

**OFFICIAL MINUTES
MONTEREY PARK PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
OCTOBER 22, 2019**

The Planning Commission of the City of Monterey Park held a regular meeting of the Board in the Council Chambers, located at 320 West Newmark Avenue in the City of Monterey Park, Tuesday, October 22, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairperson Eric Brossy de Dios called the Planning Commission meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Planner Tewasart called the roll:

Board Members Present: Eric Brossy De Dios, Ricky Choi, Theresa Amador, Antonio Salazar, and Delario Robinson,

Board Members Absent: None

ALSO PRESENT: Natalie C. Karpeles, Deputy City Attorney, Mark A. McAvoy, Public Works Director/City Engineer/City Planner, and Samantha Tewasart, Senior Planner

AGENDA ADDITIONS, DELETIONS, CHANGES AND ADOPTIONS: None

ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:

[1.] **PRESENTATIONS:** None

[2.] **CONSENT CALENDAR:** None

[3.] **PUBLIC HEARING:**

3-A. TENTATIVE MAP NO. 80304 (TM-19-04) TO ALLOW THE SUBDIVISION OF AIR-RIGHTS TO ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN A TWO-UNIT CONDOMINIUM CONVERSION PROJECT IN THE R-2 (MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL) ZONE – 128 GLADYS AVENUE

Planner Tewasart provided a brief summary of the staff report.

Chairperson Brossy de Dios opened the public hearing.

Applicant, Alex Liu, 1455 Monterey Pass Road, #206, Monterey Park, CA 91754, was present for questions.

Chairperson Brossy de Dios closed the public hearing.

Action Taken: The Planning Commission after considering the evidence presented during the public hearing adopted **Resolution No. 19-19** approving Tentative Map No. 80304

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(TM-19-04) to subdivide air-rights for a two-unit residential (3 bedrooms) condominium conversion development in the R-2 (Medium Density Residential) Zone.

Resolution No. 19-19

A RESOLUTION APPROVING TENTATIVE MAP NO. 80304 (TM-19-04) TO SUBDIVIDE AIR RIGHTS FOR A TWO-UNIT RESIDENTIAL CONDOMINIUM CONVERSION DEVELOPMENT AT 128 GLADYS AVENUE.

Motion: Moved, by Commissioner Salazar and seconded by Commissioner Choi, motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners: Brossy de Dios, Choi, Amador, Salazar, and Robinson
Noes: Commissioners: None
Absent: Commissioners: None
Abstain: Commissioners: None

3-B. SPECIFIC PLAN AMENDMENT (SPA-19-01), ZONE CHANGE (ZC-19-01) AND CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT (CU-19-04) TO ALLOW THE RECONSTRUCTION OF AN EXISTING SERVICE STATION AND CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW COFFEE SHOP WITH A DRIVE-THROUGH – 2425-2439 SOUTH GARFIELD AVENUE

Planner Tewasart provided a brief summary of the staff report.

Commissioner Brossy de Dios inquired about the difference in intent of the two zones. Planner Tewasart replied that the Garfield/Pomona intersection is identified as the gateway entrance and the specific plan discusses landscaping, street furniture, outdoor seating, etc.

Commissioner Brossy de Dios stated that there is an existing use on the lot, the use and lot are being expanded, there is a zone change on the lot on which the gas station currently sits, and even though it is an existing gas station, the entire gas station is being torn down and rebuilt as new, so under the auspices of the specific plan and the process of approving a zone change and conditional use permit, should this application be considered a new project. Commissioner Brossy de Dios inquired if the request is considered a continuation of the existing use or a new application. Planner Tewasart replied that it would be a continuation and modification of an existing use. Attorney Karpeles replied that the use of the property as a service station is a continued use and the service station use has not been abandoned. A conditional use permit is needed to have the drive-through in the GVC-S zone and the service station. Once the zone is changed, the zone change would apply to the property in perpetuity and the conditional use permit will run with the land for as long as that use is continued, meaning the drive-through and the service station. Attorney Karpeles pointed out section B on page 5 of 8 which addresses findings for the conditional use permit.

Chairperson Brossy de Dios opened the public hearing.

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Applicant, Arian Talehakimi, 4316 Marina City Drive #731, Marina del Rey, CA 90292 provided a brief presentation of the proposed project.

Representative Indira Ibrahimbegovic of Greenberg Farrow, 30 Executive Park, Suite 100, Irvine, CA 92614, stated that they are the architect of record. The menu board is placed at the seventh car from the pick-up point. This is the optimal location for Starbucks Corporation and will allow for adequate stacking contained on-site. Commissioner Brossy de Dios inquired if there is a specified traffic flow and if access is off the alley. Representative Ibrahimbegovic replied that it could be off the alley. There is an arrow at the beginning of the drive-through lane. A right can be made if coming north from Garfield.

Commissioner Choi inquired about northbound access. Representative Ibrahimbegovic replied that it would a left onto Pomona. Commissioner Choi inquired if there is a Starbucks representative because Starbucks is very active in the selection of their sites. They have a store development team and a real estate team. They are very meticulous with regards to selection of a site and a sticking point is access. Applicant Talehakimi stated that they have a fully executed lease that is conditional to the outcome of the Planning Commission and City Council. Ahmad Ghaderi of A & S Engineering, Inc., 28405 Sand Canyon Road, Suite B, Canyon Country, CA 91387, stated that on Pomona and Garfield there is driveway access and the alley.

Commissioner Salazar inquired if there are any barriers between Starbucks and the alley. Applicant Talehakimi replied no.

Commissioner Robinson stated that he is happy to see an international chain come into the area.

Commissioner Amador inquired about the number of service bays currently at the property. Applicant Talehakimi replied that there are three service bays. Half of one of the service bays was taken to expand the footprint of a small store. The service bays are currently not in operation. They had a smog test facility in there until about eighteen months ago and they suspended the use of the service bays pending the proposed development plans.

Commissioner Amador inquired about the number of fueling stations. Applicant Talehakimi replied that the number of fueling stations will stay the same. There are currently twelve and they will retain twelve, which are six stations with pumps on both sides. There will be three rows of two.

Commissioner Salazar inquired about the 24-hour service. Applicant Talehakimi replied that the service station is currently 24-hours. There is no interior access for the customers to the building, so they only walk-up to an outside service window. There would still be a degree of separation between any potential assailants and the employees inside. Commissioner Salazar stated that since the coffee shop will only be a drive-through there will be less opportunity for robberies.

Opponent Dan Morales, 2424 South Isabella Avenue stated the existing traffic flow particularly in the morning coming from southbound Garfield coming from Pomona, there

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are many trying to make a right on Riggins to get over to Isabella to make a left or they come down to Fernfield, which is the north street of this project, make a right and either make a left into the alley or drive up to Isabella and make a left there. The concern is that there is no divider that is going to keep the traffic controlled to come in through certain exits. Meaning there is two on Garfield, one on Pomona, and the alley particularly during peak hours when traffic is coming down south on Garfield. There is nothing on the plans that will keep cars from not crossing the alley where there can be potential stacking during peak hours. It is not that they are against the project; it is about what type of project it is going to be.

Speaker Flo Yuasa, 2412 South Isabella Avenue stated that the entryway from Garfield going north a left cannot be made on Garfield. The specific plan had mentioned making the alleyway and Fernfield one-way. There is a homeless situation in the area and they will be in outside area. She questioned the security and lighting.

Opponent Elena Helen Holguin, 206 West Fernfield Drive stated that she has lived in Monterey Park since 1959 and has seen a lot of changes in Monterey Park. There is terrible traffic going down Garfield and it is difficult to go down to ARCO gas station. They have problems with parking from the employees at the car wash.

Applicant Talehakimi stated that he apologizes for not connecting with the property owners, but he has tried on more than one occasion. He will provide the property owners with his connect information to bring any concerns that they may have with the project and to open the lines of communication. With respects to security, since they have owned the property, they have never been robbed or vandalized. Unfortunately, the recording studio with its dim lighting in the areas that are blocked from view it is easy for the homeless to go to those areas. They are hoping that this project will address those issues. With respects to lighting there will be more than adequate lighting. There will not be a security guard, but there will always be a person on-site to contact the police if needed. There will be greater visibility across the project. There will also be cameras throughout the property, which is a condition of the approval.

Mr. Ghaderi stated that the building is situated so as to not block the driveway. The majority of the traffic will be westbound Pomona and southbound Garfield, and going northbound on Garfield will be left on Pomona and then right onto the site. The traffic pattern is to have stacking towards the south side of the property. There is no potential blockage of the driveway. The building is intentionally designed so that the path there exiting off the driveway is accessible at all times.

Chairperson Brossy de Dios closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Robinson stated that the traffic on Garfield and Pomona is stressful. Most of the traffic comes from the 8-wheelers trying to make a left-turn going onto Garfield, but this project is on the north side and traffic is coming from the north onto Garfield. The Starbucks can be accessed from the west side and exit, which is not as much traffic. There is going to be homeless, but with the new lighting there will be a vast improvement.

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Commissioner Salazar stated that he believes that the clarification on the drive-through entrance has been addressed and there are no concerns. The new lighting will help to facilitate the discouragement of people hanging out in the existing northern part of the property. It will be an improvement for the property. He understands the concerns from the neighbors and hopes that this project can benefit everyone and not just the passer-bys.

Commissioner Amador inquired about clearance in the alleyway. Assistant City Engineering Frank Lopez replied that Starbucks is situated so that the entry is south of Mr. Morales's driveway and the exit is just north of it and cars exiting will likely turn right not through the alley to go onto Pomona. The entrance to the drive-through will likely be from Garfield. There is an aisle space outside of the alley for the drive-through, so they don't have to be in the alleyway. A couple of things to understand is that alleyways, while they are not streets, they are access to driveways both for residences and businesses. There will be some numbers that will come from Pomona, but most of the morning trips will be coming from the north going southbound, so the easiest entrance will be the driveway at the front of the property along Garfield. Commissioner Amador stated that she just wants to make that Mr. Morales's home was taken into consideration. It is a great project and may be it will give impetus to other businesses to come to this area. We see the changes, but we also need to address the concerns of the residents.

Commissioner Brossy de Dios stated that he does have concerns with this application. The gas station has been a fixture at that location for many years. There is a concern that the application made for the zone change flies in the face of what the intent of the specific plan was about. His understanding is that the corner is to be considered a primary gateway the Garfield Village and continuation to the pedestrian areas and by changing the land development zone for that parcel that we would be changing the ultimate intent of the specific plan. This project would be a great addition to a shopping center, but as the gateway there is a concern.

Action Taken: The Planning Commission after considering the evidence presented during the public hearing adopted **Resolution No. 20-19** recommending that the City Council approve Specific Plan Amendment (SPA-19-01), Zone Change (ZC-19-01) and Conditional Use Permit (CU-19-04) to allow the reconstruction of an existing service station and construction of a new coffee shop with a drive-through at 2425 and 2439 South Garfield Avenue, with an added condition.

Resolution No. 20-19

A RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING THAT THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVE SPECIFIC PLAN AMENDMENT (SPA-19-01), ZONE CHANGE (ZC-19-01) AND CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT (CU-19-04) TO ALLOW THE RECONSTRUCTION OF AN EXISTING SERVICE STATION AND CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW COFFEE SHOP WITH A DRIVE-THROUGH AT 2425 AND 2439 SOUTH GARFIELD AVENUE.

Motion: Moved, by Commissioner Robinson and seconded by Commissioner Amador, motion carried by the following vote:

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Ayes: Commissioners: Choi, Amador, Salazar, and Robinson
Noes: Commissioners: Brossy de Dios
Absent: Commissioners: None
Abstain: Commissioners: None

[4.] OLD BUSINESS: None

[5.] NEW BUSINESS: None

[6.] COMMISSION COMMUNICATIONS AND MATTERS: None

[7.] STAFF COMMUNICATIONS AND MATTERS: None

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business for consideration, the Planning Commission meeting was adjourned at 8:38 p.m.

Next regular scheduled meeting on November 12, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

Mark A. McAvoy
Director of Public Works/City Engineer/City Planner

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