

February 9, 2004

**Honorable Chairman and Members of the
Hermosa Beach Planning Commission**

**Regular Meeting of
February 17, 2004**

SUBJECT: PRECISE DEVELOPMENT PLAN 04-3
 PARKING PLAN 04-2

LOCATION: 238 PIER AVENUE – STONER BUILDING

APPLICANT: JEFF STONER, 539 25TH STREET
 HERMOSA BEACH, CA 90254

REQUESTS: PRECISE DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND PARKING PLAN TO A CONSTRUCT
 A NEW 2,800 SQUARE FOOT RETAIL BUILDING WITH REDUCED
 PARKING REQUIREMENT USING TANDEM PARKING AND PARKING IN-
 LIEU FEES.

Recommendation

To direct staff as deemed appropriate.

Background

ZONING:	C-2 Restricted Commercial
GENERAL PLAN:	General Commercial
LOT SIZE:	3,323 Sq. Ft.
EXISTING FLOOR AREA / PARKING:	1,445 Square Feet / 1 space (to be
demolished)	
PROPOSED BUILDING:	2,803.5 Square Feet
FLOOR AREA RATIO:	0.84
REQUIRED PARKING:	9 Spaces
PARKING PROVIDED:	8 (in 4 pairs of tandem spaces)
ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:	Categorically Exempt

The existing building to be demolished was initially constructed as a residence in 1941. The most recent uses of the building have been for commercial purposes, although there is a history of joint residential and commercial use previous to the recent retail uses. The building is nonconforming to current parking requirements as only one space exists in the basement level with access from the alley, while six spaces would be required under current zoning for retail commercial uses.

At the meeting of August 19, 2003, the Planning Commission denied the applicants request to remodel and expand the existing building with less than required parking and maintenance of its legal nonconforming status with respect to parking. The Commission was concerned that the amount of demolition did not warrant keeping the building's legal nonconforming status, and was concerned about the lack of adequate parking for what was essentially going to be a new building. The City Council sustained the Planning Commission decision, on appeal, at their meeting of October 28, 2003, and

specifically expressed concerns about the revised plan and the parking layout which included tandem parking for 8 spaces.

The project is categorically exempt from the requirements of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to the CEQA guidelines, Section 15303, Class 3(c), as the project is located in an urbanized area, involves construction of less than 10,000 square feet, and all necessary public services and facilities are available.

Analysis

The applicant's new proposal involves the construction of a three level 30-foot high retail commercial building in a craftsman/bungalow style similar to the existing building. The floor plan is similar to the previous proposal with parking on the ground floor accessed from the alley; with the bulk of the square footage on the ground floor; and a mezzanine level accounting for approximately 800 square feet. The project differs from the previous proposal in that none of the existing structure will remain, and there is no attempt to use the parking credit under Section 17.44.140(E) for the existing nonconforming parking deficiency. Also, instead of a modern style building, the architect is proposing a style of architecture similar to style of the existing building with wood shingle siding, wood beams, divided light windows, and stone veneer.

PRECISE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Pursuant to Chapter 17.58 a Precise Development Plan is required because of the new construction. The PDP review requirements are conformance with minimum standards of the zone, and general review of the project relating to compatibility with surrounding uses.

The project meets the basic zoning requirement of the C-2 zone, as a 5-foot setback is provided adjacent to the residential property to the south, and the building is designed to comply with the 30-foot height limit (subject to verification). Parking issues are discussed below. Beyond these basic standards, the project plans show a substantial improvement to a very old and under-utilized building, in an attempt to revitalize a prominent location in the City's downtown. Further, the architectural features of the proposed new building are consistent with the existing style of architecture. Retail commercial use of this type is certainly compatible with surrounding uses, and consistent with the general objectives of the City Council to balance the existing predominance of restaurant and bar uses with retail uses. The height of the building, while it will be increased a floor higher than the current building, is consistent with the height limit of adjacent commercial and residential zones.

PARKING PLAN

Based on the current parking ratio proposed for the downtown district of 3 spaces per 1,000 square feet of office or retail space, the proposed 2,803 square foot building requires 9 parking spaces pursuant to Section 17.44.040 pertaining to parking requirements for the downtown.¹ The applicant is proposing 8 spaces in tandem, and is requesting consideration that all of these spaces be counted towards the requirement pursuant to Section 17.44.210, Parking Plans, which allows for Commission consideration of reduced parking requirements. Further, the applicant is requesting to pay a fee in-lieu of parking for the last required space pursuant to the new Section 17.44.040 for projects in the downtown district.

The Commission should consider whether the use of tandem parking for a retail use is an appropriate application of Section 17.44.210. While tandem parking would qualify under Section 17.44.210(8) as “other methods for reducing parking demand,” it may not be an appropriate solution for retail uses, as customer turnover is frequent. Tandem parking is normally recommended for office or residential uses. To address that issue, however, the applicant proposes to use the two of the rear spaces for employee parking, allowing customer use of the other six spaces. If tandem parking is not approved to meet parking requirements, the project would be considered to be deficient 5 parking spaces (9 required, with only 4 provided) and applicant would be required to pay the in-lieu fee for five (5) parking spaces or redesign the project.

Staff will prepare a resolution based on the Commission decision and bring it back for review at the next meeting. If approved, staff recommends the following conditions of approval:

1. A revised roof plan shall be submitted to demonstrate compliance with the maximum building height of 30-feet. The plans shall clearly show property lines, property corner elevations, and maximum heights critical points.
2. A wet stamped survey clearly identifying property corner elevations.
3. At least two of the back tandem parking spaces shall be assigned for employee use only, with the remaining spaces for customer use.

CONCUR:

Ken Robertson
Senior Planner

Sol Blumenfeld, Director
Community Development Department

Attachments

1. Location Map
2. Photos
3. Applicant letter

¹ The revised section 17.04.040 has not been codified yet. The Planning Commission recommended the 3 spaces per 1,000 square foot ratio for office/retail in the downtown district at its meeting February 18, 2003, and the City Council introduced the ordinance on March 25, 2003, with final adoption pending Coastal Commission approval. The Coastal Commission only recently approved the amendments and final adoption of the ordinance is scheduled for City Council February 24, 2004.