



City of Sunnyvale

Agenda Item-No Attachments (PDF)

File #: 24-0602, Version: 1

REPORT TO THE ZONING ADMINISTRATOR

SUBJECT

Proposed Project:

USE PERMIT: to allow general alcohol sales at the hotel lounge and bar related to the VOCO hotel.

Location: 1101 Elko Drive (APN: 104-33-010)

File #: PLNG-2024-0224

Zoning: M-S - Industrial and Service

Applicant / Owner: Hiten Suraj (applicant) / Stay Cal Sunnyvale LLC (owner)

Environmental Review: Class 1 Categorical Exemption relieves this project from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) provisions.

Project Planner: Momoko Ishijima, 408-730-7532, mishijima@sunnyvale.ca.gov

BACKGROUND

The project site is located on the northeast corner of Elko Drive and Lawrence Station Road. Lawrence Expressway is located approximately 200 feet to the west. The 0.51-acre site has two frontages and is encumbered with a 27-foot wide public utility easement on the Lawrence Station Road side of the property. There are light industrial uses adjacent to the north, south and east. There is a mixed-use residential development across Lawrence Station Road to the west. The hotel is currently under construction.

Description of Proposed Project

The proposed project includes a request to allow general alcohol sales [Type 47 California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) License] in the hotel lounge and bar area from 5 P.M. to 10 P.M. daily. As described in the Project Description Letter from the applicant (Attachment 5), the hotel is rebranding to Voco IHG brand which offers a boutique hotel experience, and offers beer, wine, and specialty cocktails for guests in the evenings at the lounge and bar area. No exterior changes to the existing building or the site are proposed as part of this request.

Per Sunnyvale Municipal Code (SMC) Table 19.22.030, a Use Permit is required for restaurants and fast food restaurants that have on sale general alcohol beverage service in the M-S zoning district.

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

Previous Actions on the Site

A Use Permit (#2014-7488) was approved by the Planning Commission on November 10, 2014, for the development of a 51-room Holiday Inn Express hotel. The approval included a Variance approval to allow a 15-foot front setback on the Elko Drive frontage. Miscellaneous Plan Permits (MPP) have been approved in 2016 and 2021 to allow for changes to the exterior materials and windows. On November 13, 2023, a rebranding of the Holiday Inn Express hotel to the VOCO IHG brand and modifications to the exterior design, materials and colors were considered by the Planning

Commission at a Study Session. MPP (#PLNG-2023-0879) was approved on February 13, 2024, which implemented the direction provided by the Commission and staff regarding the exterior changes.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

A Class 1 Categorical Exemption (Section 15301 - Existing Facilities) relieves this project from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) provisions.

DISCUSSION

Proposed Use

The applicant requests general alcohol service as part of the rebranding to the VOCO IHG brand. The boutique hotel experience would transition the breakfast dining area located on the second floor of the hotel to offer a bar, cocktails, and light dinner between the hours of 5 P.M. to 10 P.M. The service is intended for the guests staying at the hotel. No exterior modifications are proposed as part of this Use Permit.

Development Standards

No improvements to the exterior building, site landscaping, parking layout, or any other site conditions are proposed as part of the Use Permit. As shown on the site plan (Attachment 4), the hotel has 41 parking spaces in the ground floor parking area per 2014 Use Permit approval which conforms with the minimum number of spaces required for 51 guest rooms (0.8 spaces minimum per room - SMC Section 19.46.100a).

NEIGHBORHOOD IMPACTS/COMPATIBILITY:

Staff finds that the proposed hotel with the evening hour lounge and bar meets the required Use Permit findings, as the project meets the objectives of the General Plan policies that encourage a mix of uses that serve neighboring businesses and residential properties. The project supports City policies to diversify and enhance community-serving retail. Moreover, the project complies with all development standards, and does not result in negative impacts to neighbors. The residential development across Lawrence Station Road is a mixed-use development with a restaurant which serves beer and wine. Department of Public Safety staff has reviewed the proposal and does not object to the proposed project. See Attachment 2 for required Use Permit findings.

PUBLIC CONTACT

30 notices were sent to surrounding property owners and residents within 300 feet of the subject site. In addition, the notice of the Public Hearing was published in the Sun newspaper. Public contact was made by posting the agenda on the City's official-notice bulletin board at City Hall at 456 West Olive Avenue and on the City's website.

Staff has received no comments on the item as of the time of staff report production.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Approve the Use Permit with the recommended Findings in Attachment 2 and the recommended Conditions in Attachment 3.
2. Approve the Use Permit with modifications.
3. Deny the Use Permit.

RECOMMENDATION

Alternative 1. Approve the Use Permit with the recommended Findings in Attachment 2 and the recommended Conditions in Attachment 3.

Prepared by: Momoko Ishijima, Senior Planner

Approved by: Noren Caliva-Lepe, Principal Planner

ATTACHMENTS

1. Vicinity and Noticing Map
2. Recommended Findings
3. Recommended Conditions of Approval
4. Site and Architectural Plans
5. Project Description Letter
6. Use Permit Justification Form
7. Final Conditions of Approval Use Permit #2014-7488