



December 11, 2017

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**Subject: South Bascom and Woodard Gas Station, Convenience Store,
Carwash and Office Project, File No. CP16-035**

P17019

Dear Mr. Levinson:

This report supplements my prior comment letters of October 7, 2017 and December 5, 2017 on the above referenced Project. It reflects my review of the City's Supplemental Memorandum to Mayor and Council on the subject Project from Rosalynn Hughey dated 12-8-17 (hereinafter "the Supplemental Staff Memo") and the Technical Memorandum by TJKM consultants dated 11-21-17 appended thereto (hereinafter "the Traffic Memo").

My qualifications to perform this review were thoroughly documented in my October 7, 2017 letter and my professional resume was attached thereto.

Details of my supplemental review follow.

Obvious Traffic Problems Remain Unmitigated

Both the Supplemental Staff Memo and the Traffic Memo acknowledge the existence of some of the traffic operational and safety problems that I identify in my comment letter of 12-8-17. However, the Traffic Memo asserts that the problem issues are associated with Farnham Elementary School vehicle and pedestrian traffic and are "completely independent of the current or future operations of the proposed project" and the Supplementary Staff Memo states that "City staff will be coordinating with other departments to develop recommendations based on the traffic report".

The Traffic Memo's statement is a denial of the obvious. There is a traffic problem on Woodard Avenue near and on the frontage of the Project site that invalidates any conclusions drawn from conventional delay/level-of-service calculations. Closing one of the two driveways between the site and Woodard Avenue places all of the traffic that enters or leaves the site as well as that of the building immediately to its south from/to Woodard Avenue closer to the school. Placing all of that traffic and the added traffic caused by the Project on the one driveway to Woodard that is separated from the adjacent residential driveway only by the width of a board fence exacerbates the safety problems that exist. And part of the operational and safety problems that exist are the result of odd maneuvers to and from the Project site caused by the fact that the Project site has no legal direct access to and from southbound traffic on South Bascom.

The Supplementary Staff Memo's response that it will "be coordinating with other departments to develop recommendations based on the traffic report" is problematic in that this constitutes a deferral of mitigation that is improper under the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA"). To properly approve this Project, the City must identify a clear feasible traffic mitigation. A vague promise to "coordinate with other departments and develop recommendations" is insufficient.

Other Traffic Problems Are Unaddressed

My letter of 12-5-17 identified other traffic problems with the Project site plan that are unaddressed by the Supplemental Staff Memo. These include:

- Projection of parking stalls and large pickup trucks, vans and SUVs from one side of the 25 foot easement at the east side of the site and a masonry wall with footing at the other side as well as sub-rosa parking tolerated in the easement will narrow the effective traversable width of the easement below the reasonable width of a 2-way aisle in a parking lot. Both the Project and the building to the south depend on this easement for two-way access/egress to/from Woodard Avenue.
- Three of the four aisles at the fueling positions are too narrow to allow other vehicles to maneuver around vehicles at the other fueling positions, leading to hazardous backing maneuvers. In addition to causing the undesirable backing maneuvers, this is why in this particular case the fueling positions should not be counted toward making up the Project's required total of parking spaces, even though this is a normal practice at gas station/convenience market sites. Ordinarily, well designed service station/marts provide sufficient space for maneuvering around other vehicles stopped at the fueling positions, making counting these spaces toward the required parking total less problematic.

- Vehicles parked in the parking stall closest to the door at the southwest corner of the proposed building must back into or very close to the pedestrian walkway to/from that same door. This is an undesirable and potentially hazardous configuration, perhaps particularly so since this is a handicapped stall.

No Analysis of the Effects of Other Development on Woodard Avenue Traffic

We understand a large redevelopment of Cambrian Park Plaza is currently proposed. Since a major access to this site is at the east end of Woodard Avenue, that development could have significant consequences for traffic on Woodard at the subject Project site. There has been no analysis of the subject Project in the context of that project's traffic.

The Project Does Not Qualify For Exemption From CEQA

The City has assumed the Project is exempt from CEQA as a Replacement or Reconstruction project under Guidelines § 15302 and/or as an Infill development project under Guidelines § 15332. Because of the traffic operations and safety problems that are evident in the record, the Project clearly does not qualify as an infill development project under Guidelines § 15332.

It does not qualify as replacement and reconstruction because a) the car wash is clearly an additive use, b) the office use is clearly an additive use, c) the vast majority of the existing building is occupied by vehicle service bays which are not being replaced and by rest rooms that are to be replaced, d) only a very small portion of the existing building, perhaps 250 square feet, is shared by the service station cashier's counter, a beverage cooler and a very limited supply of convenience items. Characterizing this as a gasoline service station with convenience market that is being replaced and reconstructed is like characterizing a 1940s gas station that had a soft drink vending machine and cigarettes and candy bars available behind the cashiers counter (as most did) as a gas service station with convenience market. This project clearly does not qualify as a replacement or reconstruction project under Guidelines § 15302.

Conclusion

This concludes my additional supplemental comments on the subject Project. To approve the subject Project properly, the City must undertake a formal CEQA review that includes traffic consequences of nearby development projects and defines specific feasible traffic mitigation measures or characterize the traffic problems that clearly exist or will exist in the future as significant and unavoidable

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and adopt findings of overriding considerations if there are any such considerations.

Sincerely,

Smith Engineering & Management
A California Corporation



Daniel T. Smith Jr., P.E.