



File #: 19-0635, Version: 1

REPORT TO THE ZONING ADMINISTRATOR

SUBJECT

Proposed Project:

SPECIAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT: to demolish an existing restaurant building (Sweet Tomatoes) and allow a new surface parking lot with landscaping for Costco Wholesale.

Location: 1210 Kifer Road (APNs: 216-27-053)

File #: 2018-8028

Zoning: MXD-1 (Flexible Mixed-Use I for the Lawrence Station Area)

Applicant / Owner: David Babcock & Associates (applicant) / Costco Wholesale Corporation (owner)

Environmental Review: A Class 11 Categorical Exemption relieves this project from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) provisions.

Project Planner: Shila Behzadiaria, 408-730-7456, sbehzadiaria@sunnyvale.ca.gov

BACKGROUND

The project site is approximately 1.6 acres in size and is located within the Lawrence Station Area Plan (LSAP). The site is currently developed with a one-story building occupied by a restaurant, with surface parking and landscaping. Costco is contiguous to the subject property, with a shared driveway access that serves both sites.

See Attachment 1 for a map of the vicinity and mailing area.

Description of Proposed Project

The proposed project includes demolition of the existing 8,200 square foot restaurant building and construction of 102 surface parking spaces and associated site improvements, including landscaping and lighting. The proposed parking lot will be used by Costco patrons. A deviation is requested to exceed the maximum number of parking spaces combined with the Costco site.

Previous Actions on the Site

The existing building was built in 1990. The site has been occupied by restaurant uses, and is currently occupied by Sweet Tomatoes. There are no previous approved planning projects related to subject application and no open Neighborhood Preservation complaints.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

A Class 11 Categorical Exemption (construction, or placement of minor structures accessory to (appurtenant to) existing commercial, industrial, or institutional facilities) relieves this project from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) provisions.

DISCUSSION

Site Layout and Access

The existing site is served by a shared driveway access that is entirely on the adjacent Costco parcel. The proposed project will maintain this existing access.

Development Standards

The proposed project complies with most of the applicable development standards as set forth in the Sunnyvale Municipal Code, except for the maximum number of parking spaces allowed.

Parking and Circulation

The project includes striping of 102 standard-sized parking spaces. The existing Costco parking lot contains 746 parking spaces. The project includes removal of ten spaces on the Costco site to allow for pedestrian access between the two sites. The modifications will result in a total of 838 parking spaces for use by Costco patrons.

When combined with the Costco site, a minimum of 557 parking spaces and maximum of 696 parking spaces are permitted. Therefore, the combined sites exceed the maximum number of parking spaces by 142 parking spaces. While the parking calculation indicates that the parking supply exceeds the demand, the Costco site experiences a demand for parking that appears to warrant the additional parking spaces. Costco is located along a major thoroughfare, and includes retail, food services, auto repair and a gas station. The additional parking is to provide for a better shopping experience for Costco customers.

Landscaping

The site complies with landscaping requirements, by providing 14,163 square feet of landscaping (20% of the site), a 15-foot frontage landscape buffer and 50% of the parking lot to be shaded by trees within 15 years. The project also meets water-efficient landscaping and stormwater requirements.

Tree Removal and Replacement

The site contains mature London Plane street trees along the Kifer frontage and shared driveway, which will be maintained as part of the project. The interior of the site contains seven protected trees, of which six are proposed for removal. One protected London Plane tree along Kifer frontage will be maintained. The trees for removal are considered as “moderate” suitability for preservation, due to declining health or structural defects. The trees would also conflict with the proposed parking lot design and access. Therefore, staff is supportive of the tree removals.

The project includes the planting of 36 24-inch box trees throughout the parking lot, which complies with the Tree Replacement Standards.

Lighting

Light poles will be installed throughout the parking lot to match the existing light poles on the Costco site. Lighting will be standard LED and facing downward to avoid lighting spillover.

LAWRENCE STATION AREA PLAN (LSAP):

The City Council rezoned the site to MXD-1 in 2016 as part of the LSAP adoption, which prioritizes mixed-use development due to its proximity to the Caltrain station. The site would be difficult to

redevelop to mixed-use on its own, due to the lack of direct driveway access on the parcel and reliance on the Costco site for access to Kifer Road. Staff anticipates and encourages the subject property to combine with the Costco site for future redevelopment per the LSAP.

NEIGHBORHOOD IMPACTS/COMPATIBILITY:

The proposed project is will provide much-needed parking for Costco patrons. The proposed parking lot is not expected to have a detrimental visual impact on the surrounding properties, as the design is compatible with the existing Costco parking lot and is screened from street view through a landscaping buffer and tree planting.

PUBLIC CONTACT

30 notices were sent to surrounding property owners and residents adjacent to the subject site in addition to standard noticing practices, including advertisement in the Sunnyvale Sun Newspaper and on-site posting. No letters or calls were received from the public by staff.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Approve the Special Development Permit with recommended Conditions in Attachment 3.
2. Approve the Special Development Permit with modifications.
3. Deny the Special Development Permit.

RECOMMENDATION

Alternative 1. Approve the Special Development Permit with recommended Conditions in Attachment 3.

Prepared by: Shila Behzadiaria, Associate Planner

Approved by: Noren Caliva-Lepe, Senior Planner

ATTACHMENTS

1. Vicinity and Noticing Maps
2. Recommended Findings
3. Standard Requirements and Recommended Conditions of Approval
4. Site and Architectural Plans