

City of Hesperia

STAFF REPORT



DATE: August 13, 2020

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Chris Borchert, Principal Planner

BY: Ryan Leonard, Senior Planner

SUBJECT: Site Plan Review SPR19-00015 and Variance VAR20-00001; Applicant: 395 LLC; APNs: 3064-591-01 & 03

RECOMMENDED ACTION

It is recommended that the Planning Commission adopt Resolution Nos. PC-2020-08 and PC-2020-09, approving Site Plan Review SPR19-00015 and Variance VAR20-00001.

BACKGROUND

Proposal: A Site Plan Review (SPR) has been filed to construct a 123,132 square foot manufacturing/industrial building, a 19,600 square foot storage building, and an 8,865 square foot administrative office building on approximately 9.4 gross acres. In addition, a variance has also been filed to exceed the 0.35 maximum floor area ratio (FAR) requirement.

Location: On the southeast corner of Highway 395 and Poplar Street.

Current General Plan, Zoning and Land Uses: The site is within the Commercial Industrial Business Park (CIBP) zone of the Main Street and Freeway Corridor Specific Plan. The surrounding land is designated as Commercial Industrial Business Park as noted on Attachment 1. The site is currently vacant. Light industrial uses exist immediately to the south and east of the site. The properties to the north are vacant. Highway 395 is located immediately to the west of the site. (Attachment 2).

ISSUES/ANALYSIS

Site Plan Review: The project consists of the development of a 123,132 square foot manufacturing/industrial building, a two-story 8,865 square foot administration/office building, and a 19,600 square foot storage building (Attachment 3). The proposed development will be constructed in three phases; the manufacturing building will be constructed in phase one, followed by the administration building in phase two and the storage building in phase 3.

The project complies with the minimum building requirements and number of required parking spaces. The parking ordinance requires a minimum of 134 parking spaces. As proposed, the project provides 136 parking spaces.

The site design complies with the architectural guidelines of the Specific Plan. The site is intended to be occupied by Old Country Millworks which specializes in fabricating custom metal panels that are used in a variety of buildings such as convention centers and sports arenas. To that end, the site design incorporates Old Country Millworks exclusive materials to showcase the building

facades. The overall site has been designed with a contemporary architecture style. The buildings feature textured and decorative metal panels with a mix of vibrant accent colors. The primary exterior walls around the manufacturing building are proposed to be grey and blue, with accent wall panels that are yellow and gold. The trim around the windows are also proposed to be yellow and gold. The metal roll-up doors are proposed to be faux wood (Attachment 4). As a condition of approval, the proposed multicolor panel accent wall that is shown on the east elevation is also required on the west elevation in order to add architectural interest along the project frontage of Highway 395.

The administration building will be the focal point of the site and will serve as the main entrance from Poplar Street. The two story administration building contains multiple roof planes that create architectural interest, horizontal metal siding and a multistory glass curtain wall that will serve as the primary entry feature (Attachment 5).

As currently proposed, the storage building seems to lack many of the same architectural features as the manufacturing building and administration building (Attachment 6). Due to its location at the northwest corner of the site, and its frontage along Highway 395 and Poplar Street, staff has a conditioned to provide the same level of architectural detail on the storage building as the manufacturing building. Therefore, the storage building would be required to provide the multicolor accent wall, textured and decorative metal panels, and window treatments along the frontages of Highway 395 and Poplar Street.

With regard to landscape coverage, the project is currently deficient on landscaping. The minimum required landscape coverage is 10% of the total site and the project provides 27,890 square feet (8.1%) of total landscape coverage. A condition of approval has been included to require additional landscaping to meet the minimum 10% requirement. It should be noted that Engineering staff is only conditioning curb and gutter improvements along Highway 395; a 6-foot-wide sidewalk is not required. Therefore, the applicant would be able to satisfy the minimum landscape requirements by installing additional landscape along Highway 395 in place of the sidewalk.

Variance: The applicant is requesting approval of a Variance to exceed the maximum floor area ratio of 0.35 that is allowed within the Specific Plan. The Floor Area Ratio is the relationship of buildable floor area (total amount of square feet) to a given site area (amount of land).

The area of the site is 407,934 gross square feet. Therefore, the site is limited to a maximum building area of 142,776 square feet. As proposed, the project proposes a total building area of 151,597 square feet and a floor area ratio of 0.37.

The proposal to allow for a 2% increase in the maximum floor area ratio and to allow an additional 8,821 square feet of gross floor area would be in keeping with the spirit and the intent of the Specific Plan. A City initiated Specific Plan Amendment is currently being processed that will among other things, increase the maximum allowable floor area in this zone from 0.35 to 0.50. The Specific Plan Amendment was presented to the Planning Commission at the July 9, 2020 meeting and it was forwarded to the City Council with a recommendation for approval. This item is scheduled to go before the City Council in August.

Drainage: Runoff created on-site will be conveyed to an underground detention/infiltration system in the northern portion of the site. The retention system will be sized to handle the additional storm water due to the additional impervious area created by the building and parking lot.

Water and Sewer: The development will connect to an existing 8-inch sewer and an existing 12-inch water line located in Poplar Street.

Traffic/Street Improvements: A Traffic Impact Study (TIS) was prepared for the project, due to the projects proximity to Highway 395 and Poplar Street and Caltrans responsibility over street dedication and site access along Highway 395. As part of developing the site, the developer is required to dedicate right-of-way and construct street improvements, including curb and gutter along the project frontage of Highway 395, and curb, gutter and sidewalk along the project frontage of Poplar Street. In addition, after review of the Traffic Impact Study the City Engineer has determined that the project is required to construct a traffic signal at the intersection of Highway 395 and Poplar Street. The developer is also required to submit an updated Traffic Impact Study to the Engineering department for review and approval prior to the submittal of grading plans.

Environmental: Approval of this project requires adoption of an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The IS/MND (Attachment 7) prepared for this project concludes that there are no significant adverse impacts associated with this project with mitigation measures incorporated.

The IS/MND was circulated to the State Clearinghouse, responsible agencies, and other interested parties for a 30-day public review period from February 10, 2020 through March 11, 2020. After the public review period ended, the applicant modified the project which required the IS/MND to be re-circulated for another 30-day public review period from May 12, 2020 through June 11, 2020.

During the 30-day public review period from February 10, 2020 through March 11, 2020, comment letters were received from two State agencies (the Department of Water Resources and the Department of Fish and Wildlife), and the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians (Attachment 8). When the IS/MND was re-circulated for public review from May 12, 2020 through June 11, 2020 one comment letter was received from the law offices of Lozeau and Drury, LLP on behalf of Supporters Alliance for Environmental Responsibility (Attachment 8).

The comment letter from the Department of Water Resources requested additional analysis on how the project would capture the project's off-site storm water runoff. The comment letter from Fish and Wildlife offered comments and recommendations to reduce impacts on fish and wildlife (biological) resources. The comment letter from the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians requested certain mitigation measures be made a part of the project conditions.

As a result of the comment letters received from the two State agencies and the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, staff made modifications to the IS/MND and added additional mitigation measures to biological resources, expanded the discussion on hydrology and water quality resources, and provided copies of an updated hydrology study.

After the IS/MND was revised and re-circulated, one comment letter was received from the law offices of Lozeau Drury, LLP on behalf of "Supporters Alliance for Environmental Responsibility". Staff would like to point out that the source of the comment, the law firm of Lozeau Drury, LLP is based in Oakland, California and it appears that they represent the Laborers International Union of North America. The 183-page comment letter asserts that the IS/MND is not adequate and does not comply with CEQA. The letter specifically identifies greenhouse gases, air quality, hazardous materials, biological resources, and cumulative impacts as topics that are not

adequately addressed. The City acknowledges the comments, but believes the IS/MND prepared for the project is adequate and complies with CEQA requirements. In addition, the project is consistent with the City's General Plan and impacts caused by this type of industrial development were known and acknowledged by the City when the General Plan EIR was adopted in 2010. Therefore, the proposed project does not exceed the level of development that is planned for in the General Plan. Lastly, it is important to point out that CEQA does not require formal responses to comments on an initial study/mitigated negative declaration, only that the Lead Agency consider the comments received (CEQA Guidelines 15074(b)).

Conclusion: The project conforms to the policies of the City's General Plan and meets the development standards of the Municipal Code and Specific Plan with the exception of the 2% increase in floor area. Furthermore, the project is a permitted use in the Commercial Industrial Business Park (CIBP) zone and is consistent with the development intensity of surrounding properties.

FISCAL IMPACT

None.

ALTERNATIVE(S)

1. Provide alternative direction to staff.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Main Street and Freeway Corridor Specific Plan
2. Aerial photo
3. Site Plan
4. Manufacturing building elevations
5. Administration building elevations
6. Storage building elevations
7. Negative Declaration ND19-00006 and its initial study
8. Comment letters received
9. Resolution No. PC-2020-08 (VAR20-00008)
10. Resolution No. PC-2020-09, including conditions of approval (SPR19-00015)