



Venice Neighborhood Council

P. O. Box 550, Venice, CA 90294

www.VeniceNC.org



Al Fresco Request Staff Report

October 29, 2026

City Case No: DIR-2026-2703-CDP

CEQA Case No: ENV-2026-2704-EAF

Coastal Zone: ADM-2026-2705-CZW

Uncleared Permits: 24016-10000-20948 2024 (attached)

26016-10000-08418 2026 (attached)

Coastal Zone: Dual Permit Jurisdiction

Venice Coastal Zone: Marina Peninsula

carve out north of Washington Blvd. otherwise within Venice Canals
adjacent to Ballon Lagoon (Grand Canal) East

Land Use Designation: C2-1-O

General Commercial – Height District 1 (FAR 1.5:1; 45-ft tall) – Oil Drilling District

Project Address: 301—319 West Washington Blvd.

Known As: Siamese Garden and Baja Cantina restaurants

Applicant/ Owner: Eric Berenek

Representative: Eric Newman NewmanBuildingDesigns@gmail.com

City Planner: Sienna Kuo sienna.kuo@lacity.org

LUPC STAFF: Jenesa Kurland jkat.vnclupc@gmail.com

Hearing Schedule: TBD

Project Description

Approve replacement of surface asphalt parking lot with outdoor dining. Most of area in discussion was already renovated: Wood trellis is constructed. Permeable and paved hardscape in pedestrian areas is placed.

New work includes resurfacing handicap parking area and replacing walkway between restaurants' outdoor areas.

Requested Entitlement

Request to make temporary Al Fresco provisions allowed during COVID-19 permanent.

“Pursuant to LAMC Section 13B.9.1, Coastal Development Permit for permanent Al Fresco outdoor dining at existing parking lot and construction of new coverings for portions of patios.”

General Compliance

- Owner read the Al-Fresco Ordinance and agreed to abide by it? YES
- Owner certified that they are currently in compliance with the Ordinance? YES
- LUPC Staff agrees that Owner is currently in compliance with Ordinance? YES
- Approximate number of residences within 500 feet of Al Fresco space: +/-200
- Current opposition by Neighbors to Issuance of Al Fresco Permit? NO
 - 100 VNC~LUPC Neighbor Awareness flyers were provided to Applicant on 10/27.
 - Flyer was emailed to Latitude 33 management company for dissemination to these residents.
 - LUPC Staff has not received e-mail from Neighbors as of 10/29.

- Complaints directly to Owner?

- Previous complaints about Al Fresco space? YES

Presumably, Radio/Party complaints were due to outdoor noise. Siamese Gardens closes at 9:30 PM, before Radio/Party complaints were called in. Thus, noise was generated in Baja Cantina parking lot & Al Fresco space.

Registered complaints to City Police recorded through 10/11/2026

Reason	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Radio / Party	0	1	5	1	6	2	4	1
Crime / Disturbance	6	5	6	7	1	5	3	1
Ambulance	0	1	0	0	0	1	3	0
Other	1	2	0	0	0	0	4	0
Total	7	9	11	8	7	8	14	2

source: LAPD Public Records

Al Fresco Space

	Baja Cantina	Siamese Garden	Total	
Interior Seats	121	0	121	EA
Al Fresco Seats	80	62	142	EA
Total Seats	201	62	263	EA
Capacity increase	+34%	0%	+83%	%
Al Fresco Area	1,890	1,000	2,890	SF

On Site Parking

	Baja Cantina	Siamese Garden	Total
Original stalls	15	0	15
Proposal stalls	1 HC	0	1
Lost stalls	< 14 >	0	< 14 >

Restrooms

M & W Stalls	Baja Cantina	Siamese Garden
Existing	6	2 *
Proposed	0	0
Total	6	2
Required	4	3
Shortfall	OK	< 1 > **

Findings

- Project conforms with California Coastal Act Chapter 3 Public access to the coast.
- Project maintains local community character.
- Although Project appears to be under-parked, this is allowed by City Ordinance/Code. Lost parking was for restaurant customers, so it does not reduce beachgoer parking. No off-street parking was removed.
- While the Grand Canal is adjacent to Project's west property line, City sidewalk runs between these two. Applicant shall not let wastewater from washing off Siamese Garden deck spill onto western sidewalk.
- The only regrading work should occur at the eastern end of the site at handicap parking replacement off Sandborn Ave.

Project Pros & Cons

Positive aspects of project:

- Mid-range price-point outdoor dining area with some shade is good for the community.
- Noise complaints & various disturbances do not appear to directly correlate to temporary Al Fresco space, and there is no reason to believe that permanent approval will change the current situation.

Negative aspects of project:

- ** Siamese Gardens restroom quantity is insufficient.
- * Siamese Gardens restroom location does not allow for patron use according to **California Health and Safety Code Section 114276**: Patrons are *cannot* pass through food preparation, food storage, nor utensil washing areas to reach the toilet facilities.
- LUPC Staff recommend relocating shared ride vehicle pick up/drop off from busy Washington Blvd. to Sanborn Ave. side street just around the corner to handicap parking stall entrance. This precludes eastbound cars from making a U-turn in Washington Blvd. to arrive at the valet stand. Restaurant can still maintain a host stand on Washington Blvd. for foot traffic.

Proposed Motion

Venice Neighborhood Council (VNC) LUPC recommends that the VNC recommend that the City approval of Project's request to make Al Fresco space permanent as long as:

1. Los Angeles Fire Department approves proposed access; and
2. Neglected exterior electrical and plumbing is fixed or replaced; and
3. Fence between Siamese Gardens and Baja Cantina is opened to allow Siamese Garden Patrons to use Baja Cantina restrooms.
4. Pending LUPC meeting...

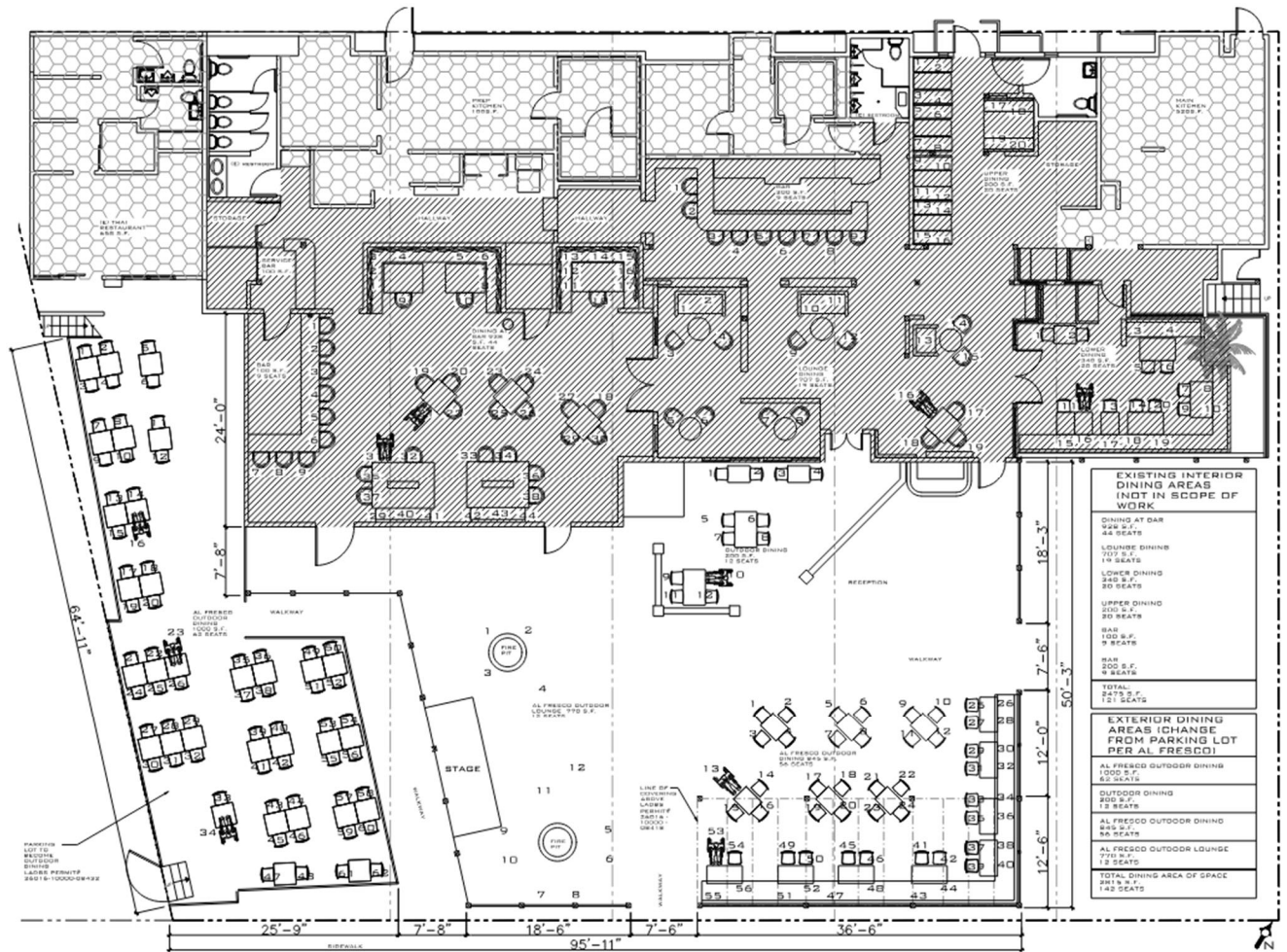
Moved by XXX, Seconded by XXX
Vote: X-X-X (X absent)

Site Map

301-319 E WASHINGTON BLVD VENICE CA 90292



Site & Floor Plan (1-level building)



Current Site Photographs

Sandborn Ave entrance to HC & bike parking



Suggested main entrance on Sanborn Ave.



HC parking off Sanborn Ave. in need of repaving



Washington Blvd. entrance



Looking West

Looking East



Siamese Garden path



suggested egress from Baja Cantina to street
in same location as
suggested restroom access from Siamese Garden to Baja Cantina



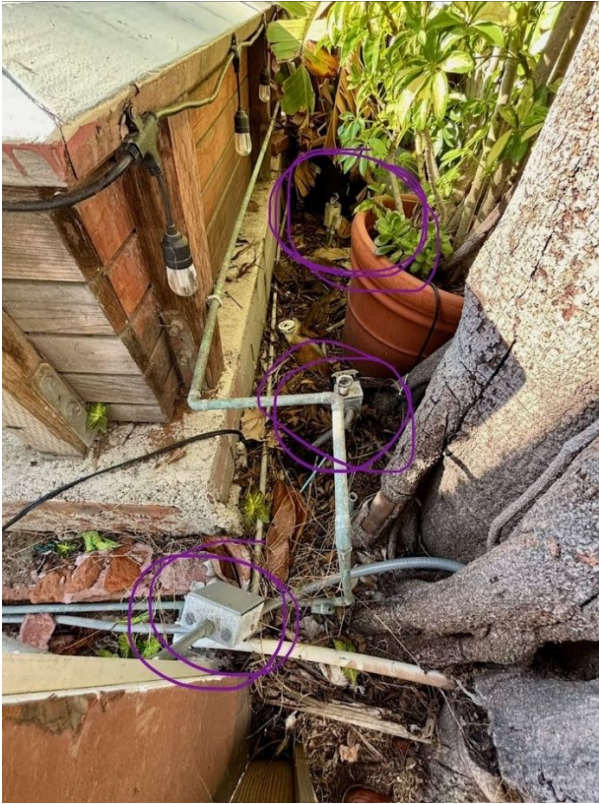
Outdoor Dining existing before Al Fresco



Shaded trellis near Washington Blvd.



Abandoned &/or neglected electrical & plumbing



Between original outdoor dining & Sandborn Ave.



Open pipes drip to sidewalk