



Staff Report

TO: Planning Commissioners
FROM: Christina Taylor, Community Development Director
DATE: 02/11/2020
SUBJECT: **VAR2020-0071 and 07-PP-12 consideration of a request for a variance from the light standard height limit of 20 feet (Section 8.50.070.3) to a maximum of 25 feet and a modification of the conditions of approval for Plot Plan 07-PP-12 for 13.6 acres located within the Sundance Specific Plan at the southwest corner of 8th Street and Highland Springs Avenue**

APPLICANT: Jan Harriman, Sundance Corporate Center

Background and Analysis:

The Sundance Corporate Center is a mixed-use commercial center which is part of the Sundance Specific Plan. Previously, the City Council approved Plot Plan 07-PP-12 and Final Parcel Map 35789 for the center which proposed construction of 8 buildings on a 13.6-acre site. The proposed use for the three buildings currently under construction are medical offices which is a permitted use in the specific plan.

The surrounding area includes a single-family neighborhood to north of the site, the Sundance Elementary School and residential to west of the site, a vacant lot to the south of the site, and a proposed residential and commercial development to the east of the site within the City of Banning. The overall height of each of medical office buildings under construction is 50 feet. The Specific Plan requires 20-foot side and rear setbacks for this commercial development. Due to the height and scale of the buildings, the applicant is providing a side setback of 101 feet and a rear setback of 243 feet. The building height and related setbacks are consistent with the maximum allowable height setback relationships within the Specific Plan.

At buildout, the site will be accessible via two (2) driveways on East Eighth Street and a signalized driveway at Highland Springs Avenue. A traffic analysis was prepared for this project with recommendations on how to mitigate any adverse traffic impacts that might be created by the uses. Based on this analysis, a traffic signal was recommended to be installed at the Highlands Springs Avenue entrance. This recommendation was included in the conditions of approval for the combined plot plan and final parcel map.

Condition Modification

The recommended traffic signal at the entrance to the development from Highland Springs Avenue was required as a condition of approval in the plot plan and parcel map to facilitate safer, full movement access to the site and maintain desired level of service on Highland Springs. The condition was developed as a result of a 2008 Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) performed specifically for the proposed center. The condition reads as follows:

4.10 A traffic signal shall be installed at the intersection of Highland Springs Avenue and Driveway 1 to the satisfaction of the Director of Public Works prior to building occupancy at the site.

It was determined through the TIA, there would only be a deficiency in Level of Service on Highland Springs during peak evening travel times. The proposed remediation for the deficiency was either providing a transition lane in a median on Highland Springs to allow left turn movement or signaling the entrance. The City determined signaling the entrance was the preferred remediation.

This signal is part of an overall traffic signal plan which includes several signals north of this location on Highland Springs as well as a signal directly across Highland Springs in the City of Banning. The applicant is requesting the traffic signal at the Highland Springs entrance be deferred so a proper coordination effort with Pardee Homes and the City of Banning can be carried out.

Staff has discussed the proposed request with the Public Works Department as well as public safety which resulted in the following:

- The Highland Springs access point should be closed (concrete k-rail) until the signal is installed.
- Construction traffic and customer traffic will be separated. Construction traffic will be directed to use the western driveway on Eighth Street. This access point will be marked and will be closed when not in use. Customer traffic will utilize the eastern driveway on Eighth Street. This access point will be fully improved at the time the first occupants open for business.
- Since there are two other points of access serving the site, public safety can adequately access the site in an emergency situation. The Fire Department determined they only need access through the primary public entrance (eastern most entrance on Eighth Street) but would be able to utilize the construction entrance if necessary.

Staff has determined the signal needs to be installed before additional permits on pad sites are issued, but the site can be adequately serviced by the two, Eighth Street entrances at this time.

Variance

The Sundance Corporate Center has three medical office buildings under construction and preparing for occupancy. The buildings will host a variety of uses including medical, dental, urgent care and out-patient surgery. The site has a significant amount of parking, ADA paths of travel and pedestrian walkways. Due to the nature of services provided on this site, there can be employees and consumers at the location well into nighttime hours. For the safety of the employees and patients, light standards were installed throughout the site providing adequate lighting of parking areas and paths of travel while still meeting the Outdoor Lighting Standards in Beaumont Municipal Code Chapter 8.50, with the exception of light standard height.

The Beaumont Municipal Code Chapter 8.50.070.3 establishes a 20-foot height limit for light poles in the commercial zone. The light poles at the Sundance Corporate Center are 20 feet tall, installed on a concrete base for an overall height of approximately 25 feet. Due to previous interpretation of the code, plan check and inspection approved the light standards at this height. Current staff's interpretation of the Code would consider this height non-conforming.

Chapter 8.50.100.4 *Variance for Non-Conforming Lighting* allows a variance to be granted for non-conforming lighting if:

- a. There are special circumstances or conditions applying to the land, building or outdoor light fixture(s) for which the variance is sought, which circumstances or conditions are peculiar to such land, building or outdoor light fixtures and do not generally apply to the land, buildings or outdoor light fixtures in the neighborhood; and

The Outdoor Lighting code was written to generally address the needs for minimizing light pollution and the impact on neighborhood. Medical uses at this location are significantly different than other commercial uses. The operational hours will be longer than typical commercial operating hours and the services provided at these facilities warrant special attention to details inside and outside of the buildings, that many other businesses do not require.

- b. The granting of a variance will generally be in harmony with the intent of this Chapter and will not be injurious to the neighborhood or otherwise detrimental to the public welfare.

The intent of the code is to minimize light pollution. Granting the variance for the additional height will meet the intent of the code while allowing the lighting needs of the center and its patrons to be met. The other provisions of the chapter can still be met ensuring there is no detriment to public welfare.

Staff has determined these findings can be made in a positive manner.

Recommended Action:

Conduct a Public Hearing;
Forward to City Council a recommendation of approval of a modification of
the conditions of approval and;
Approve Variance VAR2020-0071

Attachments:

- A. Site Plan
- B. Modified Conditions of Approval