



City of Orange

Legislation Text

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TO: Chair and Members of the Design Review Committee

THRU: Anna Pehoushek, Assistant Community Development Director

FROM: Tiffany Chhan, Assistant Planner

1. SUBJECT

Design Review No. 5060-21, Rapids Express Carwash, 1325 West Katella Avenue

2. SUMMARY

Recommendation to the Planning Commission.

The applicant proposes to demolish an existing restaurant and to construct a new automatic drive through, express carwash facility with associated vacuum stalls. This is the second review of this application by the Design Review Committee.

3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Applicant/Owner: Rapids Express Corp. (Geoff Von Der Ahe)/Gladys E. Prothero and Family LLC

Property Location: 1325 West Katella Avenue

General Plan Designation: Urban Mixed Use (UMIX)

Zoning Classification: Current zoning is Commercial-Recreation (C-R). The entitlement includes a proposed zone change to Urban Mixed Use (UMU) to establish consistency with the City's General Plan. The proposed development will be reviewed against the UMU development standards.

Existing Development: Standalone restaurant

Associated Application: Zone Change No. 1305-21, Conditional Use Permit No. 3154-21, and Minor Site Plan Review No. 1074-21

Previous DRC Project Review: The project was continued by the Design Review Committee (DRC) on July 7, 2022. Meeting minutes are provided as Attachment 4 and Applicant responses to DRC comments are provided as Attachment 6 to this report.

4. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant, Rapids Express Corp., proposes to demolish an existing restaurant and construct a new 13,860 square foot automatic carwash facility and associated vacuum areas. The carwash building is composed of three areas: 1) an east tower control office, 2) a carwash tunnel and equipment room, and 3) a west tower for storage and equipment. The vacuum areas will have fabric canopies with incorporated vacuum hoses. The proposed building is long to house the tunnel component of the carwash facility. The carwash includes a large queuing area which is three lanes

wide that will be partially screened by three canopies extending towards Main Street. There are 30 proposed vacuum stalls with four standard parking stalls along with a queuing capacity for 20 vehicles.

Architecture

The rectangular one-story building has a maximum height of 32 feet and one inch. The building design incorporates a contemporary architectural style with features including varied flat roof lines, alternating wall planes, and curved canopies. The exterior materials and colors also contribute to the design including fine sand finished stucco in Navaho White, and Brazilian Walnut (Ipe) composite wood accent to be wrapped around the tower elements. The canopies would feature dark gray porcelain tiles, clear glass walls, acrylic roof panels, trim, and flashing accented in red. Revised architectural elevations (Attachment 2) incorporate a steel awning wrapped around the main tower and clear glass storefront windows and doors in response to DRC feedback (see Analysis.)

Landscaping

Preliminary landscape plans provided show water efficient landscaping along the property frontage and the street side property line. A revised landscape plan provided on July 26, 2022, includes Brisbane Box, Crape Myrtle, Southern Magnolias, Golden Rain Tree, and a Coast Live Oak. A four-foot Privet hedge will extend between the right-of-way of Main Street and Katella Avenue and the queuing lane. Groupings of shrubs and ground cover include Cats Claw Vine, New Zealand Flax, Fox Tail Agave, Compact Xylosma, Japanese Privet Hedge, Kangaroo Paw Bush Ballad, and Pink Dancer Indian Hawthorne. Stormwater plantings include Deer Grass, Pyrenees Cotoneaster, Echeveria Afterglow, Star Jasmine, and Elijah Blue Fescue. The total landscape area is 8,975 square feet (18.58% of the site).

The project as proposed meets all development standards of the Urban Mixed Use zoning district, except for a minimum floor area ratio (FAR) requirement of 1.5 which is discussed in the Analysis section of this report.

5. EXISTING SITE

The project site is a 1.109 acre property which contains a 6,123 square foot full service restaurant (Katella Grill) and parking lot.

6. EXISTING AREA CONTEXT

The subject property is located at the northeast corner of Katella Avenue and Main Street, due east of the Stadium Promenade. The area is part of the commercial and mixed-use corridor running along Katella Avenue, dividing the bordering industrial district to both the north and south. The project site is bordered to the west by commercial restaurants, to the south by the Mazda of Orange dealership, and to the east and north by warehouses and industrial uses.

7. ANALYSIS AND STATEMENT OF THE ISSUES

A discussion of contextual compatibility, the overall landscape program, and Floor Area Ratio are provided in the July 7, 2022, DRC report (Attachment 5).

Issue 1: DRC Feedback

At the DRC meeting on July 7, 2022, the DRC members made comments regarding:

- The need to further develop corner architecture and site plan elements due to the prominent

nature of the site at a key intersection of the city.

- The amount of site paving.
- The stature of the proposed trees.

Architecture

The applicant has addressed this by integrating a sign composed of wood paneling and red steel along the corner of the property, the sign is framed by two Golden Rain Trees. A steel awning is now proposed on the front elevation along with glass storefront doors on the Main Street side and a glass door on the Katella Avenue side. On the Katella Avenue side, in front of the building, the applicant has proposed a large Coast Live Oak tree. These elements help to distinguish the front elevation from the rear elevation. Additionally, the proposed awning helps break up the tower element and the large Coast Live Oak softens the Katella Avenue building elevation.

Paving and Landscaping

At the July meeting the DRC discussed the disproportionate amount of paving on the site due to the large drive aisle widths and the abundant number of vacuum stalls. In response, the applicant has decreased the drive aisle width to provide a landscape planter that is 10 feet and 1.5 inches wide along the entirety of the eastern property line. The significant increase in planter size balances the desire for additional landscaping with the operational needs of the carwash facility. In response to the DRC's comments regarding the number of vacuum stalls, the applicant has removed four vacuum stalls northeast of the building and in their place have located large landscape planters. In total, the applicant has increased the proposed landscaping to 18.58% of the total site from the previous proposal of 13% of the total site and increased the total tree count from 21 proposed trees to 33 proposed trees.

The DRC also remarked on the stature of the proposed trees. The main issue discussed revolved around not the specific number of required trees, but the species and their ultimate mature breadth and width. In light of the discussions, the applicant has made revisions to their plant palette to include a greater variety of trees that have larger stature such as the Coast Live Oak, Southern Magnolias, and Golden Rain Trees. All of the trees at the time of planting are proposed to be 36 inch boxes, except for the Coast Live Oak which is proposed to be a 48 inch box.

The proposed preliminary landscape plans indicate that the amount of proposed paving has decreased, and the amount and stature of proposed landscaping plantings has increased. Staff seeks guidance from the DRC to determine if the balance between onsite operations and landscape design has been met.

8. ADVISORY BOARD RECOMMENDATION

Staff reviewed the application on December 15, 2021, on April 13, 2022, and on May 25, 2022, and recommended approval of the project to the Design Review Committee and Planning Commission. On July 20, 2022, staff reviewed the revised application and found that the revised plans substantially conform to the plans reviewed on May 25, 2022, and upheld the recommended approval of the project to the Design Review Committee and the Planning Commission.

9. PUBLIC NOTICE

No Public Notice was required for the DRC continuance. The project was noticed on June 27, 2022, 38 notices were mailed to adjacent property owners and tenants for the Design Review Committee

meeting.

10. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Final Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR) No. 1815-09 for the Comprehensive General Plan Update was certified on March 9, 2010 and prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act. The proposed change in zoning is within the scope of the previously approved General Plan and is adequately described in the previously certified General Plan Program EIR for purposes of CEQA.

Categorical Exemption: The proposed building and associated structures is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per State CEQA Guidelines 15332 (In-fill Development Projects) because the project site is less than five acres, the project site has no value as habitat for endangered, rare or threatened species, the approval of this project would not result in any significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality, and the site can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services. No public review is required.

11. STAFF RECOMMENDATION AND REQUIRED FINDINGS

Findings for DRC applications come from four sources:

- The Orange Municipal Code
- The Infill Residential Design Guidelines
- The Historic Preservation Design Standards for Old Towne (commonly referred to the Old Towne Design Standards or OTDS)
- Orange Eichler Design Standards (or OEDS)

The Findings are applied as appropriate to each project. Based on the following Findings and statements in support of such Findings, staff recommends the DRC recommend approval of the project to the Planning Commission with recommended conditions.

- The project design upholds community aesthetics through the use of an internally consistent, integrated design theme and is consistent with all adopted specific plans, applicable design standards, and their required findings (OMC 17.10.07.G.3).

The project upholds community aesthetics in that the adjacent properties contain an eclectic mix of styles and design. The site design and capacity of the queuing lanes will accommodate a large number of vehicles on site. The placement of landscaping and the paneled enclosure on the canopies adequately screens the queuing lane from the street and provides shading for customers. The building architecture consistently uses contemporary designs with clean lines and varies the use of materials such as stucco, glass, and acrylic with aluminum and wood accents. The proposed building and design may establish a new phase of design. Few sites in the area have fully developed any project using the UMU development standards. Over time, the Katella Avenue Corridor will fully develop into a more urban setting focused on retail, office, and services thereby strategically maximizing the development potential of the area, as intended by the City's General Plan.

12. CONDITIONS

The approval of this project is subject to the following conditions:

1. Prior to building permit issuance, City required irrigation and landscape inspection notes, in accordance with the City of Orange Landscape Standards and Specifications, shall be placed on the final landscape plan, to the satisfaction of the Public Works Director or designee in

- coordination with the Community Services Director or designee.
2. Prior to certificate of occupancy, all landscaping improvements shall be completed according to the approved plans, the City of Orange Water Efficient Landscape Guidelines, and City of Orange Landscape Standards and Specifications. The project landscape architect shall submit documentation certifying compliance with this requirement (Appendices B and E of City of Orange Landscape Standards and Specifications) for review and approval by the Community Development Director or designee, in coordination with the Public Works Director or designee.
 3. Landscape maintenance shall be performed in such a manner as to allow all trees to retain their full canopy height for screening and full canopy breadth for shade at point of maturity, except as required for public safety purposes.
 4. This project is approved as a precise plan. All work shall conform in substance and be maintained in general conformance with the plans included as Attachment 2 (date stamped July 26, 2022) of this report, including modifications required by the conditions of approval, and as recommended for approval by the Design Review Committee. Any changes from the approved plans shall be subject to subsequent review and approval by the Design Review Committee.
 5. After any application has been approved, if changes are proposed regarding the location or alteration of any use or structure, a changed plan may be submitted to the Community Development Director for approval. If the Community Development Director determines that the proposed change complies with the provisions and the spirit and intent of the approval action, and that the action would have been the same for the changed plan as for the approved plan, the Community Development Director may approve the changed plan without requiring a new public meeting.
 6. The applicant agrees to indemnify, hold harmless, and defend the City, its officers, agents and employees from any and all liability or claims that may be brought against the City arising out of its approval of this permit, save and except that caused by the City's active negligence.
 7. The final approved conditions of approval shall be reprinted on the first or second page of the construction documents when submitting to the Building Division for the plan check process.
 8. Construction permits shall be obtained for all future construction work, as required by the City of Orange, Public Works Department's Building Division. Failure to obtain the required building permits will be cause for revocation of this permit.
 9. The project approval includes certain fees and/or other exactions. Pursuant to Government Code Section 66020, these conditions constitute written notice of the fees and/or exactions. The applicant is hereby notified that the ninety (90) day protest period commencing from the date of approval of the project has begun. If the applicant fails to file a protest regarding these conditions or requirements, the applicant is legally barred from later challenging such exactions per Government Code Section 66020.
 10. If not utilized, project approval expires 24 months from the approval date. Extensions of time may be granted in accordance with OMC Section 17.08.060.

13. ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 Vicinity Map
- Attachment 2 Revised Architectural, Renderings, and Landscape Plans date stamped July 26, 2022
- Attachment 3 UMU Development Standards Reference Table

- Attachment 4 July 7, 2022 DRC Meeting Minutes
- Attachment 5 July 7, 2022 DRC Staff Report
- Attachment 6 Applicant responses to DRC comments from July 7, 2022