new green space and trails. The Bayou Greenway Initiative will complete the century-old vision of transforming 10 of greater Houston's major bayous to greenways of natural beauty, connectivity, recreation, habitat preservation, and increased functionality and cleanliness—all while addressing the deficit in equitably distributed green spaces. The total estimated cost to acquire the needed land and to thread a trail through those greenways is \$480 million.

A study conducted by the Houston Parks Board leading up to the 2012 referendum concluded that the completed Bayou Greenway Initiative will make a highly visible and tangible contribution to Houston's economic health, environmental health, and the physical and mental health of its residents equal to about \$117 million annually. These benefits come in the form of recreational use value, health cost savings, air quality enhancements, flood buyout reductions, reduced water treatment costs, reduced ecosystem services costs, increased business development, increased appeal to retirees with discretionary incomes looking to relocate, and enhanced property tax base.

Houston is also testing the possibility of transferring water

ON A RELATED TOPIC

GETTING ON BOARD WITH GREENROADS

By Rebecca Leonard

The Greenroads Rating System is a voluntary, third-party certification for projects whose goal is to deliver sustainable roads that minimize energy use, protect natural resources, and maximize the users' experience. Greenroads, a nonprofit based in Redmond, Washington, defines sustainability as "a system characteristic that reflects its capacity to support natural laws and human values." For certification, every project must meet 11 prerequisites and obtain at least 32 points from a series of optional strategies.

My firm, Design Workshop, recently contributed to the team working toward Greenroads certification for Bagby Street in the Midtown neighborhood of Houston. Bagby is a major collector in a densifying urban neighborhood between the central business district and the Texas Medical Center.

In 2013, Bagby Street achieved Silver rating with a total of 45 points—the first Greenroads-certified project in Texas and only the eighth nationwide. Overall, the process was a good experience, but several takeaways could be helpful to others.

First, our team felt that the certification process for Greenroads was geared toward highways and interstates. It was transferrable to smaller, urban streets, but only with some hand-holding from the energetic and helpful Greenroads staff. For example, the credits related to scenic views, habitat restoration, and connectivity are not really applicable to urban streets.

Second, as with all certifications, the applicant must plan early to minimize rework and streamline the process. Simple preliminary steps such as an online screen and a quick conversation with the staff at Greenroads can help save time in choosing which path to pursue: certification of a single section or of more complex, multisegmented projects.

Third, it is essential that the construction contractor be on board with the certification process—its inclusion has to be built into the contract. Up to 14 credits (out of 118) are related to construction activities, including ISO 9001 certification for the general contractor, environmental training, diversion of construction waste from landfills, use of alternative fuels in construction equipment, emissions reduction, water conservation, and sufficient warranties.

Finally, credits are weighted toward items that have the greatest impact. For instance, pavement alone can contribute to at least 20 points (more if the material is recycled or regionally sourced). On the other hand, stormwater treatment best practices are worth anywhere from one to three points. Bicycle and pedestrian access are each worth one to two points.

Greenroads is still refining its rating system. Since up to one-fifth of city land is typically devoted to streets, Greenroads certification is a terrific opportunity for municipalities, counties, and state highway departments to partner with the private sector in improving the sustainability of the built environment.

According to Greenroads, pioneers such as the San Jose Infrastructure Maintenance Division saved 23 percent on the cost of installing a two-mile-long street by choosing more sustainable materials—enough to pave another half-mile elsewhere in the city. It's quite possible that the way to a better built environment is through the pocketbook!

quality credits from rain gardens installed along Bagby Street, a Greenroads-certified stretch of road running 0.6 miles through the city's Midtown neighborhood. (For more on this project, see "Really Complete Streets," October 2014.) By allowing adjacent development to claim credit for water quality measures completed within the right-of-way, more land is made available for development and development costs are minimized. This will allow the Midtown Redevelopment Authority to provide another tool for attracting redevelopment in this district.

Using the pilot projects mentioned above, New York City is currently conducting a Green Infrastructure Co-Benefits Study—assessing the costs and benefits of different types of green infrastructure. By monitoring the projects as well as using data from literature reviews, the city aims to quantify benefits beyond stormwater management, such as carbon sequestration, urban heat island mitigation, reduced energy demand in buildings, improved habitat and ecosystem services, improved air quality, community revitalization, flood mitigation, improved urban agriculture opportunities, and green jobs.

The study will also identify and quantify the projects' life-cycle environmental and economic costs. These benefits and costs will be added to a database to support comparisons and evaluations of green infrastructure used throughout the city.

There is a general lesson in all of this: When comparing the costs of green infrastructure to single-purpose gray infrastructure, both the capital costs and the maintenance costs should be considered.

Not quite a done deal

As with other environmental trends that became conventional, there are still numerous challenges to advancing the state of the art in green infrastructure and to increasing its usage.

Claims of environmental and economic benefits should be backed up by peer-reviewed research. Cities should closely examine their own policies to see what is impeding green infrastructure (requiring concrete or asphalt driveways, disallowing permeable pavement). Although tactical urbanism and pilot projects are a worthy place to begin a green infrastructure movement, planners should keep pressing for a system-wide approach.

At the same time, overcomplicating or analyzing a green infrastructure program can have drastic results—letting the perfect become the enemy of the good. A slow and deliberate evolution will often lead to a more accepted and effective green infrastructure program. Finally, there needs to be an understanding of required maintenance of green infrastructure so that ongoing costs can be estimated accurately. Finding ways of reducing the perceived risk may accelerate broader acceptance. ■

Rebecca Leonard is the president of Design Workshop.

RESOURCES

IN PRINT

Green Infrastructure: A Landscape Approach (PAS Report 571), published by APA in 2013, is available from planning.org/store/books.

ONLINE

Cost-benefit resources from the EPA: <http://tinyurl.com/ljuvke7>.
Greenroads: greenroads.org.

New Rules for Regulating Cellular Towers

LAW

THE DRAMATIC INCREASE IN THE USE OF PERSONAL WIRELESS telecommunication services over the past few decades, and the resulting zoning conflicts over the siting of cellular towers and antennas, led Congress to adopt provisions governing how governments could regulate this new technology, and then to amend those provisions. The initial legislation, § 704(c)(7) of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, while titled "Preservation of Local Zoning Authority," actually limited local zoning of cell towers and associated facilities in order to prevent arbitrary restrictions and capricious decision making.

While the TCA does expressly preserve state and local authority for regulating the placement, construction, or modification of personal wireless service facilities, it also establishes standards for and places limits on such regulations. Specifically, the regulation of the placement, construction, or modification of personal wireless service facilities by any state or local government may not: (1) prohibit or have the effect of prohibiting the provision of personal wireless services; (2) unreasonably discriminate among providers of functionally equivalent services; or (3) address potential effects of nonionizing electromagnetic radiation.

The TCA also established procedural safeguards on state or local government regulations of the placement, construction, or modification of personal wireless service facilities. Applications must be acted on within a reasonable period of time, denial of an application must be in writing, and denial of an application must be supported by substantial evidence contained in a written record.

Over the past few years, amendments to the TCA, Supreme Court rulings, and regulations issued by the Federal Communications Commission have established new substantive and procedural rules. Planning commissions need to be familiar with and follow these new rules, discussed below.

The Court weighs in

In 2013 and 2015, the U.S. Supreme Court issued rulings on procedural aspects of the TCA. The 2013 ruling, *City of Arlington, Texas v. FCC*, upheld the commission's decision that the TCA had granted authority to issue its so-called "Shot Clock Ruling" governing the time in which a government must approve or deny a zoning application for a wireless facility (more on that below).

In January 2015, the Court's ruling in *T-Mobile South, LLC v. City of Roswell, Ga.*, established that while the TCA requires governments to provide reasons when they deny applications to build cell phone towers, they are not required to provide their reasons for denying siting applications in the denial notice itself, or any other particular form, but may state those reasons with sufficient clarity in some other written record issued essentially contemporaneously with the denial. The decision stressed that providing the reasons for the denial in writing "at essentially the same time as it communicates its denial," was critical, and so the Court easily found that the city of Roswell had failed to meet that requirement when it provided the reasons for its denial 28 days after denying the application.

In 2012, Congress amended the TCA to mandate local approval of certain applications for modification of "an existing wireless tower or base station." The amendment requires that a state or local government "may not deny, and shall approve, any eligible

facilities request for a modification of an existing wireless tower or base station that does not substantially change the physical dimensions of such tower or base station." The amendment specifies that the term "eligible facilities request" means any request for modification of an existing wireless tower or base station that involves: (1) colocation of new transmission equipment; (2) removal of transmission equipment; or (3) replacement of transmission equipment.

The latest from the FCC

In October 2014, the FCC issued rules that addressed a number of zoning regulation issues concerning wireless facilities, including clarification of several aspects of the 2012 TCA amendment, the commission's 2009 "Shot Clock" Rule, regulation of new wireless technologies, and compliance with review procedures under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. The commission's *Report and Order*, which provides the text (and an explanation) of the new rules, contains 155 pages. While we discuss some basic aspects of the new rules here, planning commissions should obtain a copy of this document and review it in detail with appropriate planning staff and legal counsel.

The 2014 rules contain several provisions that clarify the 2012 TCA amendment mandating approval of modifications to existing wireless facilities, including colocation. These include: specifying when a modification "substantially changes" the physical dimensions of a tower or base structure; providing that governments shall approve an application for a modification within 60 days unless the parties have agreed to toll that period or the application is incomplete; and deeming an application approved if the government fails to act within the requisite time period.

The 2014 rules also clarified the commission's 2009 "Shot Clock Ruling," which interpreted the TCA's requirement that



Recent FCC regulations clarify the rules for siting new or modifying existing cell towers.

state and local governments act on zoning requests within "a reasonable period of time." The 2009 ruling had interpreted that language as presumptively meaning within 90 days of the filing of a complete application for the colocating of a wireless facility (later reduced to 60 days) and within 150 days of the filing of a complete application for all other applications, including a new wireless facility.

The 2014 rules clarify that these time frames begin to run when an application is first submitted, not when it is deemed complete by the reviewing government. Further, a determination of incompleteness tolls (the clock is stopped until the reason for the stoppage is addressed) the shot clock only if the state or local government provides notice to the applicant in writing within 30 days of the application's submission, specifically delineating all missing information. Following a submission in response to a determination of incompleteness, any subsequent determination that an application remains incomplete must be based solely on the applicant's failure to supply missing information that was identified within the first 30 days.

It is critical that planning commissions recognize that while the commission's 2009 "Shot Clock Ruling" allowed government 90 days to rule on an application for colocating, this 2014 rule on colocating has reduced the time for approval to 60 days.

Finally, planning commissions are well advised to consider the concise description of the new rules for zoning regulation of wireless facilities presented above to be, metaphorically, just the "tip of the iceberg." The substantive and procedural rules and court rulings governing zoning approval of wireless facilities is complex and nuanced. Planning commissioners either need to understand those complexities themselves or receive competent guidance from those who do.

—Alan Weinstein

Weinstein has a joint appointment as professor of law and urban studies at Cleveland State University's College of Law and College of Urban Affairs.



Boston Common, circa 1910



St. Augustine's Plaza de la Constitución, circa 1880

HISTORY

DUELING HISTORY. What is the oldest public park in the U.S.? This is a seemingly simple question without a clear answer. Many sources, including the National Park Service, would tell you that it is Boston Common. Established in 1634, the area was a pasture for cows and a military training ground. It was not until the late 18th century that Boston Common started to evolve into the park that we think of today. A lesser known contender lies more than 1,000 miles to the south. St. Augustine, Florida, is a Spanish settlement dating back to 1566. Like most Spanish cities, it contains a central public space called a plaza. The Plaza de la Constitución was constructed around 1600 to function as the city's principal recreation and meeting space, according to the nomination of the city's downtown to the National Register of Historic Places. While smaller in scale, St. Augustine's plaza is older than Boston Common by nearly 30 years.

The debate may come down to what actually constitutes a park. Oxforddictionaries.com defines a park as "a large public green area in a town, used for recreation." The definition is ambiguous enough to allow for plenty of debate on the subject, but arguments can be made in favor of either place.

—Ben Leitschuh

Leitschuh is APA's education associate.

RESOURCE FINDER

The world is becoming more connected every day. Is your community ready to handle the next big push in telecommunications?

APA PUBLICATIONS

Federal Cell Tower Zoning: Key Points and Practical Suggestions

John W. Pestle
Zoning Practice, August 2011
planning.org/zoningpractice/2011/pdf/aug.pdf

Local Control and Wireless Facilities Siting *PAS QuickNotes No. 55*

planning.org/pas/quicknotes/pdf/QN55.pdf

OTHER RESOURCES

Wireless Facilities: Managing the Approval Process to Protect Municipal Interests and Comply with State and Federal Law

Katherine B. Miller
<http://tinyurl.com/ivy8myq>

—Ben Leitschuh

http://www.scpr.org/news/2015/06/16/52453/stormwater-capture-rules-gain-new-urgency-as-droug/

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Environment & Science

Stormwater capture rules gain new urgency as drought lingers

Molly Peterson June 16 2015

Trash in the crook of a boom at the mouth of the L.A. River is a visible reminder of the way storm water drains through city and county systems toward the coast. New rules aimed at capturing stormwater could keep pollution and water supplies upstream.

MOLLY PETERSON/KPCC



Under the pressure of a lingering drought, state regulators could approve a sweeping set of rules governing stormwater that for the first time aims not only to keep Los Angeles County rivers, streams and beaches clean, but also to save water in an effort to recharge dwindling local supplies.

Regulators call the rules a groundbreaking paradigm shift in managing dozens of pollutants that together make up the largest source of coastal pollution in Southern California. But environmental groups that have been fighting over L.A. water quality for decades say a revamped municipal separate storm sewer system permit (known to insiders as the MS4) may not go far enough to accomplish either goal.

Every new permit stirs long-running tensions among regulators, public agencies, and critics of pollution enforcement. When the Los Angeles County Regional Water Quality Control Board approved this one in 2012, it was no different, drawing more than three dozen petitions for change. Now many parties the stakes are higher because of the lengthening drought.

The management system that applies to Los Angeles County storm system operators departs from past practice in two ways.

Under the new rules, the city and county of Los Angeles, as well as 84 other cities, are working together within watersheds to plan for stormwater, treat its pollution under 33 separate standards, and in some cases, capture it. Together they develop more than a dozen watershed management plans, including around areas of the Los Angeles River and the San Gabriel River.

“There’s been an unprecedented amount of collaboration amongst the municipalities,” says Water Board executive officer Sam Unger.

Environmental groups, including L.A. Waterkeeper and the Natural Resources Defense Council, say the framework has potential. But they have raised concerns that provisional plans don’t do enough to mandate rainwater capture, and, in some cases, reward cities for doing less.

“If it required compliance with water quality limits and mandated stormwater retention wherever feasible, it could really play a critical role in reducing our reliance on imported sources of water,” says L.A. Waterkeeper’s executive director Liz Crosson. “We can’t afford not to make the connection between those issues wherever possible right now.”

The state is offering some money for stormwater infrastructure, but funding isn’t guaranteed. That leaves exact compliance timelines somewhat in doubt. To NRDC attorney Steve Fleishli, that’s problematic. “This is just building more delays into that process of protecting our waterways and the people who use them,” he says.

Regulators deny these concerns. But they acknowledge that transforming the landscape will cost money. The state has authorized millions of dollars in proposition money and emergency drought-related funding, specifically for storm water management. Still, estimates for costs in L.A. County alone rise above a billion dollars.

“We understand that funding is a challenge,” Unger says. “If it turns out they can’t implement the plan because the funds are available it will revert back to the previous permit.”

If cities and the county fall behind on the new watershed-focused standards, they say there’s an alternative compliance path: the traditional standards for water quality could still apply.

Few of the stormwater capture plans anticipated by this permit will be in place by this fall. If there is an El Niño, that’s the next opportunity for serious rain to begin falling again.





BUILDING SANDWICH Four stories of prefabricated housing modules hover above a ground-floor health clinic with a recreation terrace set between them.

Star Apartments | Los Angeles
Michael Maltzan Architecture

STACKING THE DECK

An architect and a nonprofit client work together for the third time to create housing for the formerly homeless, this time using prefabricated modules.

BY SARAH AMELAR

PHOTOGRAPHY BY IWAN BAAN

Star Apartments, in downtown Los Angeles, is striking not just for its angular, almost levitating sculptural form, but also for the ways it differs from Michael Maltzan Architecture (MMA)'s prior work for the nonprofit Skid Row Housing Trust (SRHT). "Rather than create a prototype and make it over and over, our collaboration with the Trust as our client is very much in the laboratory phase, still exploring what's possible," says principal Michael Maltzan. Each successive commission—Star is the third—"has expanded the ambitions," he says, "allowing us to reconsider how a building can be lived in, can support its residents, fit into the evolving city, and even be made."

Enlisting top-notch architecture to help overcome homelessness is fundamental to SRHT, which started in 1989, turning derelict SRO hotels in Skid Row into safe, affordable, attractive, hotel-style quarters for the chronically homeless. By the mid-'90s, SRHT began creating permanent, instead of transitional, supportive housing, and eventually entire new buildings, with efficiency apartments and on-site social services. And "a miraculous thing happened," says the organization's literature: "long-term homeless people . . . often considered 'beyond help,' got better, a lot better."

Yet housing this population often elicits neighborhood wariness—even along downtown Los Angeles's raw, but gentrifying fringes. SRHT responds with architecture that's "not just acceptable but outstanding—beautiful, high-performing design that serves formerly homeless residents, while genuinely enhancing the city," says Theresa Hwang, SRHT's director of community design and planning. "One of our goals is to break down stigma and NIMBY-ism."

SRHT, which owns and operates 1,600 units in 24 buildings, first engaged MMA to design Rainbow Apartments (2006), a model for permanent supportive housing. Then came the New Carver Apartments (2009), which took SRHT



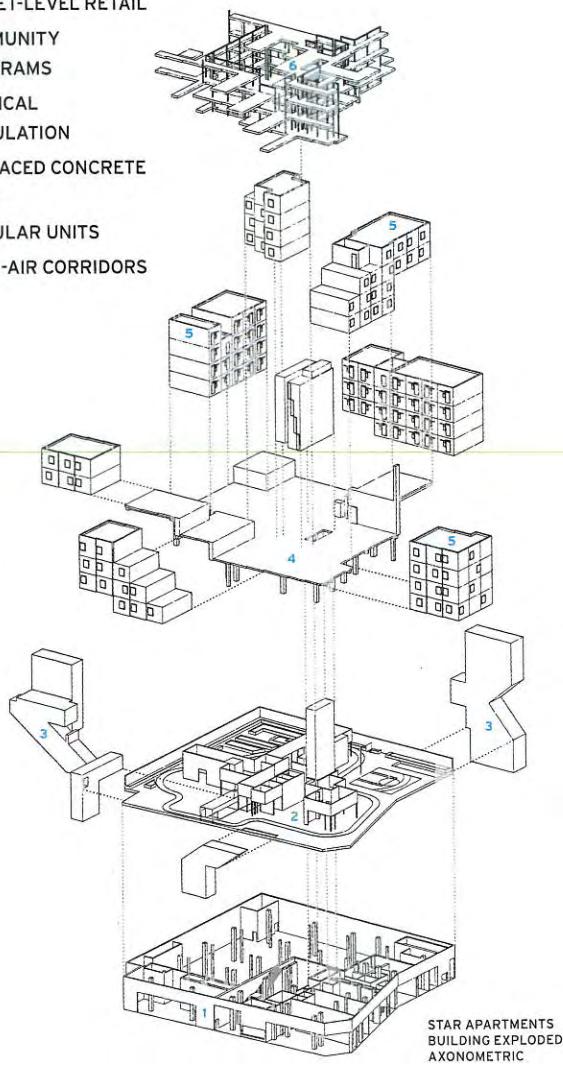
beyond Skid Row and gave a difficult site along the I-10 freeway a landmark. Completed in 2014, Star Apartments broke new ground, except not literally—as its base is an existing structure.

To integrate housing within a larger community, SRHT sought opportunities for a mixed-use project. A low-rise concrete building at Maple Avenue and 6th Street offered just that: a typical Skid Row hodgepodge of mom-and-pop street-level retail beneath roof-deck parking. Razing this five-year-old structure would have violated SRHT's commitment to sustainability—and also forfeited its chance to include retail, since its funding stipulations permit only pre-existing mixed-use.

The decision to piggyback on an existing structure led MMA to an approach not explored in Los Angeles



- 1 STREET-LEVEL RETAIL
- 2 COMMUNITY PROGRAMS
- 3 VERTICAL CIRCULATION
- 4 TERRACED CONCRETE SLAB
- 5 MODULAR UNITS
- 6 OPEN-AIR CORRIDORS



**CITY VIEWS**

The recreation terrace (above) offers open and covered spaces, as well as indoor rooms for art, dining, reading, and exercise. The apartments cluster around a courtyard and are connected by outdoor walkways (right). The prefab units were delivered by truck from Idaho and lifted onto a concrete deck (opposite, top). The 95,000-square-foot building occupies a corner site on Skid Row (opposite, bottom).





in decades: multifamily modular prefab. When traditional configurations, including double-loaded corridors and central courtyards, failed to fit enough units, plus generous outdoor areas, within a six-story limit, Maltzan recalls, "we needed to devise a model for another kind of urban space."

MMA's solution was to repurpose the parking deck as a podium, a 15,220-square-foot terrace with gardens and a jogging track, alongside a communal kitchen, lounge, and rooms for art and exercise. Above that level, a new concrete tray could accommodate 102 units, stacked non-hierarchically and interwoven with patios and outdoor catwalks—a configuration reminiscent of a hill town's scale, density, and meandering routes. "Craning in the units seemed like a natural fit," says Maltzan. "Prefab emerged as the most direct and efficient approach, addressing issues from technical and financial to social and urban."

SRHT hired Guerdon Enterprises in Idaho to prefabricate the wood-frame

modules—each a 300-square-foot studio with full kitchen, bath, and interior finishes factory-installed—while the existing building in downtown Los Angeles was retrofitted with extra concrete columns to help support the new sections. Two concrete interior stairways were also added, laterally bracing the second-floor deck. From the exterior, these muscular diagonals express the structural brawn of holding the modules high above the podium.

The units were fabricated in seven weeks and assembled in only six. On-site, they plugged into the web of steel catwalks, which double as armatures for electric, water, and gas lines.

Though the apartments are virtually identical, their massing creates a microcosm of localized conditions or "neighborhoods" with views out to the city. Input from residents, many with mental or physical disabilities, played a role in strengthening visual connections to street life and creating communal spaces more extroverted than the sheltered courts in MMA's

earlier projects.

Star's program, more complex than its predecessors, changed in midconstruction when the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services chose an unprecedented role, making a 15-year commitment to be the sole ground-floor tenant, with a large community clinic and offices for its Housing for Health program. Though not the retail and clientele mix originally envisioned, this storefront clinic serves Star residents and a broader public.

The \$40 million project has attained LEED for Homes Platinum and a high tenant-retention rate. As MMA's fourth Trust building, Crest, heads into construction, Star's community gardens burgeon with mint, tomatoes, and fruit trees. The high-ceilinged lobby, with its original concrete floors glowing, marks the gracious, modern entry to a place of pride. "People seem to be over the moon," observes Hwang. "Every time I go by, I see someone strumming a guitar or making sure the gardens get weeded." ■

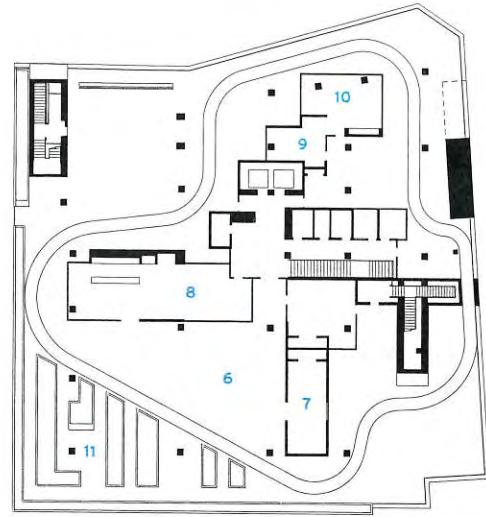
HOUSE PROUD

A double-height lobby (above) sits within an existing building converted into space for a health clinic, offices for the city's Housing for Health agency, and parking. Each 300-square-foot apartment (opposite, top and bottom) has a full kitchen and bathroom.

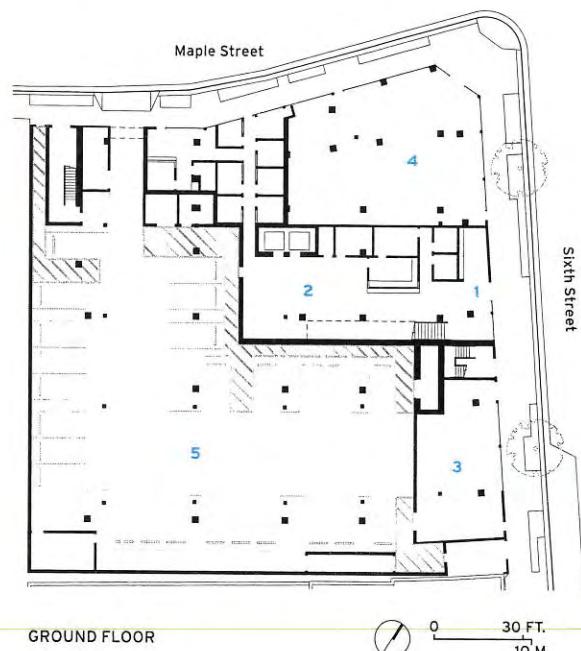
- 1 MAIN ENTRANCE
- 2 LOBBY
- 3 HEALTH CLINIC
- 4 HOUSING FOR HEALTH OFFICES
- 5 PARKING
- 6 PATIO
- 7 EXERCISE
- 8 DINING/KITCHEN
- 9 LIBRARY
- 10 ART
- 11 GARDEN
- 12 APARTMENT



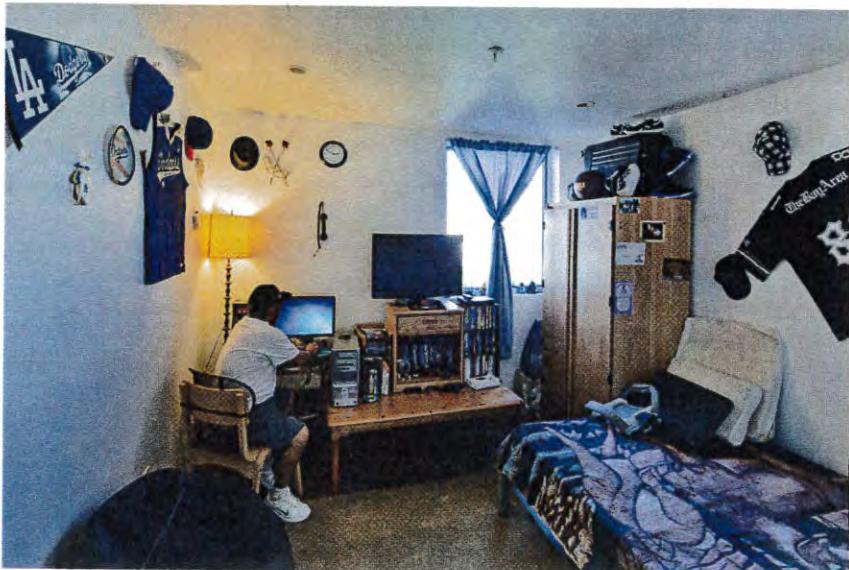
FOURTH LEVEL



PODUM LEVEL



GROUND FLOOR



credits

ARCHITECT: Michael Maltzan Architecture – Michael Maltzan, design principal; Tim Williams, principal in charge; Wil Carson, Edward Tung, Jessica Tracy, Sahaja Aram, Hiroshi Tokumaru, Michael Striegel, Theresa Hwang, David Rodriguez, Hoey Yip, Joseph Saccomanno, Mike Wang, Jessica Varner, Lisa Madonna, project team

ENGINEERS: B.W. Smith Structural Engineers, Nova Structures (structural); Green Engineering Consulting Group (m/e/p); Curtis Fletcher (prefabrication)

GENERAL CONTRACTOR: Westport Construction

CLIENT: Skid Row Housing Trust

PREFAB CONTRACTOR: Guerdon Enterprises

SIZE: 95,000 square feet

COST: \$19.3 million

SOURCES

CURTAIN WALL: Arcadia

WINDOWS: Western Window Systems

Photo courtesy of Unilock



Designing for High-Traffic Outdoor Spaces

A variety of products provide design options for high-traffic outdoor spaces

Sponsored by Architectural Area Lighting, Bison Innovative Products, Kim Lighting, Soil Retention, the StressCrete Group, Tournesol Siteworks, and Unilock
By Elena M. Pascarella, PLA, ASLA, Principal – Landscape Elements LLC

Public Plaza at the CN Tower, Toronto, Ontario, designed by IBI Group LA / Graham Infrastructure LP, provides an accessible, comfortable, sociable outdoor public space.

Landscape architects and designers consider a number of factors when designing for outdoor spaces. These factors include both the social and physical criteria that can influence the use and function of the space. The Project for Public Spaces (PPS) has been studying and evaluating public spaces since its founding in 1975. The PPS has found that there are four key qualities that make successful public spaces.

"They are accessible; people are engaged in activities there; the space is comfortable and has a good image; and finally, it is a sociable place: one where people meet each other and take people when they come to visit."

In designing high-traffic outdoor spaces that are successful, architects, landscape architects, and designers should consider these four key qualities as outlined by the PPS: accessibility, aesthetic image, comfort, and sociability. Factors of safety, durability, and sustainability should also be considered.

Accessibility is achieved not only through location, visibility, and connectivity to and from other destinations but also through the selection of pavement surfaces that are safe for people of

all ages and physical abilities. Compliance with the latest ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) guidelines² is essential to providing outdoor spaces that are safe and accessible by all users.

An outdoor space with an appealing aesthetic image will naturally entice more users into the space. Appealing outdoor spaces appear comfortable, clean, have adequate lighting and seating, and provide quality design through material selection. In addition, outdoor spaces that are designed for flexibility and are able to accommodate varied user groups as well as serve a variety of outdoor functions are thus more appealing and experience heavier use.

Materials that are modular can provide opportunities for changing the structure and function of an outdoor space. Varied pavement materials or pavement patterns provide tools for differentiating sub areas within a larger outdoor space. The broad range of pavement choices provides options for both design aesthetics and function.

An outdoor space that is comfortable has adequate site amenities such as benches and site lighting. Site lighting provides security and comfort during night-time use and it can

help to identify a public space, defining and highlighting various activity areas, entrances, and important features.

PPS states: "In many situations, particularly when people are concerned about security, there is a tendency to over-light a park, plaza, street, or other public space. But in fact, too much lighting can be just as bad as too little lighting. The key to developing a good plan is to relate lighting to the evening functions of a particular space, because in the larger view, street lighting is more than just a technical requirement, a security need, or a design element. It can be thought of and utilized in terms of how the type, placement, and wattage affect how a street is perceived and used."³

Benches provide comfort for users needing a place to stop and rest, enjoy lunch, take in a conversation or just to relax. Benches should be placed based on how the space will be used, not just in regularly spaced intervals along a walkway or within the space. Providing the correct type of bench or seating is also important. Benches should provide seating in a variety of sunlight situations, accommodate wheelchair users on either side of the bench,

Photo courtesy of Tournesol Siteworks



Thermally modified wood benches provide comfortable seating in high-use areas.

and be ergonomically designed for user comfort. Ergonomic design standards indicate comfortable seat height of 18 inches, seat width of 12 to 18 inches for benches with backs, and 30 inches for benches without backs and a 95- to 105-degree angle for the seat back.

Social outdoor spaces attract people and “what attracts people most, it would appear, is other people” (*William H. Whyte: The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces*).⁴ William H. Whyte observed this pattern of attraction in public outdoor spaces throughout the world. People were attracted to outdoor spaces that had social gatherings of other people. And an outdoor space that presents an image of safety will be more likely to attract people. Such spaces are easily accessible, have adequate lighting for safe night-time use, have adequate visibility and adequate seating, and provide safe walking surfaces.

Durability of materials is an important design criteria for high-traffic spaces. Non-durable materials will wear more rapidly and will create unsafe and unsightly elements in the space. Non-durable materials will also increase client costs as they will require increased maintenance and/or more frequent replacement.

PAVEMENTS FOR ACCESSIBILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY IN HIGH-TRAFFIC AREAS

Of the many products available for pavement surfaces in high-traffic outdoor areas, modular pavers have seen increased popularity as they

provide a wealth of design options with respect to color, size, and surface finish while being easy to install. Modular pavers provide flexibility for the design composition as well as ease of maintenance as individual units are easily removed and replaced should any unit become damaged through excessive abuse or severe impacts.

Studies have been done by the International Concrete Paving Institute (ICPI) regarding interlocking concrete pavers and ADA compliance.

Concrete Pavers

Interlocking precast concrete pavers provide many options with respect to size, shape, color, and surface texture. These pavers have been available to designers for many years and used in pedestrian, vehicular, and heavy-duty settings where durability is a requirement. The latest technologies and manufacturing processes take this durability to the next level in order to ensure the product maintains its texture and color without degradation in high-traffic areas. New processes have also given us products with surface textures and colors that look like natural stone as well as products that are unique and contemporary in styling and surface texture.

Pavers were originally manufactured with a mix of large and small aggregate throughout the entire unit that allowed for the large aggregate to become exposed at the surface over time.

Today, select manufacturers combine large and small aggregates in layers through the

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Learning Objectives

After reading this article, you should be able to:

1. Develop sustainable strategies for designing highly trafficked outdoor spaces.
2. Understand the various approaches for providing energy-efficient outdoor lighting utilizing the latest LED technologies.
3. Determine the most appropriate pavement surface application or applications for outdoor space, based on projected design use.
4. List the key qualities inherent in successful public spaces.

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entire precast concrete paver mix with the larger aggregates in the base to provide strength and the smaller aggregates towards the top. A blended layer of the highest level performing minerals that are fade-resistant is embedded into the surface of each stone during the manufacturing process. This not only provides variable options for color and texture aesthetic but ensures that the surface will not fade, crack, peel, or delaminate, and offers a durable surface that maintains its color and character through years of high-traffic use.

When specifying precast concrete pavers, designers should consider the application and use—pedestrian, vehicular, or both. Other factors to consider in specifying interlocking precast concrete pavers include how the paver is made, the paver size or sizes, color, subsurface preparation, and the desired paver pattern. In addition, designers should determine whether the project must meet LEED®, SITES™, or IGCC (International Green Construction Code) criteria and if so, consider the selection of a color with a high solar reflectance index (SRI) value to reduce urban heat island effects and/or a permeable paver.

A number of interlocking precast concrete pavers are permeable and are available in a wide variety of styles and colors with ADA-compliant joint spacing thus helping to meet LEED®, SITES™, and IGCC criteria and assist in meeting local demands for sustainability. The Interlocking Concrete Paver Institute provides

information relating to the permeability of interlocking precast concrete pavers.

ADA Design Guidelines require that surfaces be firm, stable, and slip resistant. The ADA Design Guidelines recommend that the static coefficient of friction for flat surfaces along accessible routes be 0.6 and 0.8 for ramps. ADA advisory material recommends various test methods to assess surface slip resistance. The Interlocking Concrete Pavement Institute's technical Specification Section 13 provides information on the slip and skid resistance of interlocking concrete pavements.⁵ When specifying precast concrete pavers, designers should note their capacity for slip resistance, resistance to salt erosion, and tolerance to resist oil and gas spills. These characteristics, along with their colorfast pigments and durable aggregate composition, can provide a surface material that is able to withstand high traffic as well as severe weather conditions.

To meet durability criteria, pavers are manufactured to comply with both ASTM C936 and CSA (Canadian) A 231.2 industry quality standards for strength and absorption as well as dimensional tolerances. During the manufacturing process, pavers are carefully tested, and hourly product density tests are performed. The high strength of concrete pavers, combined with low water absorption, provides a hardscape material that won't crack, peel, or delaminate. Interlocking precast concrete pavers can offer up to four times the strength of poured concrete.

The Grand Traverse Fire Station, Grand Traverse, Michigan, designed by Gourdie-Fraser, Inc., shows color options for permeable interlocking concrete pavers.



High-quality pavers are manufactured with the highest-quality minerals and pigments that are color stable and do not fade. Interlocking precast concrete pavers can be made in custom colors and textures as well as with custom recycled content. At the United Nations Center in New York, the old window pane glass was ground and made into a pozzolan that was added to the concrete pavers during the manufacturing process as part of the recycled content of the paving stones.

Case studies have been done on the durability and quality of interlocking precast concrete pavers involving applications at high-traffic areas in Cleveland, Ohio. The Uptown Alleyway project was designed by James Corner Field Operation. The project covers approximately 65,000 square feet of both vehicular and pedestrian areas. Of the total area, approximately 35,000 square feet is permeable. This is the City of Cleveland's first permeable public roadway project. The alleyway uses long plank pavers in a variety of grey color tones. Due to the heavy pedestrian and vehicular traffic, it was essential that the paver surface be durable, color-fast, highly abrasion resistant, and strong to withstand the harsh winter climate.

The aesthetic appeal of interlocking precast concrete pavers lies in the variety of available colors and textures. While some options mimic natural stone, bricks, or cobbles, others offer contemporary surfaces, shapes, and sizing. It is this variety that allows the landscape architect or designer to execute their creative vision for

Photo courtesy of Unilock

the project, or to follow industry trends such as long, linear plank designs or large-format slab paving. From roof decks to streetscapes, permeable to heavy-duty, there is a paver for every application.

While color is always evolving, other trends include mixing different paver shapes within the paver pattern and varying textures for aesthetic appeal.

Flexible Concrete Mats

Flexible concrete mats can provide vehicular parking for high-traffic outdoor areas. The flexible concrete mats provide designers with the option to green up an outdoor space by adding vegetation to the interior openings in the mat. The mats are made of wet-cast, low-moisture-absorption concrete, which is cast with holes to allow for infiltration and root penetration of the infill vegetation material. Cast inside the concrete is an engineered polymer grid that provides flexibility to the concrete mat. This flexibility provides added tensile strength to complement the compressive strength of the concrete. The flexibility also allows these mats to conform to irregular ground surfaces along pre-defined linear grooves while providing structural support for high-traffic use. The flexible concrete mat maintains its load-supporting characteristics even when saturated. The design also eliminates sharp edges and won't crack and break like rigid concrete or pop up like plastic. The small openings in the concrete grid provide spaces for infill planting of turf grass or groundcovers as well as infill with gravel, sand, or crushed stone.

The mat is designed so that the grass or groundcover that is planted in the holes can develop a continuous root system below the mat surface, thus promoting a healthy turf while minimizing moisture evaporation. Because the flexible concrete mat has porous openings and a shallow depth, it allows water to flow through laterally and to penetrate the root system of the grass. In addition, the geometry of the mat limits infill and root compaction by concentrating the load on the concrete pads instead of void spaces. The large bearing connections of the concrete coupled with the size of the holes or void spaces provide the optimal situation for sustaining and maintaining grass or other groundcover materials.

Many urban sites with large paved surfaces are challenged in trying to obtain LEED® and SITES credits. LEED® NC Criteria SSc6.2 provides credits for Stormwater Design – Quality Control. Credits are given to projects that address polluted runoff. The credit measures the Total Suspended Solids (TSS) as the indicator of level of pollution and the design must be able to show that the stormwater

treatment system is effective at treating all rainstorms for any year up to 90 percent of the average annual rainfall. The American Society of Landscape Architects in conjunction with the National Arboretum and the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center has issued their Sustainable SITES Initiative rating system. Section 3 – Site Design Water provides a possible 23 credits for designs that manage and reduce stormwater at the site.

For high-traffic areas that must meet the requirements of LEED®, SITES™, or International Green Construction Code (IGCC) criteria, the flexible concrete mat can assist in stormwater management, reduce heat island effect, lower run-off coefficients, assist in on-site water storage and biofiltration, and contribute to groundwater recharge.

The mats can be used in place of concrete or asphalt pavement, thus providing alternative solutions to stormwater management by providing surface areas for biofiltration, infiltration, and water storage below the parking/driving surface without requiring the loss of valuable site area to surface bioswales or detention basins. An example of this type of use is the fire lane at a Kaiser Permanente Hospital. The total surface area of flexible concrete mats can contribute towards required green space allowances and also meet criteria for reducing Heat Island Effect.

A project in Hastings on Hudson, New York, features three different residences on a shared lot just across from a walking trail. An area was needed for off-street parking for up to seven vehicles. The Planning Board wanted to be assured that whatever was used to create the unique, diagonally shaped parking space would blend well with the natural surroundings and not distract from the nearby Aqueduct Trailway. Ned Baldwin, senior partner with the firm of Baldwin & Franklin Architects, proposed the use of flexible concrete mats to create an area of drivable grass. "By using drivable grass instead of asphalt paving, we easily gained the approval of the Planning Board," says Baldwin. "The grass we planted over it turned green in less than three weeks, which was very encouraging, but the winter was the most severe we've had in 15 years with as much as 30 inches of snowfall at one time. Despite that terrible winter so soon after its installation, it continues to thrive."

Flexible concrete mats are manufactured to meet ASTM precast concrete standards for compressive strength, standard proctor, particle size analysis, concrete aggregates, mixed concrete, Portland cement, blended hydraulic cement, slump flow and pigments for integrally colored concrete. The manufacture process for the flexible concrete mats also follows the American Concrete Institute (ACI) standard practice for selecting proportions for normal,

heavy weight, and mass concrete, and for durability.

Flexible concrete mats can be used in all climate areas, but specific recommendations are provided for cold weather applications. Specifications recommend that sites requiring the use of snowplow machinery install mow curb strips prior to installation of the paving mats and that the mats should be depressed $\frac{1}{2}$ inch below the top of the mow curb/strip to protect the mat from the snowplow blade. In addition, it is recommended that snowplow equipment operators be educated about the underlying surface prior to snow removal and that the snowplow equipment be fitted with Teflon runners to prevent damage to the mat.

people rather than cars. The parklet, which takes up space formally occupied by two parked vehicles, provides several hundred square feet of benches, tables, planters, and bike racks. The pilot program in San Francisco was a huge success and increased sales at a local café by 20 percent. As a result, additional employees were hired. The success of this program led the way for dozens of similar projects across the city, making livable streets possible all over the United States.

Studies have been done to evaluate the function and durability of pop-up parks using modular wood tiles. The studies show an emerging trend among communities throughout the country with a desire to make use of small

Photo courtesy of Soil Retention



The use of flexible concrete mats creates a drivable grass area in Hastings on Hudson, New York.

Durable Wood Walking Surfaces

Modular wood tiles can provide another option for high-traffic areas which require durable and sustainable walking surfaces. Because of their modular characteristic and design flexibility, modular wood tiles can be installed over a variety of surfaces and are adaptable to a variety of sites. Modular wood tiles can be used to create large wood deck surfaces either on building rooftops or at ground-level surfaces. At the ground level, these modular decks have served as outdoor dining areas for high-traffic restaurants and as pop-up parks.

Pop-up parks or parklets have been designed and built throughout the United States in areas of varying climate such as New York, California, Minnesota, and Colorado. Modular wood tiles were used in the first-ever pop-up park in the country at the Mojo Café in San Francisco, California. The pop-up park has been in use since 2010 and repurposed street space for

urban spaces that are traditionally unbuildable. Modular wood tiles enable greater design creativity in small urban spaces.

Modular wood deck tiles are FSC® certified (FSC-C13454) so Ipe and Massaranduba wood tiles could contribute LEED points under Materials and Resources Credit 7 (MR Crédit 6 for CS). The wood tiles are supported by pedestals, which contain 20 percent post-industrial recycled material, thus potentially contributing to multiple points within Materials and Resources Credits 4 as a single product contributing to multiple LEED points. The tiles are made from wood remnants. These remnants are premium-grade shorts purchased from the flooring and furniture industries that comply with strict regulations regarding extraction, milling, and transport.

Modular wood tiles come in 2 foot by 2 foot (2 x 2) and 2 foot by 4 foot (2 x 4) sized units. Each modular tile has seven to eight

Photo courtesy of Bison Innovative Products



Modular wood tiles supported by HDP pedestals

top slats and three bottom slats that are held together with 48 stainless steel screws that are inserted from the bottom so that the fasteners are not visible on the surface. The wood tiles are integrated with a pedestal system with tabs which hold the wood tile units in place. A fastening kit adds further stability with the system. The pedestal system has a levelling capacity that compensates for slope and changes in grade. Through this levelling system, elevations can be adjusted from heights as little as 1/8 of an inch up to 36 inches with pedestal attachments.

The wood tiles are ADA compliant as the surface texture and spacing between the units meet ADA criteria. The wood tiles meet industry standards and certifications for wind uplift, fire rating, slip resistance, weight-bearing capacity, and seismic. To ensure adequate weight bearing in support of heavier loads, it is recommended that more pedestals be used above the standard 1.2 ratio of pedestals to wood tiles. With respect to seismic and uplift requirements, the pedestal systems can include stabilizing bracing in addition to fasteners which deter wind uplift.

SITE AMENITIES FOR HIGH-TRAFFIC OUTDOOR SPACES

Site amenities that enhance comfort and safety will make an outdoor space much more inviting. In high-traffic areas, site amenities such as benches, planters, and site lighting should be durable to minimize maintenance and energy efficient to lower operation costs. Sustainability criteria and certifications are a way of ensuring a successful, cost-effective project.

Lighting plays a major role in visual comfort and security. Architectural flood lighting, pedestrian-scale decorative lighting, and in-grade luminaires for targeted up-lighting enhance and accent the beauty of the architecture and site features.

Benches provide comfort and enhance the image of outdoor spaces. According to the Project for Public Spaces, users are drawn to outdoor areas that present a positive image and provide comfortable elements such as benches. Benches can be fabricated from a variety of materials including cast iron, aluminum,



A pop-up park in Chicago using modular wood tiles

composite wood, recycled plastic, concrete, and natural wood. Each material has benefits and can be used appropriately in high-traffic outdoor spaces.

Lighting for Parking and Larger Outdoor Areas

The International Dark Sky Association (www.darksky.org) has completed research on LED lighting. LED lighting is much more efficient than conventional incandescent lighting at converting electrical energy to light. In conjunction with newer luminaire designs, LED lamps provide reduced energy use without compromising safety. Through this reduced energy demand/use, LEDs lower carbon emissions and also lower costs to the user/consumer. Use of LED technology for lighting can contribute qualification points to LEED® and SITES™ rating systems. A possible 16 total credits can be earned toward LEED certification in the use of LED lighting.

For larger outdoor spaces and parking areas, architectural LED flood lights with

targeted optics provide safe levels of lighting for high-traffic areas while allowing the designer control over excessive or trespass lighting outside of the application areas through the use of targeted optics.

For targeted optics, LED modules are recessed into the fixture housing to provide a glare-free zone with zero upright. The independent LED modules function as multiple points of an omni-directional optical system arranged to create the most optimum light distribution. Each luminaire has adjustable emitter modules to provide maximum spacing with uniform horizontal and vertical illumination. These modules are capable of a 70-degree vertical tilt and 350-degree rotation without ever moving the luminaire housing.

The International Dark Sky Association evaluates the zonal distributions and blue light content of LED luminaires and has established a Fixture Seal of Approval Program.⁶ Obtaining their seal of approval is dependent on the luminaire meeting one of many criteria including:

- Fixture must emit no light above 90 degrees (with the exclusion of incidental light reflecting from fixture housing, mounts, and pole).
- Fixture must have a listed correlated color temperature (CCT) configuration of 3,000K or below.

The luminaires comply with Dark Sky requirements for light trespass and light pollution and the structural LED optical system and flat lenses produce zero light above 90 degrees.

Incandescent and high-intensity discharge lamps can produce unnecessary light concentrations beneath the luminaire. The LED modules significantly reduce point source glare and smooth hot spots of other LED luminaires. Users experience the appropriate illuminance levels for uniform and quality lighting throughout the various needs of the application. Improving the light levels in the dark zones reduces shadowing and potential hazard areas, providing for a more secure design.

The LED modules in architectural LED flood lighting are designed with two distinct but complementary methods to manage the life-limiting heat produced by the LED diodes. Both conduction and convection are used and the optical system is monitored by circuitry tying back to the driver controls. Heat is drawn away from the housing chamber and dispersed into the air around the luminaire to maintain diode performance output and ensure longer life.

Dark Sky compliance through the International Dark Sky Association can be met through the use of cut-off fixtures, and the LED luminaires can also meet Illuminating Engineering Society (IES) TM15 requirements or "BUG" criteria. BUG stands for Backlight, Uplight, and Glare. The IES established the BUG criteria in 2005 as a result of increased demand for reduction in glare and light trespass. LEED SS 8.8 for exterior lighting credits are given if the site lighting used provides optimum down lighting (Dark Sky Friendly™) fixtures. Fixtures must be full cut-off for park/rural settings and for residential/commercial settings, have less than 2 percent uplight above 90 degrees.

LED light conversions were made in Boston, Massachusetts, when the city embarked on a major conversion of their light fixtures to more energy-efficient LED fixtures. Starting in 2012, Boston converted thousands of their existing 175W and 250W Mercury Vapour Acorn lights with replacement 60W and 75W LED lights. The City plans to change all existing Acorn lights with LED lights by the end of 2016. Boston's city-wide LED conversion has cut their energy consumption by 50 percent and payback is expected in 1.5 years.

The City of Austin, Texas holds a "south by southwest" (SXSW) event every year. This event



Photo courtesy of Kim Lighting

sees high-traffic use, and LED lighting provided the necessary light levels to enhance the safety of the event. The poles supporting the LED lights also provided an aesthetic image appeal as the City hung 55 decorative pendants from them. This is a City of Austin pilot program which includes 12 new streetlights and the conversion of 48 streetlights on Sixth Street between Interstate 35 and Brazos Street. The lights will brighten after the bars close for the night to enhance nighttime safety and return to normal once crowds disperse. The light levels are controlled remotely.

In-Grade Flood Lighting Provides Safety and Ambiance

Architectural LED flood lights are also available as in-grade or in-ground fixtures. In-grade fixtures or luminaires can provide both safety and ambiance lighting in areas where pole-mounted flood lighting would not be appropriate. In-grade luminaires can be placed

to provide uplighting of trees, flagpoles, and buildings, and the ambient light provides both aesthetic visual safety illumination.

Aiming can be controlled in LED in-grade luminaires with a Bluetooth-enabled mobile device. The end user, designer, or property manager can select either an iOS or Android mobile device to change the optical orientation and dim or brighten the amount of light from the luminaire. To contribute to the sustainability of a project, the housings for LED in-grade luminaires can use durable brass castings and use lenses of thick tempered glass to protect against breakage, chipping, and scratches. IP68 type connections protect the interior of the light and prevent dues, moisture, and water intrusion.

The IP rating system is the Ingress Protection rating (IP = Ingress Protection). These ratings are part of the International Electrical Code standards. The rating system classifies the degrees of protection provided again the

intrusion of various elements. The first digit provides the intrusion rating against solids and the second digit provides the rating for intrusion against liquids. In-grade flood lights have been used by the communities of Long Beach, California and Fort Myers, Florida.

Pedestrian-Scale Decorative Lighting

Pedestrian-scale decorative lighting presents another option for lighting in high-traffic outdoor areas. These luminaires are available in a range of pole heights and luminaire sizes to provide options for various outdoor lighting applications.

Pedestrian-scale decorative lights can provide energy-efficient LED point source lights while providing reduced glare lighting through diffused lenses. A die-cast back housing with segmented, high-reflectance, aluminum mirrors provides a precision optical system to put light where it is needed, minimizing light trespass, sky glow, and other forms of light pollution. These optical systems are engineered for highly controlled and more effective light distribution. Because of their glare reduction and minimal light pollution, these lights are International Dark Sky compliant and meet the standards of the Design Light Consortium (DSL) of the U.S. Department of Energy.

Pedestrian-scale decorative luminaires are produced with sustainable technologies that have as small an impact on the environment as possible. Renewable materials such as aluminum and glass are used.

Light poles do not need to be fabricated of metal or fiberglass. Spun concrete poles can provide durable, cost-effective lighting for outdoor areas. Concrete poles are fabricated



of 8,000 psi concrete so they are four times the strength of a sidewalk and will last over 75 years. Concrete light poles are durable, maintenance free, do not rust, and can take considerable impact. Concrete poles also retain their color, and the color is not applied to the surface but is embedded through the entire depth of the pole as part of the fabrication process.

Spun concrete poles are a centrifugally cast reinforced concrete. They are commonly referred to as a "spun concrete pole" as they have the compressive strength of concrete but contain strand cables around which the concrete is spun. This cabling provides the tensile strength to the pole. The poles meet ASTM and CSA standards for spun concrete poles. The spinning process introduces qualities into the concrete which cannot be obtained by more conventional casting methods. Through the spinning process, the concrete attains a higher density and strength. The spinning process allows a hollow raceway to form inside the pole, thereby providing a smooth conduit for electrical cables.

Poles of spun concrete have a long service life, require minimal maintenance, have minimal vibration and deflection qualities, and are easily installed because they can be directly embedded to the site via a baseplate mounting system. This direct embedment eliminates the need for a footing and makes the spun concrete poles cost effective. The concrete poles also meet ASTM and AASHTO wind loading requirements and have a lifetime warranty.

Spun concrete poles also provide some safety advantages. Electrical fires cause power failures because of salt corrosion on poles. Concrete poles do not require any further fire protection because concrete is a non-combustible material. With concrete poles, the structural integrity remains intact safeguarding people from power failures.

Spun concrete poles can also contribute to LEED® certification points as concrete is comprised of naturally sourced materials of

water, sand and aggregated. Concrete poles are 100 percent reusable at both the existing site and for new site applications. The extremely long life span (75+ years) means that they can be reused to mount new upgraded lighting fixtures for future site upgrades and expansions. This minimizes energy and materials costs. Therefore, concrete poles can potentially offer up to 2 credits to LEED MR 1.3. Spun concrete poles contain Portland cement, which has a very good reflectance ratio (approx .35) and they can be made of a light colored concrete. This leads to a reduction in Heat Island affect for the site and can contribute to LEED Site Credit 7 Heat Island reduction. Other possible LEED credits may be obtained for MR 4.1, 4.2 for the recycled content of the poles and MR 5.0 for use of locally sourced materials.

BENCHES FOR COMFORT AND IMAGE APPEAL

The best outdoor spaces have site amenities that make them both comfortable and appealing to users. Appropriately placed benches provide rest stops for users and can affect how people use a space based on their location. Design and material selection are other factors to consider in the selection of benches. There are a wealth of available materials for bench fabrication which include stone, concrete, wood, metal, recycled plastic. Material selection should be based on site location and projected use as well as availability of bench materials. Benches fabricated from recycled or locally sourced materials will assist in gaining LEED credits for a project.

See endnotes in the online version of this article.

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To encourage Californians to conserve, a tweak in wording can help



A lot of thought goes in to the messaging that local organizations use to encourage Californians to conserve water. (Raul Roa / Burbank Leader)

Fighting California's drought is a bit like running a political campaign, complete with carefully calibrated messages crafted with polling data.

Even details like colors are used for maximum impact.

Officials at the state's Save Our Water conservation program recently tweaked their "brown is the new green" message, advising instead that residents let their lawns "fade to gold."

The shift was the result of polling funded by the Assn. of California Water Agencies, which surveyed 800 voters over three days last month to determine the best ways to conserve.

A variety of phrases were tested to see which ones were most appealing. "Brown is the new green" received the most negative response.

Voters best liked "Stay Golden, California," a slogan used to encourage energy efficiency. Other favored phrases included "Let it go" (not related to the song from the hit Disney movie "Frozen") and "Turn it off."

"We felt like it was a good switch," said Brendan Wonnacott, program manager for Save Our Water. After all, he said, "California is the Golden State."

New signs that residents can print and display on their lawns are scheduled to be available on the campaign's website next week.

There are hints that the conservation message is sinking in as the drought continues for a fourth year — including the fact that water use in urban areas fell 29% in May, officials announced this week. Gov. Jerry Brown had set a reduction target of 25%.

A bigger challenge will be cutting back water use throughout the dry summer. New numbers for June, the first month since mandatory restrictions took effect, are not yet available.

The poll also asked voters whom they would most likely listen to on the subject of conservation. Gov. Brown was rated lowest, at 61%, while firefighters led the pack at 84%.

Save Our Water has already started highlighting firefighting in its advertising.

A recent post by the program on Twitter said, "Every water drop saved is an extra drop to help fight dangerous fires."

An attached picture juxtaposed a leaky faucet and a blazing wildfire.

The poll was conducted over the phone by Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates, and had a margin of error of plus or minus 5.8%.

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