



STAFF REPORT
2/5/2020

TO: Planning Commission Chair and Commissioners

FROM: Juan Carrillo, Associate Planner

SUBJECT: Second Policy Discussion regarding a proposed development of a multi-tenant restaurant/retail building including a 2,000 sq. ft. drive-thru Coffee Shop and 4,500 sq. ft. restaurant/office space, and a 12-fueling position Canopy for Service Station and a 3,010 sq. ft. mini-market on 3.01 acres of vacant land located at the NEC of Cesar Chavez Street and First Street.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission review the attached site plan design and conceptual building elevation images for a proposed multi-tenant restaurant/retail building including a 2,000 sq. ft. drive-thru Coffee Shop and 4,500 sq. ft. restaurant/office space, and a 12-fueling position Canopy for Service Station with a “reverse orientation” and a 3,010 sq. ft. mini-market to be operated by 7-Eleven. Staff is seeking guidance on moving forward with this project in its current conceptual design.

BACKGROUND:

At the January 15, 2020 Planning Commission Staff requested direction on the proposed and above-referenced project. The commission directed Staff to bring this item back for further consideration and presentation of proposed building elevations for the development of the site. One concern expressed at the hearing was the architecture discrepancies between the existing buildings, particularly the Walgreens Pharmacy and the architectural differences with the McDonald’s and the Taco Bell buildings. The applicant provided the elevations below for a 7-Eleven recently constructed in Cathedral City. Staff believes that the elevations provided below are a significant match to the Walgreen’s Pharmacy building and that Staff can work with the applicant to address the Planning Commission’s concerns.

This property was entitled by Architectural Review 07-20 and Conditional Use Permit 233 and it is partially developed. Both applications were originally approved by the Planning Commission on May 7, 2008. While the architectural review only approved the first phase of construction, a master site plan showing future retail pads was reviewed by the Planning Commission which at the time included a service station. The overall project included a 14,814 square foot drive-thru pharmacy (Walgreens), a 2,858 square foot drive-thru restaurant pad, a 3,243 sq. ft. service station/mini-market, and two multi-tenant retail buildings totaling 12,672 square feet. The

project was then revised to remove the drive-thru component of the pharmacy and reconfigured the drive-thru for the McDonalds.



Rendering of newly constructed 7-Eleven at the corner of Ramon Rd. and Date Palm in Cathedral City.



Architectural Drawings



4 EXTERIOR ELEVATION - NORTH - Refer to Key Plan

SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"



DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS:

As mentioned before, the General Plan 2035 shows the subject property as a “Downtown Center” designation which does not allow for automotive uses including service stations or gas stations and it also prohibits drive-thru establishments as illustrated on Table 4-1 General Plan designations Compatible as shown on Attachment III. As stated above, the applicant, Fountainhead Plaza, submitted Pre-Application 19-12 on September 23, 2019, proposing the construction of a multi-tenant restaurant/retail building including a 2,000 sq. ft. drive-thru Coffee Shop and 4,500 sq. ft. restaurant/office space, and a 12-fueling position Canopy for Service Station and a 3,010 sq. ft. mini-market on 3.01 acres of vacant land, the General Plan does prohibit gas stations and drive-thru restaurants within the Downtown Center designation.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION:

With the adoption of the General Plan 2035, the City’s Zoning Map is now inconsistent with the land use designations of the General Plan. One clear example of the inconsistencies with the land use designations of the General Plan and the current zoning designations is the GC (General Commercial) land use regulation versus the “Downtown Center” classification. The General Plan prohibits gas stations and drive-thru restaurants within the Downtown Center while the current zoning designation allows the construction and operation of gas stations and restaurants with drive-thru service with the approval of a conditional use permit, in accordance with section 17.74.010 of the Coachella Municipal Code.

Staff will begin the process of amending the zoning map to be consistent with the recently adopted General Plan 2035. This will require the creation of new zoning designations and corresponding Zoning Code Amendment. Once a draft zoning map is made available it will be presented to the Planning Commission for review in recommending approval to the City Council.

At this time staff is requesting that the Planning Commission provide staff and the applicant with direction regarding the appropriateness of drive-thru for restaurants or coffee shops and auto oriented businesses, including gas stations. Staff has encouraged the applicant to design the service station in a “reverse orientation” such that the fueling canopy will be located behind the building and not as a prominent feature of the service station. The commission may take into consideration that the original project, entitled under Architectural Review 07-20 and Conditional Use Permit 233, included a gas station and other drive-thru uses was submitted prior to the adoption of the General Plan 2035 which was on April 22, 2015, and therefore the land use designation at the time of submittal may be honored. The Planning Commission may consider that all future development from the date of adoption of the General Plan has to comply with current land uses.