

Coastal Development Permit Findings- Attachment 1
1217 S. Ocean Front Walk
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Request:

Pursuant to the Los Angeles Municipal Code, section 12.20.2-C; the applicant requests approval of a Coastal Development Permit to reestablish an existing restaurant and basement theater. The Coastal Development Permit request is associated with a conditional use permit request to allow the sale and dispensing of a full line of alcoholic beverages for on-site consumption, in conjunction with an existing, a 1,276 sq. ft. groundfloor restaurant having 43 interior seats in 896 sq. ft. of service floor area, and an existing 748 sq. ft. basement theater with 49 seats located in an existing apartment hotel with a total square footage of 26,241 sq. ft. No change of use is requested as part of the request.

Project and Site Description:

The subject site is located on South Ocean Front Walk between Clubhouse Ave. and Westminster Ave. The site has an area of approximately 4,414.6 square feet, and is improved with a 5-story building with a basement. The building was built in 1913. Certificates of Occupancy for the existing apartment hotel, restaurant and theater have been provided in this application package. The applicant has requested a Conditional Use Permit approval for a full line of alcohol for on-site consumption in conjunction with an existing ground floor restaurant, and an existing basement theater. This Coastal Development Permit request is being submitted concurrently with the CUP request in order to reestablish the existing theater and restaurant, which will benefit from the privilege of being able to serve a full-line of alcoholic beverages.

D. Project Impacts

1. Will the development extend onto or adjoin any beach, tidelands, submerged lands or public trust lands?

No, the subject site is already improved with a 5-story building with a basement. The proposed project to re-establish the restaurant and theater with alcohol service through the approval of a CUP will not expand the footprint of the existing building.

2. Will the development maintain, enhance or conflict with public access to the shoreline and along the coast?

The proposed project will maintain public access to the shoreline along the abutting public rights-of-way; Westminster Avenue and Ocean Front Walk.

3. Will alternatives to private vehicle use be provided or facilitated? How will the development affect traffic on coastal access roads?

As a historic property developed in 1913, there is no on-site parking to accommodate private vehicle use. Given that the property is located in the highly trafficked heart of Venice, and that approval of the project would only serve to revitalize an existing restaurant and theater, it is not anticipated that the project will have any impacts to traffic on coastal access roads. Furthermore, many Venice Beach residents and visitors use popular rideshare services to access the vibrant mixed-use area in the vicinity of the property. As such, the use of the restaurant and theater, both of which are limited in size, is only anticipated to create a small, marginal increase in traffic, if there is any increase at all.

4. Is the development proposed within or in close proximity to an existing developed area? Will it be visually compatible with the character of surrounding areas? If in a special community or neighborhood, how will it protect the unique local character?

Located at the corner of Ocean Front Walk and Westminster Ave the project is located in the densely developed heart of Venice. The existing historic structure, built in 1913 already enhances the character of the surrounding area. In re-invigorating the theater and restaurant uses, the architecture of the historic building will be restored and enhanced so that the building may continue to contribute to the Venice's unique local character, albeit in an augmented manner.

5. Describe how grading will be conducted so as to minimize alterations to land forms. If on a bluff or in an area of high geologic risk, how will the project design assure stability and minimize erosion?

Given that the project entails primarily modifications to the interior of an existing building, no grading is necessary.

6. Does the development involve diking, filling or dredging of open coastal waters, wetlands, estuaries or lakes? What alternatives are available? How will the adverse environmental effects of this be minimized?

Given that the project entails primarily modifications to the interior of an existing building, no diking, filling or dredging is necessary.

7. Is the proposed development coastal-dependent? Will it displace any coastal-dependent facilities?

The project is not coastal dependent and entails only work to an existing building in a developed area. As such, it will not displace any coastal-dependent facilities.

8. How will the development affect biological productivity of coastal waters?

The project will not affect the biological productivity of coastal waters.

9. Is the development proposed near parks or recreation areas or sensitive habitat areas? How will the project design prevent adverse environmental impacts on these areas?

Venice Beach is located directly across from the property on the west side of Ocean Front Walk. As a heavily trafficked recreation area directly abutting the densely developed Venice community, approval of the proposed project is not anticipated to have any adverse environmental impacts on Venice Beach, given that it will have relatively little impact on how Venice Beach is used and affected.

10. Is the development proposed within or adjoining land suitable for agriculture? Will it convert agricultural land to another use? How is the project consistent with continued local agricultural viability?

The proposed project is not located within or adjacent to land suitable for agriculture.

11. What water conservation features are included in the project?

In rehabilitating the historic structure to function once again as a hotel the project will employ low-water use fixtures to reduce the property's overall water demand.

12. What energy conservation features are included in the project?

In rehabilitating the historic structure to operate once again as a hotel, the project will comply with the Green Building Code and employ a variety of energy saving features throughout. Furthermore, the rehabilitation and continued use of the existing structure, built in 1913, is itself an energy saving, green building strategy in that it reuses the embodied energy in the structure to continue serving its users.

13. Describe current location of service lines for necessary utility connections and any extensions or relocations of service lines.

As a developed property located in the heart of Venice the property is fully served by existing utilities.

14. Will the development protect existing lower cost visitor and recreational facilities? Will it provide public recreational opportunities?

As noted above, the project is located near Venice Beach and its approval will not impede access to the beach. While they are not public facilities, the restaurant and theater will both be public premises and will provide Venice residents and visitors opportunities to recreate and enjoy food, beverage and cultural offerings.

Will the development protect or provide low- and moderate-income housing opportunities? Will it displace low or moderate-income housing?

The proposed project does not involve low- and moderate-income housing, and as such, will not protect nor displace low or moderate-income housing.

15. Is the development proposed within or near a known archeological, paleontological or historic site? How will impacts on such sites be minimized?

The proposed project is not located within or near a known archeological, paleontological or historic site.

16. List all permits, permissions or approvals required from public agencies for this development and indicate those already applied for or granted.

- Approval of a Conditional Use Permit or the on-site sale, dispensing, and consumption of a full-line of alcoholic beverages (already applied for).
- Issuance of building permits from the LA Department of Building and Safety for interior remodeling and rehabilitation in the restaurant and theater (issued).
- Approval from LA County Department of Public Health to permit food and beverage service for the new restaurant (issued).
- Approval of Entertainment Permit from the Los Angeles Police Department (not yet applied for).

FINDINGS FOR APPROVAL:

1. The development is conformity with Chapter 3 of the California Coastal Act of 1972 (commencing with Section 30200 of the California Public Resources Code.)

the applicant requests approval of a Coastal Development Permit to reestablish an existing restaurant and basement theater. The Coastal Development Permit request is associated with a conditional use permit request to allow the sale and dispensing of a full line of alcoholic beverages for on-site consumption, in conjunction with an existing, , a 1,276 sq. ft. groundfloor restaurant having 43 interior seats in 896 sq. ft. of service floor area, and an existing 748 sq. ft. basement theater with 49 seats located in an existing apartment hotel with a total square footage of 26,241 sq. ft. The introduction of alcohol service will support the economic viability of the property while reactivating the historic uses in this historic building to once again serve the Venice community and its visitors.

Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act includes provisions that address the impact of development on public services, infrastructure, traffic, the environment and significant resources, and coastal access. The applicable provisions are as follows:

Section 30211 states that development shall not interfere with the public's right of access to the sea.

The project, which entails the revitalization and continued use of an existing historic structure with no expansion of square footage and no change of use will have no impact on the public's ability to access the sea via the adjacent Venice Beach.

Section 30250 states that new development shall be located in areas able to accommodate it, areas with adequate public services, and in areas where such development will not have significant adverse impacts on coastal resources. While the project does not constitute new development, it nonetheless is located in an existing developed area to enhance and existing visitor-serving facility in a part of Venice that is highly trafficked by visitors and residents alike. The introduction of alcohol service to the property does not have the potential to have adverse impacts on nearby coastal resources.

Section 30251 states the scenic and visual qualities of coastal areas shall be considered and protected as a resource of public importance. Permitted development shall be sited and designed to protect views to and along the ocean and scenic coastal areas, to minimize the alteration of natural land forms, to be visually compatible with the character of surrounding areas, and, where feasible, to restore and enhance visual quality in visually degraded areas. The proposed project will not enlarge the existing historic building, built in 1913, and as such does not have the potential to negatively affect any scenic coastal areas, nor will it be visually incompatible with the character of surrounding areas.

Section 30252 states that new development should maintain and enhance public access to the coast. The project, which entails the adaptive reuse of an existing historic structure with no expansion of square footage and no change of use will enhance public beach access by reestablishing visitor-serving facilities, namely the restaurant and theater, that will attract people to the coast by providing compatible and beneficial visitor-serving uses..

Section 30253 requires new development to minimize risks to life and property in areas of high geologic, flood, and fire hazard, minimize impacts along bluffs and cliffs, and protect special communities and neighborhoods that are popular visitor destination points for recreational uses. The proposed project will enhance the historic Venice Waldorf apartment hotel, a historic resource recognized in the Venice Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan. In doing so it will fortify the North Venice community in which it is located, and which is a popular visitor destination point by enhancing and revitalizing a historic resource for both Venice residents and visitors alike.

2. The permitted development will not prejudice the City of Los Angeles to prepare a local coastal program that is in conformity with Chapter 3 of the California Coastal Act of 1976.

Coastal Act Section 30604 states that prior to the certification of a Local Coastal Program, a coastal development permit may only be issued if a finding can be made that the proposed development is in conformance with Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act. The Venice Local Coastal Land Use Plan was certified by the California Coastal Commission on June 14, 2001; however, the necessary implementation ordinances have not been adopted. The subject site is located in the North Venice subarea and is zoned C1-1 with a General Plan Land Use Designation of Community Commercial. The proposed project is consistent with the following policies of the Land Use Plan:

Policy I. B. 6. mix of residential dwelling units and visitor-serving uses. Overnight visitor-serving uses, such as hotels and youth hostels, are preferred uses in the Community Commercial land use category.

The project will enhance the economic viability by introducing alcohol service to existing restaurant and theater in the historic building, which has a Land Use designation of Community Commercial. Further, the existing apartment hotel use of the property will remain unaltered resulting in just the kind of development this policy calls for.

Policy I. E. 1. General. Venice's unique social and architectural diversity should be protected as a Special Coastal Community pursuant to Chapter 3 of the California Coastal Act of 1976.
and

Policy I. F. 1. Historic and Cultural Resources. The historical, architectural and cultural character of structures and landmarks in Venice should be identified, protected and restored where appropriate, in accordance with historical preservation guidelines.

And

Policy I. F. 2. Reuse and Renovation of Historic Structures. Wherever possible, the adaptive reuse and renovation of existing historic structures shall be encouraged so as to preserve the harmony and integrity of historic buildings identified in this LUP

The project will preserve and enhance the Venice Waldorf, which was originally a 55-room hotel where Charlie Chaplin and other stars stayed. It is a historic resource recognized in the Land Use Plan. The project will highlight Venice's unique social and architectural diversity for the benefit of its residents and visitors. The project will directly work to restore this unique historic resource while re-introducing public oriented uses that will allow residents and visitors to experience and enjoy the historic building's ambiance.

Policy 11. C. 2. Ocean Front Walk Pedestrian Amenities. In order to support pedestrian activities along Ocean Front Walk, commercial development should include design elements aimed at providing for pedestrian safety and convenience, such as shade, seating, directional signs, courtyards and walkways.

The design of the project's ground floor restaurant will open up onto the adjacent Ocean Front Walk providing eyes on the street to enhance the safety of nearby areas and enlivening the streetscape in the vicinity of the property. Restaurant seating will open up directly onto Ocean Front Walk enhancing how the building interfaces with the Ocean Front Walk public realm.

- 3. The Interpretive Guidelines for Coastal Planning and Permits as established by the California Coastal Commission dated February 11, 1977 and any subsequent amendments thereto have been reviewed, analyzed, and considered in light of the individual project in making its determination.**

The Regional Interpretive Guidelines have been reviewed and the proposed project is consistent with the requirement for the North Venice Subarea; the project also complies with the policies of the LUP and standards of the Specific Plan.

- 4. The decision of the permit-granting agency has been guided by any applicable decision of the California Coastal Commission pursuant to Section 30625(c) of the Public Resources Code.**

The Coastal Commission has tended to support and encourage the retention of viable visitor-serving facilities located in areas zoned for commercial use, particularly those with historical significance such as the subject property. The project, which does not involve a change of use from what is existing, nor does it involve any additions to the historic building or alterations to its exterior, does not create a precedent contrary to what has been established by recent decisions of Coastal Commission affecting properties in the near vicinity.

- 5. If the development is located between the nearest public road and the sea or shoreline of any body of water located within the coastal zone, the development is in conformity with the public access and public recreation policies of Chapter 3 of the California Coastal Act of 1976.**

Development shall not interfere with the public's right of access to the sea where acquired through use or legislative authorization, including, but not limited to, the use of dry sand and rocky coastal beaches to the first line of terrestrial vegetation. The building was constructed in 1913 and there are additions proposed and no change in public access. Visitors seeking recreational activities at the beach will continue to have unimpeded pedestrian access. The site is in conformity with the public access and public recreational policies of the Coastal Act.