



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

REPORT TO THE HEARING OFFICER

HEARING DATE: February 9, 2005

REPORT NO. HO-05-023

ATTENTION: Hearing Officer

SUBJECT: LA JOLLA SHORES LIFEGUARD STATION
PTS PROJECT NUMBER 25502

LOCATION: 8200 Camino Del Oro, La Jolla, CA

APPLICANT: Jihad Slieman, Engineering and Capital Projects
City of San Diego

SUMMARY

Requested Action - Should the Hearing Officer approve Coastal Development Permit No. 66151 and Site Development Permit No. 66153 to demolish an existing La Jolla Shores Lifeguard Station, remove the existing steel storage container, construct a replacement 1,485 square-foot, lifeguard station with a second story observation tower and a new, detached 650 square-foot, single story, vehicle storage facility on a 0.2-acre site, in the existing parking lot of Kellogg Park at La Jolla Shores?

Staff Recommendation -

1. CERTIFY NEGATIVE DECLARATION No. 25502 and
2. APPROVE Coastal Development Permit No. 66151 and Site Development Permit No. 66153.

Community Planning Group Recommendation – On May 6, 2004 the La Jolla Community Planning Association voted 8-5-0 with the recommendation that the existing narrower parking spaces be located on the opposite side of the parking lot. On May 24, 2004, the La Jolla Shores Advisory Board voted 3-1 in favor of the project.

Environmental Review – A Negative Declaration No. 25502 has been prepared for the project in accordance with State of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines.

BACKGROUND

The existing La Jolla Shores lifeguard station at Kellogg Park was constructed in 1983. The lifeguard station is located directly in front of Kellogg Park on the west side of the boardwalk which runs parallel to the shoreline near Calle Frescota in the La Jolla Shores community (Attachment 3). The project is located in Public Park zone and is designated for Parks/Open Space.

Project Description

The Engineering and Capital Projects Department proposes to relocate the 50-foot wide facility from the west side of the boardwalk to the east side, move it away from the park green space and onto the southwest corner of the existing parking lot. The project requires a Coastal Development Permit as the proposal is located in the Coastal Overlay Zone. San Diego Municipal Code Section 103.0302.3(d) requires that all development in the La Jolla Shores Planned District Ordinance area also obtain a Process 3, Site Development Permit.

The new station, as proposed, would include two separate buildings connected by a breezeway, with a 30-foot high observation tower cantilevered out over the boardwalk and sand (Attachment 5). The station would provide locker room space for the lifeguards, a first aid room for the public, an observation room, community room and a unisex public restroom. A third building is proposed in the existing parking lot to store lifeguard vehicles. In addition, an eight-foot wide, by nine-foot high, by 40-foot long steel container that currently stores lifesaving equipment adjacent to Kellogg Park along Calle Frescota would be removed as part of the proposal.

DISCUSSION

Through the project and environmental review, several issues have been addressed. The issues include the proposed placement of the rescue vehicle storage facility in the parking lot, protecting views, the number of parking spaces to be provided, rescue vehicle movement warning and breezeway gating between the two station buildings.

Vehicle Storage Facility

At present, the lifeguard station provides no facility to house lifeguard vehicles. They must be stored offsite at other lifeguard stations. Early project designs proposed the rescue vehicle storage facility adjacent to the proposed lifeguard station buildings. The proposal to locate the facility near the center of the parking lot resulted from numerous community input meetings. Many indicated locating the facility away from the lifeguard station would break up the bulk and scale of the buildings. The parking lot location would also align the vehicle storage facility near the existing seawall opening, allowing for more direct rescue vehicle access to the beach. Other benefits of the parking lot location are avoiding the Calle Frescota View Corridor (Attachment 6) and moving the building away from the Kellogg Park green space. This location was approved by both the La Jolla Shores Association and the Permit Review Committee.

Protecting Views

The City of San Diego does not protect private views. A public view corridor is the width of the public right-of-way from which the views are taken. The four view corridors identified in the La Jolla Community Plan and Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan are Camino Del Oro, Calle Frescota, Vallecitos and Avenida De La Playa. The nearest public view to be protected is from Calle Frescota, and neither the proposed new station nor vehicle storage facility would block that public view. Currently, the only major obstacle in that public view corridor is the existing storage container, which would be removed by the project. Vallecitos and Avenida De La Playa are well south of the project and the Camino Del Oro view corridor is on the northern edge of the parking lot. No part of the proposed project would block any of the identified view corridors.

Parking Spaces

The existing parking lot currently provides 378 spaces. The proposed project design would maintain 374 parking public spaces and the four lifeguard spaces. The project would re-stripe the westerly most spaces of the lot to accommodate spaces displaced by the project. Currently, there are 365 spaces and 9 accessible parking spaces (374). The project proposes 366 parking spaces and eight accessible spaces. While the accessible stalls are being reduced by one in number, they would now include two van-accessible spaces. With the proposed re-striping, there would be no net loss in parking spaces provided. In a preliminary design, staff had suggested narrower parking spaces in the westerly most row. Although that proposal was dropped from the design, the La Jolla Community Planning Association recommended that these spaces be located on the opposite site of the lot. No narrower spaces are now proposed.

Four lifeguard spaces would be located immediately around the proposed vehicle storage facility. This would not only provide for lifeguard vehicle storage outside of and in close proximity to the storage facility, but would also create a buffer between beachgoers backing out of the nearby parking stalls and rescue vehicles entering or exiting the facility.

Rescue Vehicles Movement Warning

Through review of the proposal, it was determined that there should be some type of device installed to warn those in the parking lot that rescue vehicles are about to enter or exit the storage facility, cross the travel lane and head to the seawall break or return to the facility. In response, the project proposes to include a flashing beacon that would activate when the facility door opens to warn pedestrians and drivers that a rescue vehicle is exiting or entering the facility. The exact location of the beacon would be determined in consultation with the Transportation Review staff.

Breezeway Gates

The proposed design of the lifeguard station includes an eight-foot wide breezeway between the two buildings (Attachment 5). This design element is in response to community input to reduce the bulk and scale of the lifeguard station structure, and to eliminate any large solid wall along the boardwalk. However, the breezeway would be gated on both ends to protect some lifesaving

equipment to be stored in the breezeway (namely surfboards). While the breezeway includes gates, they would be open during normal business hours and only closed when the station shuts down for the evening. This would allow passersby to see through the buildings and the building wall would be broken up. Neither the building nor the breezeway would be aligned with any identified public view corridor and the station is proposed for the east side of the boardwalk, allowing pedestrians open views of the ocean as they use the boardwalk. The only passersby that would be in position to peek through the breezeway to view the ocean would be those walking in the parking lot.

Conclusion

Throughout an extensive project outreach effort, the applicant has responded to input from numerous groups in the community. The bulk and scale of the proposal has been reduced from early proposals and the vehicle storage building has been moved away from the observation buildings and Kellogg Park, as requested. This design is also consistent with the La Jolla Community Plan (Plan) in that it calls for minimizing impacts to public views and from environmentally sensitive areas of La Jolla.

Removing the existing storage container also shows consistency with the Plan which calls for maintaining physical and visual access to the beach. Rather than one long wall along the east elevation, the station is proposed as two buildings with a breezeway, reducing bulk and affording passersby peak-through views of the ocean. The proposed observation tower would have a narrower east elevation than the existing tower and would be removed from the pedestrian boardwalk.

Maintaining the current number of parking spaces in the existing parking lot, while adding the rescue vehicle storage facility, would be accomplished with some parking space re-striping. This is very important given parking is a premium for beachgoers at this popular location. Lifeguards would maintain four designated spaces immediately adjacent to the storage facility and would not reduce the number of public parking spaces currently available. Any new parking spaces or drive aisles would meet current standards.

In addition, no buildings are proposed within any identified public view corridors and staff has determined that the project would meet building height, landscaping and water quality requirements. Therefore, the project would comply with the applicable regulations of the Land Development Code.

Given the project is consistent with the La Jolla Community Plan and meets the requirements of the Land Development Code, staff is recommending project approval.

ALTERNATIVE

1. Approve Coastal Development Permit No. 66151 and Site Development Permit No. 66153, with modifications.

2. Deny Coastal Development Permit No. 66151 and Site Development Permit No. 66153, if the findings required to approve the project cannot be affirmed.

Respectfully submitted,

Morris E. Dye, Development Project Manager

Attachments:

1. Aerial Photo Survey
2. Community Plan Land Use Map
3. Project Location Map
4. Project Data Sheet
5. Project Plans, including Elevations and Site Plans
6. Identified Public Vantage Points
7. Draft Permit with Conditions
8. Draft Resolution with Findings
9. Ownership Disclosure Statement
10. Project Chronology

Rev 6-15-04 dej