

Redevelopment Agency
September 12, 2006

Agency Agenda Item 5A

PUBLIC HEARING

Honorable Chairman and Members
 of the Torrance Redevelopment Agency
 City Hall
 Torrance, California

Members of the Agency:

SUBJECT: Redevelopment Agency - Consideration to allow removal of the perimeter berm, landscaping modifications, and parking reconfiguration in the Skypark Redevelopment Project Area.

MOD06-00005: CONTINENTAL SKYPARK CORPORATION (Alex J. Rose)

Expenditure: None

RECOMMENDATION

The Deputy Executive Director recommends that the Redevelopment Agency deny the application and adopt a Resolution denying a Modification of previously approved Conditional Use Permits to allow removal of the perimeter berm on Hawthorne Boulevard and the westerly portion of Skypark Drive, landscaping modifications and reconfiguration of the parking lot on property located in the Skypark Redevelopment Project Area, in the Planned Development District, in the Hawthorne Boulevard Corridor Specific Plan overlay zone. The following action is necessary for denial of the project:

1. Adopt a RESOLUTION denying Modification No. MOD06-00005.

Funding:

Not applicable

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

The Skypark Redevelopment Project Area (SRPA) was established in 1976 and encompasses 30 acres, including streets. The project is characterized by distinctive architecture, water features and park-like landscape. Development Standards were established to maintain a planned mixed-use park with setback, architectural, landscaping, signing and parking controls.

The SRPA received the Pacific Coast Builders Conference 1984 Gold Nugget Award for its unique commercial mixed-use site plan. The City of Torrance also awarded Skypark

with its 1985 Beautification Award for its remarkable blend of landscaping and architecture. The frontage along Hawthorne and Skypark sets a standard for one of the major corridors of the City.

The applicant is proposing to remove the existing landscape berm along the Hawthorne and westerly Skypark frontage of the SRPA in order to increase the available parking, in much the same way as has been done on the rear portion of the project fronting Madison Street. The SRPA was designed to accommodate a specific mix of uses; an increase in medical uses requires a concurrent increase in the required parking for the project, as medical use is a higher intensity use than general office.

The applicant is proposing additional medical use and is requesting the reconfiguration of the parking lot areas to accommodate the additional parking element. In so doing, they are requesting to remove the perimeter berm, including the removal of all the mature trees within the berm. Additionally, they are proposing to decrease the front and side setback areas to accommodate for the increase of parking stalls.

Previously, in 2004, the Executive Director of the Redevelopment Agency approved an interim change to the property along Madison Street and the east portion of Skypark Drive, consisting of the removal of the berm and mature trees in order to accommodate additional parking spaces for an increase of medical use. This interim change was approved as a trial to determine if the Redevelopment Agency would entertain similar changes to the berm and landscaping in the remainder of the SRPA. While the changes to the rear of the project were approved administratively, the proposed changes to the face of the SRPA on Hawthorne will constitute a major change to the Hawthorne Boulevard streetscape, and therefore, a more significant change to the SRPA, thereby, requiring Agency approval.

Medical office use is a permitted use in the SRPA, and as such, Redevelopment Agency Staff concurs that this use is within the goals of the Redevelopment Plan. The applicant's proposal to provide additional parking spaces, including the removal of a "landmark" portion of the landscaping, the perimeter berm along Hawthorne Boulevard and its mature trees and vegetation, and the reconfiguration of the parking lot with decreased setbacks, does not meet the SRPA Development Standards.

The applicant has requested to remove all of the 324 existing mature trees that are located in the perimeter berm. The majority of these trees are Eucalyptus, and under the right circumstances are known to live for at least a century. They have been in place for approximately 25 years. Mature Weeping Willows and assorted other trees line the perimeter berm. Additionally, within the interior of the parking lot, the applicant is proposing to remove all of the 73 existing trees. The perimeter berm along with its 115 mature trees and the interior parking lot's 24 mature trees, to the rear of the project on Madison Street and the eastern portion of Skypark Drive, have already been removed as part of the interim change. While these changes are appropriate for the rear of the project, they are not adequate for the front of the project, along Hawthorne.

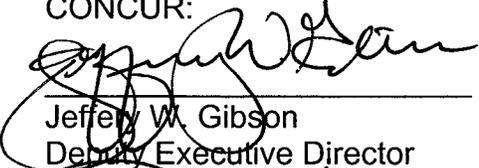
The applicant is proposing to install 206 trees in the new proposed, low-profile perimeter and 118 trees throughout the interior of the parking lot. The majority of the trees and shrubs indicated for the perimeter and the interior were not a part of the previously approved landscape plans for Skypark, nor do they conform with the HBCSP landscape requirements.

In addition to mounding, the SRPA Development Standards require a minimum front setback of 20 feet, and no parking of vehicles shall be allowed in the required 20 foot front area. The side setback requirements are 15 feet minimum. The proposed width between the property line and the parking stalls is approximately 12 feet along the Hawthorne Boulevard and Skypark Drive sections, falling between 8 and 3 feet short of the Development Standards, respectively.

Currently, the streetscape on Hawthorne Boulevard between Lomita Boulevard and Pacific Coast Highway is defined by the existing Skypark berm and mature trees that were installed approximately 25 years ago. Eliminating the streetscape ideals for the Hawthorne Boulevard Corridor and the Skypark Redevelopment Project Area are not consistent with the Skypark Redevelopment Plan and will not aid in the redevelopment of the project area. Staff therefore recommends denial of the subject request, Modification Number MOD06-00005, as it does not meet applicable SRPA Development Standards.

Should the Redevelopment Agency decide to approve the project, a Resolution for approval may be prepared for a future meeting, which will include the attached Special Conditions of Approval.

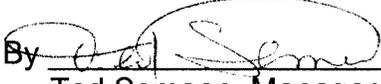
CONCUR:


 Jeffrey W. Gibson
 Deputy Executive Director


 LeRoy J. Jackson
 Executive Director

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffery W. Gibson
 Deputy Executive Director

By 
 Ted Semaan, Manager
 Redevelopment & General Plan

Attachments:

- A. Resolution
- B. Location and Zoning Map
- C. Proof of Publication and Proof of Service by Mail
- D. Special Conditions of Approval
- E. Site Plans and Landscaping Plans (Limited Distribution)
- F. Applicant's bound proposal and application (Limited Distribution)
- G. Chairman's Script (Limited Distribution)

RESOLUTION NO. RA 2006 – _____

A RESOLUTION OF THE REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA, DENYING AN APPLICATION FOR MODIFICATION OF PREVIOUSLY APPROVED CONDITIONAL USE PERMITS AS PROVIDED FOR IN DIVISION 9, CHAPTER 5, ARTICLE 1 TO ALLOW REMOVAL OF THE PERIMETER BERM, LANDSCAPE MODIFICATIONS AND RECONFIGURATION OF THE PARKING LOT ON PROPERTY LOCATED IN THE SKYPARK REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT AREA, IN THE PLANNED DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT, IN THE HBCSP OVERLAY ZONE.

**MOD06-00005: CONTINENTAL SKYPARK CORPORATION
(ALEX J. ROSE)**

WHEREAS, Land use limitations in areas with average slope of less than 20%, considered minor alterations, which do not result in any changes in land use or density are Categorical Exempted by the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act, per Section 15305; and

WHEREAS, due and legal publication of notice was given to owners of property in the vicinity thereof and due and legal hearings have been held, all in accordance with the provisions of Division 9, Chapter 5, Article 1 of the Torrance Municipal Code; and

WHEREAS, the Redevelopment Agency of the City of Torrance conducted a duly noticed public hearing on September 12, 2006, to consider MOD06-00005; and

WHEREAS, the Redevelopment Agency of the City of Torrance does hereby find and determine as follows:

- A) The property for which this Modification is denied is located in the Skypark Redevelopment Project Area, and is described as loosely bounded by Hawthorne Boulevard, 234th Street, Madison Street and Skypark Drive;
- B) The proposed Modification will impair the integrity and character of the Planned Development District in the Skypark Redevelopment Project Area, in the HBCSP overlay zone in which it is located, as extensive mounding is proposed to be removed and replaced with a low profile perimeter, and parking stalls are proposed in the front setback area.
- C) The subject site is not physically suitable for the proposed Modification, as the minimum setback requirements are not provided;
- D) The proposed Modification will not encourage and will not be consistent with the orderly development of the City as provided for in the General Plan and the Skypark

Redevelopment Plan and HBCSP, as minimum development standards are not provided; and

E) The proposed Modification will aesthetically reverse Redevelopment efforts by the removal of the mounded perimeter berm and its 209 mature trees and vegetation.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that MOD06-00005 filed by Continental Skypark Corporation (Alex J. Rose) to allow the removal of the perimeter berm, landscaping modifications and reconfiguration of the parking lot on property located in the Skypark Redevelopment Project Area, in the Planned Development District, in the HBCSP overlay zone on file in the Community Development Department of the City of Torrance, is hereby DENIED.

Introduced, approved and adopted this 12th day of September, 2006.

Chairman of the Agency

Executive Director of the Agency

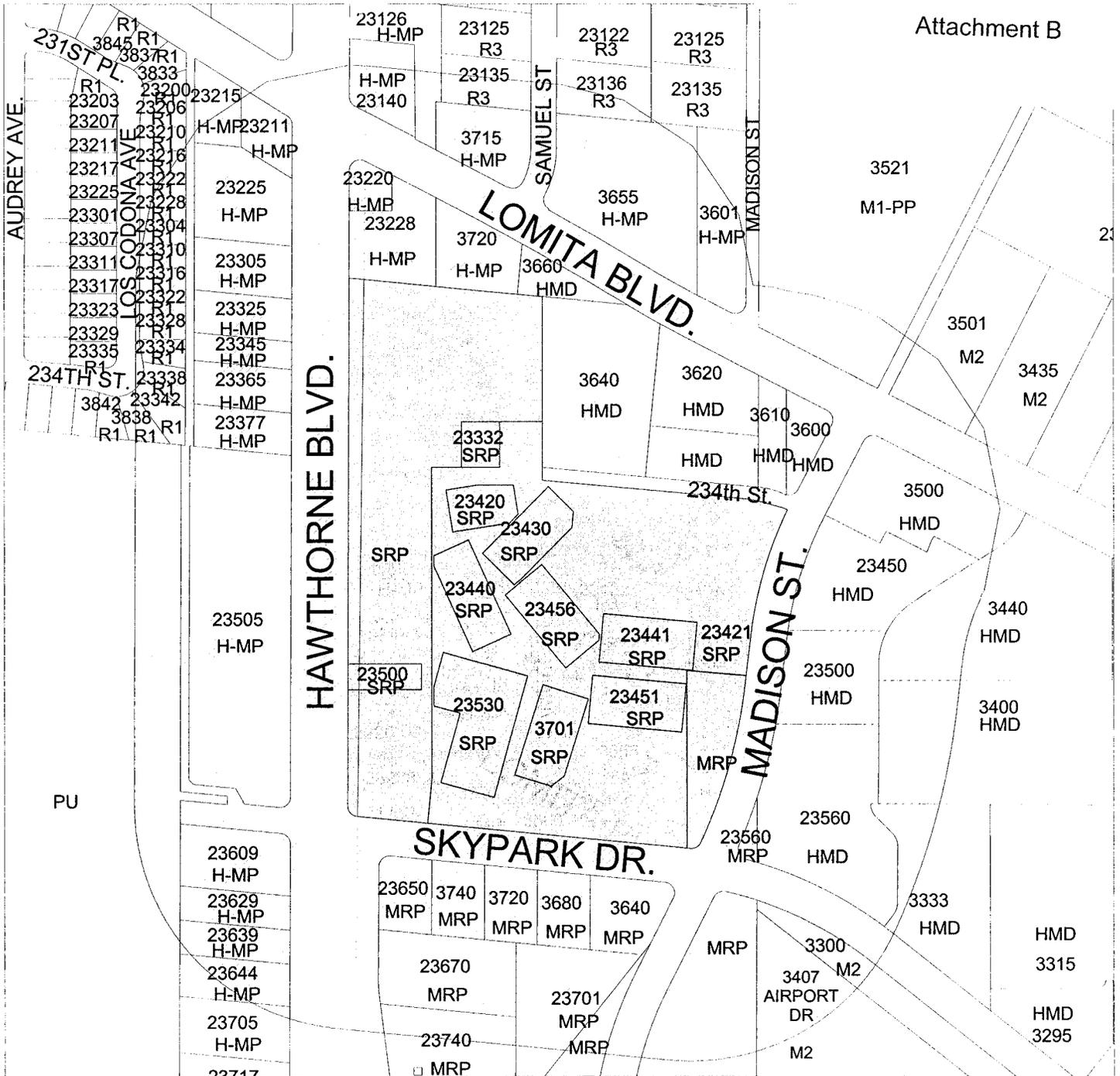
ATTEST:

Clerk of the Agency

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

John L. Fellows III, Agency Counsel

By _____



LOCATION AND ZONING

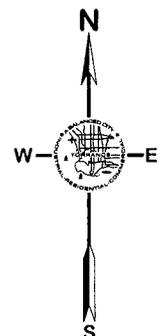
MOD06-00005
CONTINENTAL SKYPARK CORPORATION



LEGEND

- Skypark Redevelopment Project Area
- Notification Area

0 100 200 300 400 500 Feet



Daily Breeze

5215 TORRANCE BLVD * TORRANCE CALIFORNIA 90503-4077
(310) 543-6635 * (310) 540-5511 Ext. 396

PROOF OF PUBLICATION (201 5.5 C.C.P.)

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

County of Los Angeles,

I am a citizen of the United States and a resident of the County aforesaid; I am over the age of eighteen years, and not a party to or interested in the above-entitled matter. I am the principal clerk of the printer of the THE DAILY BREEZE

a newspaper of general circulation, printed and published

in the City of Torrance
County of Los Angeles, and which newspaper has been adjudged a newspaper of general circulation by the Superior Court of County of Los Angeles, State of California, under the date of

June 10, 1974

Case Number SWC7146

that the notice, of which the annexed is a printed copy (set in type not smaller than nonpareil), has been published in each regular and entire issue of said newspaper and not in any supplement there of on the following dates, to-wit

Sept. 1,

all in the year 2006

I certify (or declare) under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Dated at Torrance

California, this 1 Day of Sept. 2006

[Signature]
Signature

This space is for the County Clerk's Filing Stamp

2006 SEP 1 - 5 PM 1:47

NOE

Proof of Publication of

DB

DB 9-15 NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a Public Hearing will be held before the Redevelopment Agency of the City of Torrance on September 12, 2006, at 7:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers of City Hall, 3031 Torrance Boulevard, Torrance, California, on the following matter:

MOD06-00005, CONTINENTAL SKYPARK CORPORATION

(ALEX J. ROSE); Redevelopment Agency consideration for approval of a Modification of previously approved Conditional Use Permits to allow additional medical use, reconfiguration and increase of parking stalls and landscaping modifications including the removal of the perimeter berm on property located in the Planned Development District in the Skypark Redevelopment Project Area in the HBCSP overlay zone.

Material can be reviewed in the Community Development Department. All persons interested in the above matter are requested to be present at the hearing or to submit their comments to the City Clerk, City Hall, 3031 Torrance Boulevard, Torrance, CA 90503, prior to the public hearing.

If you challenge the above matter in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing described in this notice or in written correspondence delivered to the Community Development Department or the office of the City Clerk prior to the public hearing, and further, by the terms of Resolution No. 88-19, you may be limited to ninety (90) days in which to commence such legal action pursuant to Section 1094.6 of the Code of Civil Procedure.

For further information, contact the REDEVELOPMENT STAFF of the Community Development Department at (310) 618-5990.

**SUE HERBERS
CITY CLERK**

Pub.: September 1, 2006.

PROOF OF SERVICE BY MAIL

I, the undersigned, am a resident of the County of Los Angeles, State of California, over the age of eighteen years, and not a party to the within action. I am employed by the City of Torrance, 3031 Torrance Boulevard, Torrance, California 90503.

On August 31, 2006, I caused to be mailed 69 copies of the within notification for MOD06-00005, CONTINENTAL SKYPARK CORPORATION (ALEX J. ROSE) to the interested parties in said action by causing true copies thereof to be placed in the United States mail at Torrance, California.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed August 31, 2006, at Torrance, California.

Alejo M. Castro
(signature)

CITY OF TORRANCE
 Community Development Department
 3031 Torrance Boulevard
 Torrance, CA 90503

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Publish: September 1, 2006

**SUE HERBERS
 CITY CLERK**

SPECIAL CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL FOR MOD06-00005:

1. That final plan shall show a break up of long parking aisles in sections 2 and 3 to improve on-site circulation. The loss of parking will be approx. 4 per section. (Transportation Planning)
2. That access into the modified aisles between section 2 & 3 and section 3 & 4 shall be modified and signed for outbound/egress only. (Transportation Planning)
3. That parking spaces or landscaped areas shall not encroach into projected drive aisle paths. (Transportation Planning)
4. That parking spaces at the end of the aisles shall meet the minimum dimensional requirement of standard parking stalls; (cannot be rounded up). (Transportation Planning)
5. That provision for adequate throating by closing the first opening east of Hawthorne Boulevard between section 4 and 5 shall be made. (Transportation Planning)
6. That all driveways to be reconstructed shall be reconstructed to commercial radius type driveways (minimum 30' wide) with depressed back of walk and wheelchair ramps per City of Torrance standards. (Engineering – Permits and Records)
7. That on site drainage shall not drain through driveway, but shall be collected on-site and discharged through the public street curb(s). (Engineering – Permits and Records)
8. That all proposed and/or existing meters >2" and double detector check/reduce pressure backflow assemblies shall be located above ground on private property near the public right-of-way. Final location and access shall be approved by the Community Development Director and incorporated into the on-site landscaping plan prior to building permit. (Engineering – Permits and Records)
9. That a minimum of three-foot wide landscape fingers shall be installed at the end of each parking aisle. (General Plan)
10. That a minimum four-foot wide landscape strip shall be used along major circulation aisles. (General Plan)
11. That planting within parking rows shall be achieved by one of the following (see landscape diagram in the Hawthorne Boulevard Corridor Specific Plan on page V-24):
 - a) A continuous landscape strip, at least four feet wide (interior dimension, between rows of parking spaces), or

- b) Tree wells, eight feet wide, resulting from the conversion of two opposing full sized spaces to compact spaces, or
- c) Diamond-shaped tree wells, at least five feet square, placed diagonally between parking stalls. (General Plan)

12. That pedestrian linkages/walkways shall be established from Hawthorne Boulevard, Skypark Drive and Madison Street sidewalks to the interior of the property. (General Plan)
13. That existing mature eucalyptus trees at the perimeter shall be preserved when possible. That applicant shall provide Community Development Department an inventory of trees to be retained. That for every mature eucalyptus tree removed along the perimeter of the property, a replacement tree shall be planted to the satisfaction of Redevelopment Agency Staff. (General Plan)
14. That the Meadow Park sub-district calls for Eucalyptus species, Cajeput tree, Paperbark (Melaleuca), and Brisbane Box (Tristania) trees shall be planted every 30 feet of property frontage. That Natal Plum (Carissa) shrubs, five gallon size, shall be planted for each 15 feet of landscape area and Star Jasmine (trachelospermum) and turf shall be planted as groundcover. (General Plan)
15. That a maximum allowable overhang for a parking space shall be two feet. (General Plan)