

**CITY OF GARDENA
PLANNING & ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMISSION
MINUTES**

**TUESDAY, JUNE 2, 2020, MEETING
VIRTUAL MEETING VIA ZOOM**

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Called to order by Chair Jackson at 7:00 P.M.

ROLL CALL

Present: Deryl Henderson, Steve Sherman, Dale Pierce, Stephen Langley, Brenda Jackson
Absent: None
Also in Attendance: Lisa Kranitz, Assistant City Attorney
Raymond Barragan, Acting Community Development Director
John F. Signo, Senior Planner
Amanda Acuna, Planning Assistant

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Commissioner Pierce and seconded by Commissioner Langley to approve the minutes of the meeting on May 19, 2020. The minutes were approved 5-0-0.

Ayes: Pierce, Langley, Henderson, Sherman, Jackson
Noes: None
Absent: None

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Agenda Item #4

Assistant Planner Acuna addressed the Commission and public on procedures for conducting the online meeting since all participants were attending from a remote location. Instructions on how to comment and ask questions via the Zoom application was given. All written comments and questions will be read.

There were no oral communications from the public.

PUBLIC HEARING

Agenda Item #5

Site Plan Review #3-19; Tentative Parcel Map #2-19; Modification of Memorandum #10-05 approving Site Plan Review #6-05 for Target and Variance #1-05 for a reduction in parking on the Target Site

The applicant is requesting the following entitlements: Site Plan Review, Tentative Parcel Map, and Modification to a Site Plan Review and Parking Variance. The Tentative Parcel

Map will divide a 9.47-acre parcel into a 9.27-acre parcel for the Target store and a 0.84-acre parcel for a fast-food, drive-thru restaurant. Revisions to the previous Site Plan approval and Parking Variance are needed to reduce the Target parcel size and allow a reduction in parking spaces to 392 spaces in accordance with Section 18.54.040 of the Gardena Municipal Code relating to nonconforming off-street parking. A Site Plan approval is also required for the creation of a standalone 3,486 square foot fast-food restaurant with drive-thru and 501 square foot outdoor patio. There will be 40 parking spaces for the fast-food restaurant. The project is located in the General Commercial (C-3) zone, is consistent with Titles 17 and 18 of the Gardena Municipal Code and qualifies for a Categorical Exemption under Guidelines Section 15303 for New Construction Projects and 15061(b)(3) where it can be seen with certainty that there will not be any significant impact to the environment.

Project Location: 2169 West Redondo Beach Boulevard (APN: 4063-014-017)
Applicant: Kristen Roberts, Raising Cane's/Target Corporation

Assistant Planner Acuna gave the staff presentation, explained that the findings for approval can be made, and the project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). On May 21, 2020, a public hearing notice was advertised in the Gardena Valley News and sent to residents and owners within 300 feet of the subject property. No written comments have been received from the public.

Assistant City Attorney Kranitz introduced Clare Look-Jaeger from Linscott, Law and Greenspan Engineers (LLG) and that she is available for any questions on parking.

Commissioner Henderson asked if parking is going to be reduced during peak times and if a number was given. Where do you accommodate the overflow with the parking problem in Gardena?

Traffic Engineer Chin Taing from LLG explained that weekend and weekday peak periods were observed. It is forecasted that there would be a surplus of parking during peak periods for Target and Raising Cane's.

Commissioner Langley asked about the applicant. Is Raising Cane's the same as Target?

Assistant Planner Acuna explained that Kristen Roberts is representing Raising Cane's. Target is included as an applicant because there will be modifications made to the Target site with different conditions for the modification.

Commissioner Langley explained that he visits Target regularly and peak season would be around Thanksgiving to Christmas. Target knows how many people visit their store each day. He expressed concerns that the study was taken during the off-season.

Assistant Planner Amanda explained that the applicant submitted in September of last year, but staff made the determination that the parking analysis be conducted during another time because it would not be an accurate representation for the site during the majority of the year.

Assistant City Attorney Kranitz explained that parking studies are not done during peak season because there would be an over-abundance of parking.

Commissioner Langley mentioned that sales would tell when Target is busy.

Assistant Attorney Kranitz stated it would not account for other users using the bus and going to the adjacent shopping center.

Commissioner Pierce had no comments.

Commissioner Sherman stated he is concerned about the parking. The tentative parcel map shows a driveway that may impact the property to the east. He stated his concern with the turning radius with the drive through of Raising Cane's. You would be forced to make a right-hand turn coming out to Redondo Beach Boulevard.

Assistant Attorney Kranitz asked if the driveway to the east is still Target's.

Assistant Planner Acuna explained the Target property abuts the shopping center to the east. The Raising Cane's property does not abut the adjacent shopping center.

Commissioner Sherman explained that if you drove along the top of Raising Cane's parking lot, exiting would be an issue and you would be forced onto Redondo Beach Boulevard.

Chair Jackson asked if the opening through the shopping center would remain open.

Assistant City Attorney Kranitz answered yes.

Chair Jackson asked if the driveway could be changed. It can be a hazard going from the restaurant to Target. It can be confusing.

Assistant Planner Acuna explained that with multiple driveways leading out, it would help alleviate traffic.

Acting Community Development Director Barragan suggested the applicant can explain.

Applicant representative Bethany Kwon introduced herself and spoke about the project.

John Pollock, Civil Engineer, from Kimley Horn representing Raising Cane's presented background information on Raising Cane's. He indicated the menu is very limited but delicious. The restaurant will be a great part of the community and creates a lot of jobs. In regards to parking concerns, the site to the east through the retail center really has no legal obligation that it remains open for cross access. To address Commissioner Sherman's question, the area is striped due to concern for vehicular movement to try to alleviate traffic issues. The drive through allows queuing for 15-16 cars assuming 20-22 feet per car. They have done studies at other sites to make sure the design is appropriate. The project was considered by Target because the parking lot has in excess of over 160 parking spaces. Even in peak season parking does not fill up like a lot of other stores.

Chair Jackson stated the 3D rendering addresses her concern where it shows the property to the east.

Commissioner Langley stated he lives close by to the east of Target and uses the driveway to go to Gramercy Place. He asked if the intersection at Van Ness and Redondo Beach Boulevard would be improved for left turns.

Commissioner Pierce indicated that the intersection from Van Ness onto Redondo Beach Boulevard consists of two left-turn lanes and cycling is more than adequate from what he's observed.

Commissioner Langley stated to be aware that the situation may change during semi-peak season. The difficulty is making a left turn into Ralph's from Van Ness, that there is interference.

Commissioner Pierce agreed.

Chair Jackson opened the public hearing and asked if there are any speakers.

Ms. Acuna stated that there were comments sent via Zoom that Senior Planner Signo will read into the record.

Senior Planner Signo read a statement from C. Garcia:

"Has there also been a study on the increase in traffic on Redondo Beach Blvd. Since you mentioned Feb & March of this year, the community has also been under "shelter at home orders" so traffic both with cars and people have been drastically reduced. What is your response to address more accurate statistics? Also, there are a lot of traffic accidents coming out of the parking lot, what will be addressed to reduce traffic accidents with the proposed increase in traffic? Will there be another traffic light in place on Redondo Beach Blvd?"

"Another note on the entry to the proposed drive thru, there is a lot of traffic going to the current Ramen restaurant in the small area of that driveway. As it stands today, that area to drive through has a lot of people standing around outside plus traffic trying to park. This will be a hazard as well. This will need to be adequately addressed during peak times at lunch and dinner."

Mr. Signo responded that there would not be another traffic light in place on Redondo Beach Boulevard. Target is willing to consider the restaurant due to the surplus in parking.

Ms. Kranitz indicated the study was done on February 29 and March 5 and there was no lockdown during that time; traffic should have been normal.

Mr. Signo continued reading C. Garcia's statement:

"If there is people taking orders, that will still cause traffic issues as there is a new chicken restaurant on Redondo Beach Blvd. & Crenshaw that has a HIGH level traffic that has backed up traffic on both streets. This Chick Filet is only a few blocks down the road from the proposed site. The traffic on the street is a REAL issue today. This sounds like it will create more traffic issues as well."

Mr. Signo indicated the other restaurant is about half a mile away to the west.

Ms. Acuna confirmed the distance and stated there is at least one major intersection between the restaurants.

Ms. Taing, LLG, stated there should not be difficulties turning out of the Target driveway due to the center median on Redondo Beach Boulevard.

Commissioner Henderson asked if entry way to the east will still be accessible. He mentioned the Raising Cane's in Lakewood is filled every day.

Ms. Taing, LLG indicated the driveway will be maintained.

Ms. Acuna agreed.

Chair Jackson asked if there are other questions.

Ms. Acuna stated there are more questions in the Q&A box.

Mr. Signo read C. Garcia's statement:

"On March 5th the COVID-19 was still taking lives and people were not out shopping as much. The dates you have don't reflect an accurate count of people and cars."

Mr. Signo stated there was a pandemic during that time but the order to shut down came after.

C. Garcia stated: "When coming out of the Target parking lot there are a LOT of accidents from that driveway. There needs to be a traffic light."

Mr. Signo stated there is no new traffic light being proposed.

Commissioner Henderson asked if the median could be better identified.

Mr. Signo indicated the street is shared with the City of Torrance and there is usually a schedule for restriping.

Ms. Acuna stated if there are other speakers, the "raise your hand" feature could be used. She indicated there were no other speakers.

Clare Look-Jaeger of LLG indicated they prepared the parking analysis. The City required parking counts when schools and businesses were in normal sessions. Parking counts were taken before the safer-at-home order was issued. The parking counts for Target were slightly higher given that in early March there was word that safer-at-home orders would be given. They typically do counts in fall or spring. They did find a substantial parking surplus and observed no more than 60 percent of parking being utilized. They were conservative in their analysis and did not assume overlap of customers using different stores. As it relates to the access scheme with Raising Cane's drive through, 95 percent of the queue does not exceed 10 vehicles, and on weekends it's 12 vehicles. The drive through allows 14 vehicles to queue. They believe queuing is sufficient. She indicated on Redondo Beach Boulevard, patrons can make a left or right on egress.

Commissioners indicated their acknowledgement of Ms. Look-Jaeger response.

Chair Jackson closed the public hearing.

MOTION: It was moved by Commissioner Pierce and seconded by Commissioner Henderson to adopt Resolution No. PC 3-20 approving Site Plan Review #3-19, Tentative Parcel Map #2-19, and the Modification to Variance #1-05, subject to the attached conditions of approval, and directing staff to file a Notice of Exemption.

The motion passed by the following roll call vote:

Ayes:	Pierce, Henderson, Langley, Sherman, Jackson
Noes:	None
Absent:	None

Agenda Item #6

General Plan Amendment #3-20

Consideration of PC Resolution No. 5-20 recommending that the City Council amend the Circulation Plan of the City's General Plan, adopt the revised CEQA policies and procedures which incorporate the new thresholds for transportation impacts related to vehicle miles traveled and direct staff to file a notice of exemption.

Project Location: Citywide

Applicant: City of Gardena

Assistant City Attorney Kranitz introduced the City's consultant, Fehr & Peers.

Sara Brandenburg from Fehr & Peers gave a presentation and showed a video on the item. She mentioned that the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) has a model on vehicle miles travelled (VMT).

Ms. Kranitz discussed the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review process.

Commissioner Henderson had no questions but stated he was very impressed with the thorough presentation, although there was a lot to process.

Commissioner Langley discussed methodical changes with SB 743. He mentioned he does not know what greenhouse gas goals are under State legislation.

Ms. Sara Brandenburg gave explanation on recent State legislation, including SB 35. She discussed the Circulation Plan and mentioned it makes the community look at streets holistically to find ways to improve it. There are no funding obligations that come from the policy.

Commissioner Pierce asked if this is bringing the City's policies and procedures up to date with the State's mandate.

Ms. Kranitz indicated it is and that we are no longer able to use level of service (LOS) in analyzing traffic thresholds. This will help developers understand what they need to do to comply.

Commissioner Pierce agreed that it would save in resources.

Commissioner Sherman indicated the Circulation Plan was last updated in 2006 and that we are doing amendments that eliminate LOS and replaces it with VMT.

Ms. Kranitz agreed. If we keep LOS as a standard then we wind up with inconsistency. The Circulation Plan attached to the staff report shows what is being added and deleted.

Commissioner Sherman asked what is needed to comply with CEQA.

Ms. Kranitz explained that the Planning Commission will make a recommendation to the City Council to adopt the Circulation Plan. The other part is adopting the CEQA Policies and Procedures. She elaborated more on the contents in the Policies and Procedures.

Chair Jackson opened the public hearing. There being no questions from the public, the public hearing was closed.

MOTION: It was moved by Commissioner Langley and seconded by Commissioner Pierce to adopt PC Resolution No. 5-20 recommending that the City Council amend the Circulation Plan of the City's General Plan, adopt the revised CEQA Guidelines which

incorporate the new thresholds for transportation impacts related to vehicle miles traveled and direct staff to file a Notice of Exemption.

The motion passed by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Langley, Pierce, Henderson, Sherman, Jackson
Noes: None
Absent: None

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Acting Community Development Director Raymond Barragan had no report.

PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMISSION REPORTS

Commissioner Langley indicated he would like to get a booklet from Fehr & Peers and mentioned their presentation was very well presented.

Commissioner Pierce had nothing to report.

Commissioner Henderson indicated at the last meeting there was a project that the Planning Commission had to approve. If there is no discretion then why does it come before the Planning Commission?

Ms. Kranitz explained that the Planning Commission has purview over a few things under Site Plan Review, but the City has to allow residential units to meet State requirements.

Mr. Barragan added that we can ask for certain modifications but have to approve a housing project.

Commissioner Langley stated that on page 6, it says we are promoting high-quality housing types. He indicated six units seems to be in violation of that.

Ms. Kranitz indicated it is not; the property was zoned R3 and there is similar development in the area.

Commissioner Pierce stated there are approximately three to four single-family homes on that block surrounded by multifamily homes.

Commissioner Langley mentioned he walked the subject street which brought back memories.

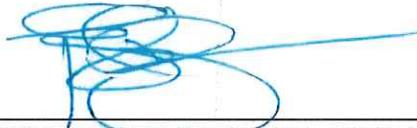
Commissioners Sherman had no report.

Chair Jackson had no report.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Jackson adjourned the meeting at 9:15 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,



RAYMOND BARRAGAN, SECRETARY
Planning and Environmental Quality Commission



FOR

BRENDA JACKSON, CHAIR
Planning and Environmental Quality Commission