



# Administrative Report

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J.1., File # PC21-2649

Meeting Date: 6/17/2021

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**To: PLANNING COMMISSION**

**From: MARIANNE GASTELUM, ASSISTANT PLANNER**

## **TITLE**

A PUBLIC HEARING FOR CONSIDERATION OF AN EXEMPTION DECLARATION, CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT, AND PLANNING COMMISSION DESIGN REVIEW TO ALLOW THE CONVERSION OF AN EXISTING AUTOMOBILE SERVICE AREA TO A CONVENIENCE STORE FOR AN EXISTING SERVICE STATION ON PROPERTY LOCATED WITHIN A COMMERCIAL (C-2) ZONE AT 1200 BERYL STREET.

APPLICANT: VLADIMIR VARDANIAN

ADDRESS: **1200 BERYL STREET**

APPLICATION NOS: CUP-2021-02; PCDR-2021-02

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

1. Open public hearing and administer oath;
2. Take testimony from staff, applicant, and interested parties;
3. Close public hearing and deliberate; and
4. Adopt a resolution by title only approving the request subject to the findings and conditions contained therein:

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF REDONDO BEACH, CALIFORNIA, APPROVING AN EXEMPTION DECLARATION AND GRANTING THE REQUESTS FOR A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT AND PLANNING COMMISSION DESIGN REVIEW TO ALLOW THE OPERATION OF A CONVENIENCE STORE AT AN EXISTING VEHICLE SERVICE STATION ON PROPERTY LOCATED WITHIN A COMMERCIAL (C-2) ZONE AT 1200 BERYL ST

## **BACKGROUND**

The property is located at 1200 Beryl Street at the south-east corner of Beryl Street and Prospect Avenue. The applicant requests approval to convert the existing vehicle service station/gas station structure, approximately 2,252 square feet into a convenience retail store (no alcohol sales). The existing building has three (3) automotive repair service bays, storage area and a small retail store. There are three (3) gas pump islands with five (5) dual-sided gas pumps.

The vehicle service station/gas station is part of the larger shopping center located within the Commercial (C-2) zone. Vehicle service stations/gas stations are conditionally permitted and pursuant to RBMC 10-2.1602 (c) (2) "No equipment, service, or use shall be added to any existing service station within the City, nor shall any structural or architectural alterations, except incidental

maintenance, be made to any existing service station within the City, unless a conditional use permit is obtained pursuant to Section 10-2.2506.” Additionally, due to the “unique nature” of vehicle service stations/gas stations, the project also requires the approval of a Planning Commission Design Review pursuant to RBMC 10-2.2502 (a) (4).

The project site is at the south-east corner of Beryl Street and Prospect Avenue. The vehicle service station/gas station is part of a large neighborhood multi-tenant commercial shopping center that was developed during the late 1960s. The shopping center is anchored by Vons Supermarket, Dollar Tree and various other commercial tenants. The subject property is zoned Commercial (C-2) as is the entire 1200 block of Beryl Street.

The vehicle service station/gas station has two canopy covered gas pumping islands. One of the canopies has two (2) dual sided gasoline pumps and the other canopy has three (3) dual sided gasoline pumps for a total of ten (10) gas pumps. The service station building is approximately 2,252 square feet. Originally the structure had three service bays, a storage area and a small retail area. The service bays recently closed and with the recent major wind storm earlier this year, the canopy structure along Beryl Street was damaged and recently removed. A permit has been issued for the canopy replacement. The replacement canopy will match the existing remaining canopy.

**CURRENT REQUEST:**

Conditional Use Permit

Pursuant to Section 10-2.1602(b)(12) a. of the Municipal Code, incidental convenience items such as soft drinks, candy and cigarettes may be sold within an area that is an extension of the main structure and that is designed specifically for the purpose of accommodating a snack area, subject to the approval a Conditional Use Permit is obtained Pursuant to Section 10-2.2506. Additionally, Section 10-2.1602(c)(2) requires the issuance of a Conditional Use Permit whenever a use is added or any structural or architectural alterations are made to an existing service station. The applicant seeks approval to add the operation of a convenience store to the existing vehicle service station/gas station and make minor architectural and structural alterations. The applicant will convert the existing three (3) automotive repair service bays, storage area and small retail area into an incidental retail sales area/snack shop area along with two new restrooms, storage room and small office area. There are eight (8) existing parking spaces immediately adjacent to the building. Pursuant to the City’s current parking regulations the existing vehicle service station/gas station will small retail shop requires a total twelve (12) parking spaces, three (3) per each service bay with three (3) bays requires nine (9) parking spaces and the existing 852 square foot retail area requires three (3) parking spaces (one (1) space per 250 square feet). The proposed uses will require only nine (9) parking spaces and with the additional parking space to be added the subject use will be conforming with respect to parking regulations.

The proposed convenience store will be typical of the other convenience stores located throughout the city at vehicle service stations/gas stations. Within the convenience store area there will be freestanding merchandise shelves, separate areas for cold and hot beverages, food items, a reach-in cooler, and a cashier’s counter. No alcohol sales are proposed with this application. Two new unisex

restrooms will be accessible from inside the store instead of the current exterior door access.

The purpose of a Conditional Use Permit is to review certain uses possessing unique characteristics and to ensure that the establishment of those uses will not adversely affect surrounding uses nor disrupt the orderly development of the community. Approval of a Conditional Use Permit must generally meet certain criteria specified in Section 10-2.2506 of the Municipal Code. The criteria include the following:

*1. The site for the proposed use shall be in conformity with the General Plan and shall be adequate in size and shape to accommodate such use and all setbacks, spaces, walls and fences, parking, loading, landscaping, and other features required by this chapter to adjust such use with the land and uses in the neighborhood.*

The existing gas station meets the intent of the General Plan goals and policies by providing a resident-serving commercial use. The project includes the addition of one (1) new parking space and will comply with all applicable development standards.

*2. The site for the proposed use shall have adequate access to a public street or highway of adequate width and pavement to carry the quantity and kind of traffic generated by the proposed use.*

The project site abuts Beryl Street and Prospect Avenue. The site has four (4) vehicular entry points, two along Beryl Street and two along Prospect plus vehicle access in and out of the adjacent shopping center. The service station complies with all applicable criteria for existing service stations concerning driveways, access, and on-site circulation.

*3. The proposed use shall have no adverse effect on abutting property or the permitted use thereof.*

Land uses to the east are part of the overall integrated neighborhood shopping center, to the south are medical buildings and the Beach Cities Health District, and to the north are multi-family residential units with single family residences to the west. The existing gasoline service station and the proposed conversion of the automotive repair service bays to convenience retail store supports and compliments surrounding commercial and residential uses.

*4. The conditions stated in the resolution or design considerations integrated into the project shall be deemed necessary to protect the public health, safety, and general welfare. Such conditions may include but shall not be limited to:*

The conditions of approval stated in the resolution are crafted to protect the public health, safety, and general welfare and to achieve development in an orderly and efficient manner in conformity with the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance. As examples, a condition regarding improved ADA pathways and ADA compliant restrooms at the site and conditions for added design features that will serve to better integrate the existing service station with the adjacent neighborhood commercial shopping center have been added.

#### Planning Commission Design Review

Pursuant to Section 10-2.2502 (a) (4) of the Municipal Code, due to the “unique nature” of vehicle service stations/gas stations, the project also requires the approval of a Planning Commission Design Review(PCDR). The purpose of the design review is to consider the impacts of the site layout, and its relationship to surrounding properties, and to consider the overall design of the structure.

- Layout

- This is an existing gas station/vehicle service station that is part of a larger shopping center. The existing building shall remain and all of the existing vehicle accesses off of Beryl Street and Prospect Avenue shall remain. The exterior of the building will be remodeled as well as the interior space to accommodate the convenience store.
- One (1) additional new parallel parking space will be stripped adjacent to the landscaping area near the intersection of the Beryl Street and Prospect Avenue.

- Building Design

- The exterior of the building will be remodeled to accommodate the new entrance to the convenience retail area. The service bay doors will be replaced with fixed glass store front windows and swinging commercial glass doors.
- The existing board and batten siding will be replaced with smooth stucco and the existing brick and new smooth stucco will be painted with colors to match the existing commercial shopping center behind the service station.

The purpose of the planning commission design review is also to protect surrounding property values, prevent blight and deterioration of neighborhoods, promote sound land use, design excellence, and protect the overall health, safety, and welfare of the City. The criteria for PCDR are as follows:

**1. User impact and needs.** *The design of the project shall consider the impact and the needs of the user in respect to circulation, parking, traffic, utilities, public services, noise and odor, privacy, private and common open spaces, trash collection, security and crime deterrence, energy consumption, physical barriers, and other design concerns.*

The project maintains the existing vehicle service station driveway aisles used for two-way traffic within the site. The existing driveways will continue to provide clear ingress/egress to the gas station and convenience store. The adjacent nine (9) parking spaces provide customer parking for the convenience store consistent with the City’s parking regulations. The large storefront windows will provide high visibility into the convenience store from the intersection and particularly Beryl Street which serves as a crime deterrence consistent with Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.

**2. Relationship to physical features.** *The location of buildings and structures shall respect the natural terrain of the site and shall be functionally integrated with any natural features of the landscape to include the preservation of existing trees, where feasible.*

The site has been developed with a service station since the late 1960s, thus, there is no natural terrain at the site. Staff has proposed a landscaping condition requesting improved landscaping within the existing planter areas.

**3. Consistency of architectural style.** *The building or structure shall be harmonious and consistent within the proposed architectural style regarding roofing, materials, windows, doors, openings, textures, colors, and exterior treatment.*

The proposed conversion of the existing automobile service bays to a convenience store will provide an update to the façade of the service station building since the closure of the automobile service bays. The design elements to be added will better integrate the architecture with the surrounding commercial center with the conversion of the board and batten to smooth finish stucco and the use of matching color schemes for the brick and stucco. Additionally the red tile roof with exaggerated enclosed eaves will be maintained as another architectural design feature that is consistent with the adjacent commercial center.

**4. Balance and integration with the neighborhood.** *The overall design shall be integrated and compatible with the neighborhood and shall strive to be in harmony with the scale and bulk of surrounding properties.*

The re-configuration of the closed service bays provides revitalization of the existing structure. There are no foreseen impacts to the adjacent commercial uses or residential units. The overall design as remodeled is more consistent in terms of colors and materials with the adjacent larger commercial center of which this site is within.

**5. Building design.** *The design of buildings and structures shall strive to provide innovation, variety, and creativity in the proposed design solution. All architectural elevations shall be designed to eliminate the appearance of flat facades or boxlike construction.*

The conversion of the existing vehicle service bays to a convenience store will require the remodeling and update to the exterior of gas station structure. The new interior will require improvements to the exterior that will include a more simple design with building materials and colors and seamless windows that are consistent with the architecture of the adjacent shopping center.

**6. Signs.** *Signs and sign programs shall meet the criteria established in Sign Regulation Criteria, Section 10-2.1802 and the existing sign program for the shopping center.*

No signage for the convenience store is proposed with this application. All signage will be required to be consistent with the existing sign program for the adjacent shopping center and compliant with all RBMC signage regulations.

It is staff's opinion, that the continued use of this site as a vehicle service station/gas station with the addition of a convenience store with sales for incidental items as redesigned can be accommodated without adverse impacts to the neighborhood and the surrounding community. The Planning Division recommends approval.

**ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS:**

The proposed project is Categorically Exempt from the preparation of environmental analyses, pursuant to Section 15303 (small structures) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

**ATTACHMENTS**

Exemption Declaration

Draft Resolution

Applications for Conditional Use Permit and Planning Commission Design Review

Architectural Drawings