



Staff Report

File #: 23-0464

REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION

DATE: 06/07/2023

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Planning and Development Department

SUBJECT:

CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT CUP2021-0004 TO ALLOW A DRIVE-THROUGH AND WALK-UP WINDOW COFFEE SHOP (STARBUCKS) WITHIN AN EXISTING COMMERCIAL CENTER LOCATED AT THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF GREEN RIVER ROAD AND DOMINGUEZ RANCH ROAD IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL DISTRICT OF THE SIERRA DEL ORO SPECIFIC PLAN (APPLICANT: JESSICA STEINER OF BICKEL GROUP ARCHITECTURE)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This staff report asks Council to affirm the Planning and Housing Commission's action granting Conditional Use Permit 2021-0004 (CUP2021-0004). CUP2021-0004 will establish a 966 square foot drive-up service coffee house for Starbucks. The project site is a vacant pad within an existing commercial center that contains various commercial, offices and restaurants. This is the last vacant pad within the center to be developed.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the City Council:

- a. Take no action, thereby affirming the Planning and Housing Commission's action granting CUP2021-0004, based on the findings contained in the staff report and conditions of approval.

OR

- b. Set the item for review at a subsequent meeting.

BACKGROUND & HISTORY:

The project site is a 0.39-acre (16,910 square feet) commercial parcel that is located within the Green River Promenade commercial center. The commercial center is located at the southeast corner of Green River Road and Dominguez Ranch Road and was originally constructed in the early

1990s under Precise Plan 91-08. The proposed project is located on a vacant pad at the northeast corner of the center's retail area. Based on the center's 1991 precise plan, the pad was originally intended to accommodate a 4,000-square-foot restaurant building. The intended building pad was rough graded but has not yet been developed.

The project was reviewed by the Planning and Housing Commission at its meeting on February 21, 2023, April 10, 2023, and May 8, 2023. Although the drive-through lane had a total queuing capacity for 14 vehicles with 7 stacking spaces provided from the menu board, which exceeded the city's required queuing capacity of six spaces from the menu board, the Commission still wanted the applicant to provide additional vehicle stacking capacity. At the meeting on May 8, 2023, Starbucks eventually proposed a dual drive-through lane that supports 18 vehicles. The Commission approved the project at its May 8, 2023, meeting.

ANALYSIS:

The project site is zoned NCD (Neighborhood Commercial District) by the Sierra Del Oro Specific Plan. The NCD zone requires conditional use permit (CUP) approval for restaurants with drive-through services, which is the reason for CUP2021-0004.

Overall Site Plan

The project site is located on the northern portion of the commercial center, adjacent to Green River Road. The southernmost portion of the commercial center contains the center's main building with in-line tenants. To the east of the project site is an office park consisting of 11 office buildings, and to the west is a drive-through restaurant, and a gasoline service station with a convenience store.

The existing Green River Promenade development is comprised of three components, including a retail shopping center, office park, and an adult daycare (east of the office park). All of these uses share three driveways along Green River Road, and one driveway on Dominguez Ranch Road. The proposed project will be accessible from any of the shared driveways.

The shopping center has a common parking lot area that is centrally located to serve the center's in-line tenants and restaurant pads.

Site Plan

The proposed Starbucks building is set back approximately 36 feet from the center's property line at Green River Road, which exceeds the Specific Plan's 10-foot setback requirement. The pad is elevated approximately 12 feet higher than Green River's roadway, and the existing sloped setback is fully landscaped.

The coffee shop will provide drive-through and walk-up services. There is no interior or outdoor seating proposed. The drive-through lane entrance is located on the south side of the building. The lane circulates along the east and north sides of the building and exits into the center's parking lot. The order board and pick-up window are located on the east and north sides of the building, respectively. The drive-through lane has a total vehicle stacking capacity for 18 vehicles from the

drive-through window. The lane accommodates 11 vehicles after the menu board with the dual lane design, which meets the Code's minimum stacking requirement for drive-through establishments.

The walk-up window is located on the south side of the building, opposite of the drive-through window. Customers can walk up to a coffee shop window to order or pick-up drinks, pastries, and prepackaged food items.

The applicant is proposing to construct a new trash enclosure in the parking lot, to the west of the coffee shop building. The trash enclosure will be constructed of cement block and plastered to match the color and finish of the Starbucks building. The enclosure will also be topped with a solid metal roof, and the opening above the block wall will be secured with a flat wire mesh.

The Green River Promenade currently has 476 striped parking spaces. Starbucks' new dual lane design will remove 40 parking spaces and replace 21, resulting in a net loss of 19 parking spaces (a total of 457 spaces will be provided). Two of the 21 replacement parking spaces are located behind the building at 4300 Green River. The project as currently proposed will comply with the parking requirements required by the Corona Municipal Code, which includes a minimum of 452 parking spaces.

Floor Plan and Operations

Per the applicant's floor plan, the building will house an employee restroom, workroom area, and backbar. The workroom area consists of freezers, an employee rest area, a manager's desk, refrigerators, and shelving racks. The backbar is the kitchen area, which includes the coffee machines, cash registers, and all other necessities required to serve coffee customers. The floor plan is a standard Starbucks configuration for their small quick-serve restaurants.

Architecture

The applicant is proposing a building design that maintains Starbucks' familiar "look" and functional elements, and is compatible with the shopping center's existing architecture, which consists of beige stucco walls, flat rooflines and tower elements covered with "S-shaped" roof tiles.

The proposed Starbucks building has beige colored stucco walls on all four sides, and is accented with brownish colored stone veneer on the north and west elevations. The roofline is comprised of parapet walls with varying heights, which add visual interest to the upper portion of the building. The parapet walls also screen rooftop mechanical equipment. Metal awnings are provided over the drive-through and walk-up windows, which are intended to accentuate the windows and shield customers from inclement weather. Light fixtures are mounted on the north and south elevations to provide illumination at the drive-through and walk-up windows.

Project signage is conceptually shown on the exterior of the building and consists of green colored directional signs and simple Starbucks logo signs. Signage will be required to comply with the signage requirements per the Sierra Del Oro Specific Plan and will be reviewed in detail by the Planning staff at the time of permit issuance.

Landscaping

A mixture of shrubs and trees are proposed within the project site. Deciduous and evergreen trees will be placed along the drive-through lane, which will create interest and soften the view of the proposed building. The plan also includes three-foot high shrubs along the outer edge of the drive-through lane, which will minimize headlights of vehicles in the drive-through from shining into Green River Road. All new landscape plant materials proposed for the project site are required to be California-friendly. There are existing mature palm trees and various flowering shrubs located adjacent to the site's north and east perimeters, which will remain in place.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The applicant paid the application processing fees of \$6,933 to cover the cost of the Conditional Use Permit.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

This action is categorically exempt pursuant to Section 15303(c) Class 3 (New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures) of the Guidelines for the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), which states a restaurant less than 2,500 square feet is exempt from CEQA. This project consists of a new 966-square-foot coffee shop with drive-through and walk-up services only (no indoor or outdoor seating), within an existing commercial center. Therefore, no environmental analysis is required.

PLANNING AND HOUSING COMMISSION ACTION:

At its meeting of May 8, 2023, the Planning and Housing Commission considered the subject matter and took the following action:

Motion was made, seconded (Alexander/Sherman) and carried unanimously that the Planning and Housing Commission find the project exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15303(c), and adopt Resolution No. 2605 granting CUP2021-0004, based on the findings contained in the staff report and conditions of approval. The minutes of the Planning and Housing Commission meeting are included as Exhibit 4.

PREPARED BY: JOANNE COLETTA, PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

Attachments:

1. Exhibit 1 - Locational and zoning map
2. Exhibit 2 - Site plan for CUP2021-0004
3. Exhibit 3 - Planning and Housing Commission staff report
4. Exhibit 4 - Minutes of the Planning and Housing Commission meeting of May 8, 2023