



Monday, October 2, 2023

A Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission was held in the Council Chambers, 6615 Passons Boulevard, Pico Rivera, California.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Aric Martinez called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Celiz, Elisaldez, Rocha, R. Martinez, A. Martinez

ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Alvaro Betancourt, Director of Community & Economic Development
Julia Gonzalez, Deputy Director of Community & Economic Development
Eba Soleimani, Planning Technician

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

The pledge of allegiance was led by Commissioner R. Martinez.

PUBLIC HEARING(S):

- 1. PUBLIC HEARING – CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. 755 AN APPLICATION TO REHABILITATE AND OPERATE AN EXISTING SELF-SERVICE CAR WASH AND DETERMINE THE PROJECT CATEGORICALLY EXEMPT FROM THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) GUIDELINES SECTION 15301 (CLASS 1- EXISTING FACILITIES).**

Planning Technician Eba Soleimani provided the staff report presentation. The applicants are requesting to renovate and operate an existing self-service car wash located at 4614 Rosemead Boulevard in the multi-family residential zoned district. The subject site was developed in 1965 and was operational as a self-service car wash from 1965 until the most recent car wash operator closed their business in 2020. The site has been vacant since then.

The existing four bays will remain in place, and any improvements required for the car wash will be completed by the applicant. The improvements include cleaning the property, exterior paint and touch up, and replacing any deteriorated or inoperable equipment such as the vacuum cleaners. The hours of operation will be from 7:00 AM – 10:00 PM daily.

A site visit revealed overgrown and/or dead vegetation in the planters and a condition of approval was included to remove all overgrown vegetation and replace with horsetail bamboo that has a mature height of two-to-four feet that must be maintained at all times. Fourteen energy efficient LED lights will be provided throughout the site. As a condition of approval, the applicant will be required to install light shields on to prevent light from spilling onto adjoining properties.

Nine security cameras will be installed throughout the site with 24-hour monitoring. The cameras will be located within each bay, the rear of the property, and along the exterior walls of the car wash.

The existing three vacuum cleaners along the rear of the property will be removed and replaced with new equipment. A condition of approval was included to add a redwood fence on the existing rear block wall to extend the overall height of the wall to eight feet.

The applicant has approximately 10 years of experience renovating car washes. The applicant currently operates five self-service car washes with three pending to be acquired.

A condition of approval was included to prohibit noise levels that exceed 65 dBA, as measured from the nearest residential property line. The property must be maintained free of trash, debris, and graffiti at all times.

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines and according to the provisions contained in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the project was determined to be exempt per Section 15301 Class 1 under Existing Facilities.

Planning Technician Soleimani concluded the report and advised that the project applicants Chris Atkins and Sheila Vossough were present to answer questions.

Chairperson Martinez closed the public hearing as there were no public comments.

Commissioner Elisaldez asked if the eight-foot-high fence would be sufficient to reduce noise to 65 decibels from the nearest property line since the vacuums were determined to produce noise at 93 decibels.

Chairperson Aric Martinez stated that he believed that the noise level of 93 decibels would exceed the 70-decibel threshold but the 70 decibel threshold applies after 10:00 PM.

Director Betancourt stated that the General Plan has a Noise Element that changes the allowance for noise levels. It is louder during the day, and it is lower during the evening. The 70 decibels are what is allowed in the zone and after 10:00 PM. To mitigate noise from the vacuums for the residential properties adjoining the site, the fence was conditioned to be raised to eight feet.

Commissioner Elisaldez asked if mitigation would be needed if the vacuums did exceed the minimum.

Director Betancourt stated the eight-foot-high fence would be installed and the site would be operational from 7:00 AM – 10:00 PM. There would be ambient noise levels that go beyond the allowance. The business has been closed for three years and is being re-introduced.

Commissioner Celiz asked for the number of car wash businesses in the City.

Deputy Director Gonzalez stated there are approximately six car washes in the City.

Commissioner Robert Martinez asked if the existing chain link fence between car wash and the tire shop would remain.

Applicant Chris Atkins answered it is going to stay.

Commissioner Martinez asked if there were any ordinances prohibiting murals because there is an existing mural.

Applicant Chris Atkins answered that the mural would remain.

Deputy Director Gonzalez stated that special signage is allowed through the conditional use permit process.

Commissioner Martinez stated that he was concerned with the treatment of wastewater and the chemicals that are being discharged into the storm drain.

Applicant Sheila Vossough answered that an industrial wastewater permit is required to construct a soil and wastewater interceptor. She has three businesses in Arizona that require an industrial wastewater permit, and the interceptor must be tested every six months. She stated that self-service car washes typically use soaps and waxes and no other hazardous chemicals.

Commissioner Martinez asked if there were interceptors installed at the site.

Applicant Sheila Vossough answered there were existing interceptors that would have to be tested to ensure they are working properly. She would also conduct a backflow test.

Commissioner Martinez asked if there was a backflow preventer there now?

Applicant Sheila Vossough stated that there was a backflow preventer, but it would have to be tested.

Commissioner Martinez asked if the applicant was discharging into the storm drain or the sewer.

Applicant Sheila Vossough answered that wastewater would have to go through the wastewater interceptor into the sewer and not the stormwater drainage system.

Commissioner Martinez stated stormwater would go through the storm drain and wastewater would go through the sewer.

Applicant Sheila Vossough answered that a condition was added as part of the resolution to obtain an industrial wastewater permit.

Commissioner Martinez asked if there were any off-site street improvements required.

Planning Technician Soleimani answered that the Public Works Department only required a wastewater permit to be obtained.

Commissioner Rocha asked if they were replacing the pole sign.

Applicant Sheila Vossough answered yes.

Chairperson Martinez asked if the applicants would be amenable to include a sign that would state "be courteous to the residential neighbors".

Applicant Sheila Vossough answered yes. They would also include proper lighting and cameras to deter loitering.

Chairperson Martinez motioned for a condition regarding signage be added to the resolution.

The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Elisaldez motioned to adopt the resolution adopting Conditional Use Permit No. 755 subject to conditions of approval.

Commissioner Celiz seconded the motion.

AYES : Celiz, Elisaldez, Rocha, Chairperson Martinez, Vice Chair Martinez
NOES : None

Motion passed.

NON-AGENDA ITEMS PUBLIC COMMENTS: None.

CONSENT CALENDAR: None.

PLANNING COMMISSION REPORTS:

Director Betancourt reported that the Senior Center restroom ADA improvement project was awarded to Global Builders contractors.

NEW BUSINESS:

Commissioner Elisaldez stated that he and Commissioner Celiz attended the Whittier Specific Plan Advisory Committee meeting on September 7th. He stated that everyone is urged to fill out an online survey. Much of the discussion was focused on high density housing and the reconstruction and development of the traffic lanes on Whittier Boulevard.

The Mercury Project has been put on hold due to financial strains, interest rates, labor costs, and material cost. Commissioner Elisaldez stated he would be attending the Temple City and Pasadena tour to gain perspective on mixed use projects.

On September 12th, Commissioner Elisaldez attended the City Council meeting. The City Council approved a new trash compactor system in the amount of \$280,000. The new trash compactor system is anticipated to save money, are generally cleaner and better for the environment.

Cynthia Ayala was awarded the permanent position of City Clerk.

Commissioner Martinez asked if the alley beautification project received a matching grant.

Director Betancourt answered the project has a feasibility phase which will determine project cost feasibility.

Commissioner Celiz asked for the status on the public storage facility on Rosemead Boulevard.

Deputy Director Gonzalez stated the project should be completed in March 2024.

Commissioner Rocha asked how the bike lane would look on Mines Avenue.

Deputy Director Gonzalez answered that the bike lane was initially on the center of the street and due to public concerns was redesigned to one end of the street. A stormwater system would separate the bike lane from the parking.

OLD BUSINESS:

Commissioner Martinez asked for the screen mesh to be repaired at the future Mercury site.

Director Betancourt stated that he would ask code enforcement to address the screen mesh.

ADJOURNMENT:

Chairperson Aric Martinez adjourned the Planning Commission meeting at 7:20 p.m.



Aric Martinez, Chairperson

ATTEST:

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct report of the proceedings of the Planning Commission Regular Meeting on October 2, 2023, and approved by the Planning Commission on September 16, 2024.



Alvaro Betancourt, Director
Community & Economic Development Department