

November 7, 2019

CHAIR AND PLANNING COMMISSIONERS
City of Long Beach
California

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND 08-19) and approve a Site Plan Review (SPR18-032) for the onshore improvements to the Long Beach Cruise Terminal including expansion of the existing parking structure to include approximately 650 parking stalls, the reconfiguration of the leasehold traffic lanes near the parking garage, and abandonment and fill of the existing tunnel system located at 231 Windsor Way in the PD-21 Zoning District. (District 2)

APPLICANT: Wilkin Mes, for Carnival Corporation
231 Windsor Way
Long Beach, CA 90802
(Application No. 1909-08)

DISCUSSION

The project site is located in Pier H at the terminus of Queens Highway North. Other public rights of way into and around the site include Queens Highway South, South Harbor Scenic Drive and Windsor Way. The Pier H area is a 45- acre portion of the overall 103-acre parcel (7436-021-907) within the PD-21 Zoning District, Subarea 4, and has a General Plan Designation of LUD #7, Mixed Use District (Exhibit A - Location Map). The 45-acre area is currently developed with the RMS Queen Mary Hotel and tourist attraction, Catalina Classic Cruises, City of Long Beach Aqua Link, Island Express Helicopters, a surface parking lot, a six-story parking structure, Harry Bridges Memorial Park, and the Long Beach Cruise Terminal (former Spruce Goose Dome). Long Beach Fire Department Station 6 is also located on Pier H to the southwest of the existing parking structure and northwest of the Long Beach Cruise Terminal. To the southwest, of the 45-acre portion of the site, on the opposite side of South Harbor Scenic Drive is Pier G (also a part of APN 7436-021-907) which contains a rail yard, truck container storage, large liquid storage tanks, and refinery equipment.

Project Description

The Applicant proposes to make improvements to its facilities at the Long Beach Cruise Terminal to accommodate a new and larger class of cruise ships capable of holding 4,008 passengers, to safely moor the larger cruise ships at the existing berth, and to improve existing safety at the berth related to ocean swells. The proposed maritime and onshore improvements will include all actions and activities necessary to accommodate the larger vessel and the

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associated increase of approximately 1,000 passengers, as compared to the Carnival Inspiration and Imagination which also berth at the Long Beach Cruise Terminal. Not for consideration by the Planning Commission, but included for context, the maritime improvements include dredging the existing berth to a deeper depth (approximately 33,250 cubic yards of dredge volume), construction of two mooring dolphins and associated catwalks, a passenger walkway bridge extension, and fender replacements.

In addition to the City approvals, including building and grading permits, there are numerous entities that require review, approvals, and permits for the overall Long Beach Cruise Terminal expansion project. At a minimum, the following approvals and permits are required for the project:

City of Long Beach Harbor Department (Port of Long Beach)

- Harbor Development Permit (for waterside improvements only)

- New Water Lease Agreement (expansion from 7.81 acres to 11.8 acres)

United States Army Corp of Engineers

- Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit (for dredging activities)

- Section 10 Permit (for dredging and installation of piles and dolphins)

California Coastal Commission

- Federal Consistency Certification (for disposal of dredged materials at the LA-2 Ocean Dredge Material Disposal Site)

Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board

- National Pollution Discharge Elimination System Construction General Permit

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries, Office of Protected Resources— Marine Mammal Protection Act

- Incidental Harassment Authorization

Onshore improvements that are specifically under the authority of the Planning Commission include expansion of the existing parking structure to the north and south to include 657 new parking stalls (321,595 square feet of expansion area), filling of an abandoned 450 foot-long tunnel between Windsor Way and the parking structure, and the reconfiguration of the traffic lanes within the leasehold area near the parking garage to accommodate the expanded and remodeled structure (Exhibit B – Plans). Pursuant to Section 21.25.502 of the Long Beach Municipal Code (LBMC), Site Plan Review is required for new construction that exceeds 500 square feet in size on City land (Pier H is owned by the City of Long Beach). The table below shows which floors will be expanded and the number of new parking stalls on each floor.

Table 1:
Parking Count

	SOUTH EXPANSION	NORTH EXPANSION	EXISTING TO REMAIN
Ground Floor	0	0	164
2 nd Floor	51	0	340
3 rd Floor	122	80	342
4 th Floor	122	80	299
5 th Floor	122	80	254
Total	417	240	1,399
Grand Total as Designed	2,056 parking spaces		

The south expansion, which includes the second through fifth floors, will have 417 new spaces; the north expansion will encompass 240 spaces on the third through fifth floors. The bus parking area to the north will be reconfigured along with the interior reconfigured drop-off traffic lanes to allow for improved pedestrian circulation from the structure and drop-off area to the check-in area at the Dome. The south expansion has been designed to accommodate vertical clearance for emergency vehicles per the U.S. Department of Transportation standards and the City's Public Works Department. Each of the expanded floors have been designed to integrate seamlessly with the existing structure and once completed, all levels will be accessible as one continuous structure.

At regular intervals along the existing elevations of the open parking structure there are frames which are currently empty, but in the past have included decorative mesh inserts, which break up the massing of the parking structure and create a visual point of interest while maintaining the air circulation and ventilation. Conditions of approval (Exhibit C – Conditions of Approval) have been included to require additional frames with graphic inserts along the new parts of the structure. The specific locations of the frames as well as the illustration/picture contained on the mesh shall be subject to review and approval of the Site Plan Review Committee.

To the south of the existing structure, the vehicular aisle adjacent to the parking structure will be reconfigured and the landscaping (including roots and organic materials) will be removed. The Queen Mary propeller monument signage will be removed and included as a condition of approval, the applicant has indicated that they will work with the City and sub-landlord (Urban Commons) to integrate the propeller into the overall design of the adjacent Queen Mary Island. The existing 450-foot tunnel is currently unused and will be formally abandoned and filled as part of the project.

The applicant has committed to meeting the Zoning Code requirements and providing detailed landscaping and irrigation plans during the plan check phase of this project. Currently, there are several trees and a landscaped area along the southwest elevation of the existing parking structure. In order to accommodate the expansion, these trees will have to be removed. However, the City's Municipal Code (Section 21.32.225.A.4), requires that all sides of a parking

structure abutting a public street shall be screened by trees, vines or other decorative screening as approved by the Director of Development Services. In response to this requirement, conditions of approval have been added that will require a minimum one to one tree replacement at a size that allows for quick, mature growth, and spaced such that those areas of the parking structure without the mesh screens will be screened by the trees.

The proposed waterside improvements are anticipated to begin immediately in order to permanently accommodate and safely moor the new ship to the existing berth. The onshore improvements will begin after the completion of the waterside improvements and are anticipated to take several months to complete.

The proposed onshore improvements; including the parking structure expansion, fill of the abandoned tunnel, and reconfiguration of the leasehold traffic lanes, is a proposal that will accommodate the new and larger class of cruise vessel, improve the site, and provide enhanced and greater access for Cruise Terminal visitors, that is consistent with the zoning district and compatible with the immediate surrounding area. Staff recommends that the Planning Commission approve the Site Plan Review based on the findings (Exhibit D – Site Plan Review Findings) and subject to the recommended conditions of approval.

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

A total of 520 public hearing notices were distributed on October 21, 2019, in accordance with the requirements of Chapter 21.21 of the Zoning regulations. As of the preparation of this report one letter about the project was received from a member of the public. (Exhibit E - Public Comments) and public hearing notices were mailed to all property owners and leasehold interests within 1,000 feet of the subject property on October 23, 2019.

As of the date of this report, staff attended a meeting with the Port of Long Beach staff and members of the environmental community. A member of the Coalition for Clean Air expressed several concerns about the proposed project and the environmental documentation that was prepared.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the CEQA Guidelines, a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) was prepared for the proposed project (Exhibit F – Mitigated Negative Declaration 08-19). The MND was distributed to public agencies and made available for review and comment for the required 30-day review period that covered June 20, 2019 to July 19, 2019). The Notice of Intent (NOI) was filed with the Los Angeles County Clerk on June 20, 2019. Several comment letters were received (Exhibit G – MND Comment Letters - Initial).

At the conclusion of the review period, it was decided to re-review and update the MND based upon the public comments that were received. As a result, several areas of the MND were

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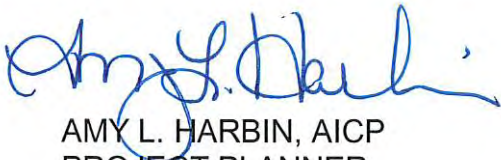
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updated and clarified and the City recirculated the MND for public review and comment for another required 30-day period that covered August 28, 2019 to September 26, 2019. The recirculated NOI was filed with the Los Angeles County Clerk on August 28, 2019. Comments were received by the City at the conclusion of the recirculated MND public review period (Exhibit H – MND Comment Letters - Recirculation). A few editorial changes were made after the conclusion of the recirculated Draft IS/MND, in addition to topical responses to the comments that were received by the City on the recirculated IS/MND; these edits and response to comments are noted in the Memorandum (Exhibit I – Topical Response to MND Comments - Recirculation and Edits).

The MND provides mitigation measures addressing Air Quality, Biological Resources, Noise and Tribal Cultural Resources (Exhibit J – Mitigation Monitoring Program). The MND determined that with mitigation measures in place, the proposed project would not result in any significant adverse environmental impacts.

Respectfully submitted,



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PROJECT PLANNER



ALEXIS OROPEZA
CURRENT PLANNING OFFICER



CHRISTOPHER KOONTZ, AICP
PLANNING BUREAU MANAGER



LINDA F. TATUM, FAICP
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

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Attachments:

- Exhibit A – Location Map
- Exhibit B – Plans
- Exhibit C – Conditions of Approval
- Exhibit D – Site Plan Review Findings
- Exhibit E – Public Comments
- Exhibit F – Mitigated Negative Declaration 08-19
- Exhibit G – MND Comment Letters - Initial
- Exhibit H – MND Comment Letters - Recirculation
- Exhibit I – Topical Response to MND Comments - Recirculation and Edits
- Exhibit J – Mitigation Monitoring Program