



CITY OF LONG BEACH

DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

333 West Ocean Blvd., 5th Floor

Long Beach, CA 90802

(562) 570-6194

FAX (562) 570-6068

January 17, 2019

CHAIR AND PLANNING COMMISSIONERS

City of Long Beach
California

RECOMMENDATION:

Accept Categorical Exemption CE-18-251 and approve a request for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP18-033) to allow the operation of a veterinary use with boarding with a maximum of 50 kittens in an existing commercial tenant space located at 1179 East Wardlow Road in the Community Automobile-Oriented (CCA) Zoning District. (District 7)

APPLICANT: CatPAWs
c/o Deborah Felin and Helen Sanders
1198 Pacific Coast Highway, D-227
Seal Beach, CA 90740
(Application No. 1811-01)

DISCUSSION

The subject property is located on the north side of East Wardlow Road between Orange Avenue and Cerritos Avenue in the Community Automobile-Oriented (CCA) Zoning District (Exhibit A – Location Map). The site abuts a multi-family residential use to the north and a 15-foot-wide alley to the west. A multi-family residential building is also located to the west across the alley. Commercial, retail, and restaurant uses are located to the south, southeast, and east across East Wardlow Road and Orange Avenue. All adjoining and abutting properties to the site are in the CCA Zoning District, which prohibits single- and multi-family residential uses.

The site is located within General Plan Land Use District No. 8M (Mixed Office/Residential Strip District) (LUD 8M). LUD 8M intends for combinations of land uses – including office, residential, and some ground-floor retail.

The project site is developed with a one-story building constructed in 1936, according to City building permit records. The project site consists of an approximately 5,000-square-foot building developed to the property lines of the site (Exhibit B – Plans and Photographs). There is no off-street parking for the building. The subject tenant space is 1,138-square-feet in size and has an access point from the building frontage along East Wardlow Road. The last business license issued for this tenant space was for a business

office, which expired in 2008. The tenant space includes an entrance door and bathroom, and is air-conditioned.

The Conditional Use Permit (CUP) application is for the operation of a veterinary use with boarding. The project applicant, in partnership with the City of Long Beach Animal Care Services Bureau of the Department of Parks, Recreation and Marine (ACS), proposes to provide veterinary care and boarding for unweaned kittens. Under current zoning, veterinary uses with boarding require a CUP in the CCA Zoning District. The Department of Development Services is in the early stages of updating these regulations, however a CUP is needed at this time to address an urgent need for this facility.

Operation

The proposed veterinary use with boarding would be for the treatment and boarding of ACS-impounded (unweaned) kittens until they are of adoptable age. The target population for treatment within the veterinary use are ACS-impounded kittens (stray or abandoned) that are too young to feed themselves, are too young for adoption, or are ill.

The proposed use will be in direct collaboration with ACS. After an unweaned kitten is impounded and examined by ACS staff, the facility operator will be notified to pick up the kitten(s) from the ACS facility. The kittens are then transported to the proposed veterinary facility for care and boarding. The facility will be operated by staff and volunteers who will house and care for kittens ages zero to eight weeks old, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. At any one time, it is expected that three nonprofit staff and five volunteer will care for the kittens on site in shifts between two to eight hours. The kittens will be housed in cages, and between 20 to 50 kittens will be boarded in the facility at any given time.

Kitten care will include veterinarian-provided medical treatment, bottle feeding kittens, cleaning kitten bins and cages, and kitten socialization. Once of adoptable age, approximately eight-weeks old, facility operator will identify placement for each kitten, such as foster care, transfer to another rescue group, or public adoption. The operator will maintain detailed records for all kittens including feeding log, weight gain, vaccinations, medical treatment, and outcome. Limited adoptions by the public, along with limited sales of kitten supplies and toys may take place at the proposed facility. As part of the partnership with ACS, City ACS staff will regularly inspect the Kitten Nursery to track the health and outcome of the kittens.

Development Standards and Parking

The existing building features an entry door with an exterior security screen door along the south elevation on East Wardlow Road. As conditioned, the applicant shall remove the existing screen door that swings over the public right-of-way and install a fabric awning to match the adjacent tenant spaces. No substantial changes are proposed to the exterior of the building beyond the conditioned improvements.

The existing building is non-conforming with regard to the amount of off-street parking provided; there are no on-site parking spaces on the property. Based on the current parking requirement for personal service uses, four parking spaces are required per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area (GFA).

The last use to occupy the tenant space was a business office, which requires the same parking ratio (4 spaces per 1,000 square feet of GFA). Therefore, since no expansion of the building area is proposed, the veterinary use would require the same number of parking spaces as the previous use and would be within the nonconforming parking rights established for the previous business office, and no new off-site parking is required.

There is a green 30-minute parking curb area along East Wardlow Road near the entrance to the tenant space. The remainder of the curb area in front of the building along East Wardlow Road has a red curb to prohibit street parking in front of the existing bus stop. Due to the tenant space's lack of dedicated off-street parking and adjacency to Wardlow Road, as conditioned, the applicant/operator would be required to install interior barriers at the interior main entrance and to transport kittens in carriers/cages to ensure safety of the animals during transfer to/from the facility.

Veterinary Use Special Conditions

In considering an application for a veterinary use with boarding, Chapter 21.52 of the Long Beach Municipal Code establishes specific conditions that must be satisfied (Exhibit C – Findings). Veterinary uses must be evaluated for: a) permitted veterinary uses and types of animals; b) use confinement within a building that is fully air-conditioned and sound-proofed to the standards of the noise ordinance; and c) site location adjoining or abutting a residential use district.

The use will include medical treatment and boarding of kittens only. Treatment includes a range of actions to care for unweaned kittens until adoptable age. In addition, all treatment and boarding will occur entirely indoors, within an existing tenant space. The tenant space maintains one entry door on the southern building elevation and there are no exterior windows. The tenant space is improved with air conditioning, and, as conditioned, shall maintain proper ventilation at all times (Exhibit D – Conditions of Approval). While kittens at the age of proposed boarding do not make substantial noise, staff has added conditions to ensure that the use complies with the Noise Ordinance, Chapter 8.80 of the Municipal Code. A condition of approval is required to track all complaints within the first 12 months of operation. If complaints are documented within this period, the applicant would be required to work with the City to implement and document measures to monitor interior noise levels at adjacent tenant spaces, including but not limited to an annual noise monitoring study. In addition, City ACS staff shall perform monthly inspections during the first year of operation. Annual inspections by the Planning Bureau shall also be completed to ensure that all conditions of approval are adhered to.

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

A total of 236 Public Hearing Notices were distributed on December 31, 2018, in accordance with the provision of the Zoning Ordinance. No comments have been received as of the preparation of this report.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

In accordance with the guidelines for implementing the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Categorical Exemption CE-18-251 was issued (Exhibit E – Categorical Exemption CE-18-251). The project is exempt per Section 15301 - Existing Facilities, as the project involves establishing a use within the existing building, which requires minor alterations to an existing structure, as conditioned.

Planning staff finds that the proposed CUP for the operation of a veterinary use with boarding, with the incorporation of the recommended conditions of approval, will not cause any substantial adverse effects on neighboring land uses or the community. The proposed project is consistent with the General Plan, Zoning Regulations, and all special development standards for veterinary uses with boarding as appropriate, and detailed in the required Findings. Staff, therefore, recommends that the Planning Commission accept Categorical Exemption CE-18-251 and approve the Conditional Use Permit (CUP) (Application No. 1811-01) for the operation of a veterinary use with boarding at 1179 East Wardlow Road.

Respectfully submitted,



MARYANNE CRONIN
PROJECT PLANNER



ALEXIS OROPEZA
SENIOR PLANNER



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 and Photographs
 Exhibit C – Findings
 Exhibit D – Conditions of Approval
 Exhibit E – Categorical Exemption CE-18-251