

P99-005 - Del Paso Blvd. Rite Aid

- REQUEST:
- A. **Environmental Determination:** Categorical Exemption (Section 15332)
  - B. **Lot Line Adjustment** to reconfigure three existing parcels of 0.404, 0.433, and 3.532 acres into three parcels of 1.800, 0.454, and 2.092 acres.
  - C. **Special Permit** to operate a drive-through pharmacy facility for an existing Rite Aid Pharmacy.
  - D. **Variance** to allow drive-through lane width to be reduced from 11 feet to 9.5 feet.
  - E. **Driveway Variance** to allow a 45 foot wide driveway which exceeds the 35 foot maximum driveway width for the loading area on Rio Linda Boulevard.
  - F. **Sign Variance** to allow a total of 8 attached signs, exceeding the allowed total of 4 attached signs.
  - G. **Sign Variance** to allow the existing joint Rite Aid/Kragen pylon sign to serve as an offsite sign for the Kragen Auto Parts store.

LOCATION: 2419 Del Paso Blvd  
Northwest corner of Del Paso Blvd and El Camino Ave  
APN: 263-0252-022, -023, -008  
North Sacramento Community Plan Area  
Council District 2

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| APPLICANT:         | Josh Pane, (916) 447-8982<br>Linda Budge, CommTech Services, 363-4164<br>9571 Mira Del Rio, Sacramento, CA 95827 |
| OWNER:             | Paul Petrovich, Petrovich Development Co. LLC<br>6238 Birdcage Street, Citrus Heights, CA 95610                  |
| APPLICATION FILED: | January 19, 1999   |
| STAFF CONTACT:     | Stacia Valterza, (916) 264-7110  |

SUMMARY:

The applicant is requesting necessary entitlements to construct a two lane, drive-through pharmacy facility on the parcel adjacent to an existing Rite Aid Pharmacy. In order to construct the vacuum tube system, a Lot Line Adjustment is required (vacuum tubes are not allowed to cross property lines). A drive-up window facility requires a Special Permit in any zone. The site is currently occupied by a concrete block building (previously used as a photo processing lab) which will be demolished. Issues include consistency with drive-through facility and driveway standards and signage.

RECOMMENDATION:

**Staff recommends approval of the Lot Line Adjustment, Special Permit, and Variances subject to conditions set forth herein, but does not support the sign variance as requested by the applicant.**

PROJECT INFORMATION:

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| General Plan Designation:   | Community/Neighborhood Commercial & Offices |
| Community Plan Designation: | Neighborhood/Community Commercial           |
| Existing Land Use of Site:  | Shopping Center                             |
| Existing Zoning of Site:    | C-2   |

Surrounding Land Use and Zoning:

North: Multi-family Residential (R-2B)  
 South: Parking Lot (C-2)  
 East: Shopping Center (C-2)  
 West: Funeral Home (C-2)

Setbacks:            Required    Provided

|            |      |      |
|------------|------|------|
| Front:     | 7.5' | 300' |
| Side(St):  | N/A  | N/A  |
| Side(Int): | 0'   | 76'  |
| Rear:      | 0'   | 30'  |

|                              |                       |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Property Dimensions:         | 162' x 103'           |
| Property Area:               | 0.404± net acres      |
| Density of Development:      | N/A                   |
| Square Footage of Building:  | N/A                   |
| Height of Building:          | 20 feet               |
| Exterior Building Materials: | Cement plaster, brick |
| Roof Material:               | Built-up              |

|                      |             |
|----------------------|-------------|
| Hours of Operation:  | 7am to 11pm |
| Parking Provided:    | 203 spaces  |
| Parking Required:    | 190 spaces  |
| Topography:          | Flat        |
| Street Improvements: | Existing    |
| Utilities:           | Existing    |

OTHER APPROVALS REQUIRED: In addition to the entitlements requested, the applicant will also need to obtain the following permits or approvals, including, but not limited to:

| <u>Permit</u>                  | <u>Agency</u>                         |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| *Design Review (DR99-007)      | Design Review Board                   |
| *Alley Abandonment             | City Council                          |
| Transportation Management Plan | Public Works, Transportation Division |
| Certificate of Compliance      | Public Works, Development Services    |
| Encroachment Permit            | Public Works, Development Services    |
| Building Permit                | Building Division                     |

\*Requires a public hearing.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The proposed project would replace a vacant photo processing building which has been located at the present site for a number of years. The building would be demolished and replaced with a drive-through prescription window and new parking area with access onto Rio Linda Boulevard to service the existing Rite Aid Pharmacy, formerly Payless Pharmacy, immediately to the east.

The applicant also proposes to make improvements to the overall site, in the form of new parking lot configuration and landscaping, remodeling of the shopping center, and the addition of a new tenant space (Blockbuster Video). These improvements are not subject to this application, but are currently under review by Design Review Staff.

STAFF EVALUATION: Staff has the following comments:

#### A. Policy Considerations

**General Plan:** The proposed project is consistent with Goal B of the Sacramento General Plan, Commerce and Industry Element which promotes reuse and revitalization of existing developed areas with special emphasis on commercial and industrial districts (SGPU, p.4-7). It is also consistent with Policy 4 of the Neighborhood/ Community Commercial and Office Areas section

which states: "Strengthen viable strip commercial development and discourage existing marginal strips from becoming extended." (SGPU, p. 4-17).

**North Sacramento Community Plan:** The proposed project is consistent with the Goal in the Commercial Land Use section of the North Sacramento Community Plan which states: "Encourage land uses which will enhance economic vitality of the community." (NSCP, p.40).

B. Site Plan Design/Zoning Requirements

1. Setbacks

The proposed project meets the required setback requirements. The existing setbacks would be unchanged. The only new structure proposed for the site is the drive-through canopy, which exceeds the minimum setback requirements. The existing Rite Aid store square footage will be reduced to create a new tenant space and a loading area to the rear of the site, with access onto Rio Linda Boulevard.

The trash enclosure for the site is to be located in a new loading area to the rear of the new tenant space (a proposed Blockbuster Video store). Access to the trash enclosure is from a 45' wide driveway on Rio Linda Boulevard. Because the proposed loading area's driveway is wider than the 35' permitted by Chapter 38 of the City Code, a Driveway Variance is required. Public Works staff has reviewed the size of the driveway and has determined that the increased width is desirable for the facilitation of truck access and loading; therefore, staff supports the variance.

Although masonry walls are not required between commercial uses, the applicant proposes to construct (at the request of the adjacent property owner) an 8' tall masonry wall along the North Sacramento Funeral Home property line to the west of the site. Construction of the wall is meant to address concerns about noise raised by the adjoining property owner, despite noise study evidence from similar projects that indicates a wall is not necessary. The wall will be landscaped with vines to discourage graffiti.

2. Parking/Circulation

Adequate parking for the entire shopping center will be provided both in total numbers as well as for each proposed new parcel. Adjusted Lot A, containing 15,200 square feet of building (Rite Aid Pharmacy), requires 61 spaces and provides 67 spaces. Adjusted Lot B, containing 5,400 square feet of building (future Blockbuster Video), requires 22 spaces and provides 22 spaces. Adjusted Lot C, containing 26,704 square feet of building (Kragen Auto Parts), requires 107 spaces and provides 203 spaces.

The existing driveway on El Camino Avenue currently requires customers to make a very sharp, wide turn (approximately 45 degrees) in order to turn right into the shopping center parking lot. At the same time, customers exiting the parking lot at this point must wait in the same driveway to make a right or a left turn onto El Camino Avenue. This creates a difficult and dangerous situation both for pedestrians and motorists due to an increased chance of collision in the driveway.

Many alternative driveway designs were studied in an attempt to resolve the current traffic situation. The preferred alternative was one which included a deceleration lane on El Camino Avenue with a protected right-turn lane into the parking lot. In order to ensure the safety of vehicles turning right in the new turn lane, a raised median would be used to separate traffic until it was safe for it to merge in the parking lot. However, this plan would have restricted left-turn access to the southern entrance to the North Sacramento Funeral Home parking lot and to the Funeral Home garage.

In the interest of compromise, staff recommends the following alternative: that the preexisting traffic issue be addressed by softening the southern edge of the El Camino driveway to facilitate an easier right turn into the parking lot. Existing SMUD power poles and transformer will need to be moved southwest of their current position, into the landscaped planter. Customers exiting the parking lot from the existing driveway should no longer be allowed to make a left turn onto El Camino Avenue. A 6' wide, raised sidewalk is proposed along the length of the North Sacramento Funeral Home that borders the driveway to give pedestrians a safe way to traverse the parking lot from El Camino to Rite Aid Pharmacy. Thus, compromise can be reached in this alternative in that the traffic safety situation at the El Camino driveway will be improved and by the Funeral Home being able to retain easy access to the southern entrance to the parking lot and to their garage.

Because the existing driveway onto El Camino is located in the remnant of a public alley, and a number of new improvements are proposed in the alley, Public Works staff is requiring that the alley be abandoned. The abandonment of the alley is subject to City Council approval and must occur prior to construction of the driveway improvements.

The applicant proposes to include a paved pedestrian pathway through the parking lot from Del Paso Boulevard to the Rite Aid entrance. A pedestrian pathway is also proposed between the Rite Aid building and the proposed drive-through, connecting the shopping center to Rio Linda Boulevard.

### 3. Landscaping

The site's entire parking lot will be re-stripped and new landscaped planters will be installed. The proposed project would meet the fifty percent tree shading requirement by providing more shade trees. The area on the west side of the drive-through, between the drive-through and the parking lot will contain a four-foot wide planter, to be landscaped with small shrubs and flowers. Landscaping of the overall site, including the drive-through area, will be reviewed by Design Review Staff.

### 4. Signage

The Rite Aid Pharmacy and proposed canopy are situated on a corner lot; therefore, the Sign Ordinance allows two attached signs per frontage for the west and south building frontages, for a total of four (4) attached signs. The signs must not exceed a total aggregate area of three square feet of sign area for each front foot of building occupancy. Directional signs must not exceed four (4) square feet in area.

Because the proposed number of attached signs does not comply with the Sign Ordinance, the applicant is requesting a variance. The applicant's proposal includes (2) wall-mounted Rite Aid signs, (2) entrance canopy signs which read "Pharmacy, Foodmart, 1 Hr. Photo," a corner tower with (3) Rite Aid signs on it, and (1) wall-mounted "Drive-Through Pharmacy" sign, for a total of eight (8) attached signs.

Staff finds that the applicant's proposal for five "Rite Aid" signs (signs #1, #2, #3, #4, and #5) on the south and west facades of the building is excessive. The North Sacramento Community Plan clearly states in its Neighborhood Environment Element that a goal of the community is to, "Conserve and build upon the positive qualities of the North Sacramento Community and at the same time eliminate those qualities that create negative perceptions." (NSCP, p.92) One of the negative features of the community, as listed in the plan, is the, "general sign clutter in commercial areas."(NSCP, p.89)

The corner tower feature which contains the vertical "Rite Aid" signs was added by the applicant to address design review concerns that the elevations should have a more "art deco" style, consistent with the Del Paso Boulevard design theme. Staff supports retaining the tower signage with the three signs on the tower in place of the two wall-mounted "Rite Aid" signs on the south and west facades. The tower signs are supported because they are more consistent with the design theme established along Del Paso Boulevard. Staff would support this variance from the sign ordinance to allow (5) attached signs, exceeding the allowed total of (4) attached signs.

Staff recommends that the "traffic control" wall sign which reads "Drive Thru Pharmacy" (sign #7 on the sign plan) should be reduced to meet the 4 square foot area maximum required by the Sign Ordinance for directional signage.

The applicant proposes (3) attached exempt directional signs on the entrance side of the drive-through canopy (signs #8, #9, and #10) and (1) on the exit side (#14). There are (3) detached directional signs proposed to direct traffic through the parking lot (signs #11, #12, and #13). The proposed signs comply with the maximum size of 4 square feet allowed for exempt directional signs.

The site includes an existing pylon sign in the shopping center parking lot, near the intersection of Del Paso Blvd and El Camino. The sign advertises both Rite Aid Pharmacy and Kragen Auto Parts. If the proposed Lot Line Adjustment is approved, this existing sign becomes an offsite sign for Kragen Auto Parts because the Kragen store would no longer be located on the same parcel as Rite Aid. As a result, the applicant is seeking a variance to allow Kragen to retain the offsite sign. Staff supports the off-site sign variance because it allows a single, shared sign for both businesses, rather than multiple, separate signs for each business.

However, it should be noted that Design Review and Planning Staff and several community members have expressed a strong desire to see the pylon sign replaced with a smaller, lower monument sign to reduce the sign's visual impact on the neighborhood. An alternative approach would involve relocating the building's corner tower from the entrance to the Rite Aid store to the pylon sign location as a free-standing sign to replace the pylon sign. The applicant has not indicated a desire to replace the pylon sign.

In summary, staff recommends that: the (1) "Drive Thru Pharmacy" (sign #7) be reduced to a maximum 4 square foot area (qualifying it as an exempt directional sign), the (2) "Pharmacy, Foodmart, 1 Hr. Photo," signs be retained on the south and west elevations, and that the "Rite Aid" signs on the south and west facades (signs #1 and #2) be removed in favor of the (3) "Rite Aid" tower signs. Therefore a variance is necessary to allow (1) additional attached sign.

Should the applicant decide not to include the proposed tower with its accompanying signage and the wall-mounted "Drive-Through Pharmacy" sign (sign #7) is reduced to 4 square feet or less, then no variance for additional signage would be necessary, because the total number of attached signs would not exceed the number permitted by the Sign Ordinance.

### C. Building Design

The remodeled design of the overall shopping center, including the drive-through canopy design was reviewed and approved by the Design Review Board on April 21, 1999. The

shopping center will be remodeled to an Art Deco theme in accordance with similar design efforts on Del Paso Boulevard. There is a community desire to expand on the Deco styles already influencing the neighborhood to promote a greater sense of place. The applicant agreed and has made changes to the original design.

The drive-through canopy will be 20' x 20', with a height of 10'.

#### PROJECT REVIEW PROCESS:

##### A. Environmental Determination

The proposed project is exempt from environmental review pursuant to State EIR Guidelines (CEQA Section 15332). This project is characterized as in-fill development and is consistent with the General Plan, the North Sacramento Community Plan, and zoning designation and regulations. The site is surrounded by urban uses and consists of an area less than five acres. The site has no value as habitat for endangered, rare or threatened species. Studies done on similar projects indicate that this project would not result in any significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality. The site can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services. Review by the Toxics Program Coordinator of the Phase I and II Assessments of the photo processing site indicate that Preliminary Remediation Goals for named contaminants have not been exceeded; therefore, toxic soil contamination is not anticipated.

##### B. Public/Neighborhood/Business Association Comments

The applicant and planning staff presented the proposed project to the North Sacramento Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) at a meeting of the Economic Development Subcommittee on March 8, 1999, and it was reviewed again at a joint meeting of the PAC on April 12, 1999. The PAC voted in favor of the project in general, with the recommendation that staff continue to meet with neighboring property owners to attempt to resolve traffic concerns.

Concerns have been expressed by the owner of the North Sacramento Funeral Home with regards to traffic issues on the overall site. During the course of several meetings between the applicant, city staff, and the property owners, a variety of compromises were discussed. To address the Funeral Home owner's concerns about potential noise from the Drive-Through, the applicant will construct an 8' masonry wall along the Funeral Home property line on the west side of the drive-through site. The applicant is also proposing the previously discussed improvements to the driveway on El Camino, situated due south of the Funeral Home property.

No additional neighborhood comments were received by Staff.

##### C. Summary of Agency Comments



The project has been reviewed by several City Departments and other agencies. The following summarizes the comments received:

1. The Department of Utilities has the following comments:
  - A. An on-site storm drain system may be required for the proposed parking lot located within the area of the demolished photo processing building.
  - B. Abandon water service tap(s) which serve the demolished photo processing building. The abandonment fee shall be paid to the Department of Utilities, Customer Service.
  
2. The Fire Department has the following comments:
  - A. Develop fire flow for required sprinkler system, including the remodeled area.
  - B. Policy statement will require Knox Box for emergency services entry.
  
3. Public Works Department

The Public Works Department's comments have been incorporated into the site plan and conditions of approval.

**PROJECT APPROVAL PROCESS:** The Planning Commission has the authority to approve or deny all of the entitlements listed below. The Planning Commission action may be appealed to the City Council. The appeal must occur within 10 days of the Planning Commission action.

Staff recommends the Planning Commission take the following actions:

- A. Adopt the attached Notice of Decision and Findings of Fact which finds that the project is Exempt pursuant to CEQA Section 15332;
- B. Adopt the attached Notice of Decision and Findings of Fact approving the **Lot Line Adjustment** to reconfigure three parcels of 0.404, 0.433, and 3.532 acres into three parcels of 1.800, 0.454, and 2.092 acres;
- C. Adopt the attached Notice of Decision and Findings of Fact approving the **Special Permit** to operate a drive-through pharmacy pick-up facility for an existing Rite Aid Pharmacy in the General Commercial (C-2) zone;
- D. Adopt the attached Notice of Decision and Findings of Fact approving the **Variance** to allow drive-through lane width to be reduced from 11 feet to 9.5 feet;

- E. Adopt the attached Notice of Decision and Findings of Fact approving the **Driveway Variance** to allow a 45 foot wide driveway which exceeds the 35 foot maximum driveway width for the loading area on Rio Linda Boulevard.
- F. Adopt the attached Notice of Decision and Findings of Fact approving the **Sign Variance** to allow a total of 5 attached signs, exceeding the allowed total of 4 attached signs.
- G. Adopt the attached Notice of Decision and Findings of Fact approving the **Sign Variance** to allow the existing joint Rite Aid/Kragen pylon sign to serve as an offsite sign for the Kragen Auto Parts store.

Report Prepared By,

Report Reviewed By,



Stacia Valterza, Planner



Scot Mende, Senior Planner

Attachments

|              |                                       |
|--------------|---------------------------------------|
| Attachment 1 | Notice of Decision & Findings of Fact |
| Exhibit 1A   | Enlarged Site Plan                    |
| Exhibit 1B   | Site Plan                             |
| Exhibit 1C   | Elevations                            |
| Exhibit 1D   | Attached Signage Site Plan            |
| Exhibit 1E   | Signage Elevations                    |
| Exhibit 1F   | Detail of Signs # 1&2                 |
| Exhibit 1G   | Detail of Signs # 3-6                 |
| Exhibit 1H   | Detail of Signs # 7-10                |
| Exhibit 1I   | Directional Signage Site Plan         |
| Exhibit 1J   | Detail of Signs # 11-13               |
| Exhibit 1K   | Lot Line Adjustment Exhibit           |
| Attachment 2 | Vicinity Map                          |
| Attachment 3 | Land Use & Zoning Map                 |