

REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL

DATE: FEBRUARY 23, 2005

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: GREG RAMIREZ, CITY MANAGER

BY: MIKE KAMINO, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

SUBJECT: CONDUCT A PRE-SCREEN REVIEW TO CONSIDER A ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT REGARDING SELF-STORAGE FACILITIES (CASE NOS. 04-PSR-008 and 04-PSR-003)

Two separate applicants are requesting direction from the City about expanding the existing zoning ordinance regarding self-storage facilities. Self-storage facilities typically consist of structures that have storage units within them that are available to rent for the storage of household goods. They typically also store recreational vehicles and boats outdoors or within the storage structures and usually have a 24-hour caretaker's residence. The purpose of this pre-screen review is to receive non-binding comments from the City Council and to help provide direction to the applicants as to whether to proceed with the necessary legislative changes that would allow such use.

The first request for a pre-screen review (Case No. 04-PSR-008) is by Chris Chigaridas of Canwood Storage, LLC regarding a 4.8-acre lot in the BP-M-FC (Business Park Manufacturing-Freeway Corridor) zone located at 28661 Canwood Street, west of the Dale Poe Industrial Park, west of Derry Avenue. Concept plans show a self-storage facility with five separate buildings: two for personal storage, two for business storage, and one for covered RV and boat storage. There are also some outdoor areas for larger RV and boat storage. The second request for pre-screen review (Case No. 04-PSR-003) is by Gene Chan of A+ Storage on a vacant 36,000 square foot lot located at 28340 Roadside Drive, west of Lewis Road. The site is a vacant in-fill lot located adjacent to a recently completed office building and is in the CRS-FC (Commercial Retail Service-Freeway Corridor) zone. Concept plans show a four-story building with some ancillary retail sales.

The zoning ordinance, as currently written, is quite restrictive regarding self-storage facilities. Specifically, the zoning ordinance allows for self-storage uses only in the Business Park – Manufacturing (BP-M) and Commercial Retail Service (CRS) zones, subject to a CUP, provided that they are conducted in an enclosed building and not located within 5,000 feet of another self-storage facility. Further, the Freeway Corridor (FC) overlay zone standards expressly prohibit self-storage facilities and yards. In order for either of these requests to move forward, a zoning ordinance amendment would be necessary to allow storage facilities and yards in the FC Overlay zone, and to remove the criterion requiring a 5,000 foot separation between storage facilities.

There are currently two self-storage facilities in the City of Agoura Hills which are both considered non-conforming as they existed prior to City's incorporation. Both sites are located in the FC overlay zone and are located less than 5,000 feet from each other. Conejo Valley U-Store-It is located on Agoura Road, east of Kanan Road in the CRS zone, and the Agoura Self Storage is located on Agoura Road, west of Kanan Road, in the BP-M zone. The attached exhibit shows the location of the two existing non-conforming self-storage facilities in the City, the proposed two self-storage sites, and the BP-M-FC and CRS-FC zones.

In general, it appears that unlike the older, traditional self storage facilities, many new ones are designed to be more compatible with the surrounding uses and greater architectural quality is incorporated into the development. Some storage facilities incorporate office buildings which further help to blend with the surrounding uses. Also building walls rather than high perimeter walls are used to screen outdoor RV and boat storage and compatible architectural elements and styles are used to help the storage facility blend in with the area. Furthermore, the amount of traffic that would be generated from self storage facilities would be minimal and primarily on weekends. In addition, the development of a self-storage facility near residential communities would provide opportunity for the residents to more conveniently store household goods and recreational vehicles and boats.

While there may be reason to allow self-storage facilities, there are disadvantages. First, job creation and sales tax generation is minimal. Additionally, self-storage facilities usually require a large land area on a flat surface, and as such may require extensive grading that could lead to a development that significantly alters the natural terrain. Moreover, the large land area made available for the self-storage use could consume the City's vacant land inventory which could be used for more productive uses. Also, there could possibly be a change to the character of a commercial or business park area as residents would come into the area with RVs, boats and personal items to access the storage facility.

One of the proposed properties for a self-storage facility on Canwood Street is zoned BP-M. The BP-M zone is the most intensive zone in the City and allows industrial-type uses such as wholesale distribution facilities, light manufacturing and assembly, and auto repair. The proposed use of a self-storage facility at a location adjacent to the Dale Poe industrial park could be considered to be in keeping with the immediate area in relation to the existing surrounding uses and the scale of existing development. The site is also not as visible from the freeway and is convenient to the residential communities north of the freeway. In comparison, the BP-M zoned properties on the south side of the freeway, which are located west of Kanan Rd., consist of a more corporate environment, is more visible from the freeway, and is adjacent to Ladyface Mountain.

The second request for the self-storage facility is on Roadside Drive in the CRS zone. The purpose of the CRS district is to provide for general commercial, retail, and service uses. The type of uses that typically exist in the CRS zone are small professional offices, restaurants, stores, and services and therefore it would be more difficult for a self-storage facility to blend in with the fabric of a commercial retail-service environment. Properties and development in the CRS zone are typically much smaller than those in the BP-M zone and, therefore, a self-storage

facility could appear out of scale with the area. Also, CRS zoned properties by nature of their intended uses are located along major traffic corridors and thus would be more visible and would have a greater impact on the surrounding character. As for the proposed site at 28340 Roadside Drive, this property is adjacent to a recently completed office building and there are other office buildings and restaurant and retail uses in the immediate area. This site would be more visible from the freeway than the Canwood site. It is also located in the Old Agoura Overlay zone.

Based on the above analysis, if the City Council finds it appropriate to consider expanding the ordinance regarding self-storage facilities, staff recommends the following:

- That self-storage facilities be limited to the BP-M-FC zone on the north side of the freeway. This would generally encompass the areas on the north side of Canwood Street from near Derry to near Clareton and would include the Chigaridas site. Also, with this geographic limitation, the two existing non-conforming self-storage businesses would remain non-conforming.
- That self-storage facilities be subject to development, design, and performance standards. These could include provisions such as maximum percentage of site devoted to outdoor storage, screening and landscape requirements, amount of lot coverage, types of items that may be stored, etc.
- That self-storage facilities be subject to approval of a Conditional Use Permit. Additional development and operational features can be included in the CUP to further address neighborhood compatibility.

The applicant would be responsible for filing an application for any amendments to the Zoning Ordinance Amendment regarding self-storage facilities. The request would first be reviewed by the Planning Commission at a public hearing to formulate recommendations to the City Council. The Council would then conduct another public hearing prior to taking final action. Actual development would be subject to CUP reviews by the Planning Commission.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff respectfully requests that the City Council conduct a pre-screen review regarding a zoning ordinance amendment relative to self-storage facilities.

Attachment: Zoning and Vicinity Map