



PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

STAFF REPORT

DATE: November 17, 2021

TO: Hearing Officer

SUBJECT: Certificate of Exception #387

LOCATION: 130-162 N. Sierra Madre Boulevard and 163 Cook Avenue

APPLICANTS: Volkswagen Pasadena

ZONING DESIGNATION: EPSP-d1-CG (East Pasadena Specific Plan, Subdistrict d1, Commercial General)

GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION: Low Commercial (0.0-1.0 FAR)

CASE PLANNER: Emma Carrico

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Adopt the Environmental Determination and the Specific Findings in Attachment A to **approve** Certificate of Exception #387 with the conditions in Attachment B.

PROJECT PROPOSAL: Certificate of Exception: To allow a lot line adjustment that would consolidate four adjacent parcels (APN 5746-022-045, 5746-022-042, 5746-022-047, 5746-022-070) into one parcel.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION: This project has been determined to be exempt from environmental review pursuant to the guidelines of the California Environmental Quality Act (Public Resources Code §21080(b)(9); Administrative Code, Title 14, Chapter 3, §15311, Class 11, (Accessory Structures); and there are no features that distinguish this project from others in the exempt class; therefore, there are no unusual circumstances. Section 15311 exempts the construction, or placement of minor structures accessory to (appurtenant to) existing commercial, industrial, or institutional facilities, including but not limited to small parking lots. This request is limited to adjusting the property lines between adjacent parcels to facilitate the expansion of a vehicle display area/parking lot. Further, the project will not result in a substantial adverse change to a historic resource.

BACKGROUND:

Site characteristics: The subject site is located on the East side of North Sierra Madre Boulevard, South of the intersection with East Foothill Boulevard and North of the intersection with East Walnut Street. The site is predominately flat and almost entirely paved, with existing vegetation limited to landscaping areas along North Sierra Madre Boulevard and East Walnut Street.

Adjacent Uses: North – Commercial
South – Commercial
East – Commercial
West – Commercial

Adjacent Uses: North – EPSP-d1-CG (East Pasadena Specific Plan, Subdistrict d1, Commercial General)
South – EPSP-d1-CG (East Pasadena Specific Plan, Subdistrict d1, Commercial General)
East – EPSP-d1-CG (East Pasadena Specific Plan, Subdistrict d1, Commercial General)
West – EPSP-d1-CG (East Pasadena Specific Plan, Subdistrict d1, Commercial General)

Previous Zoning Cases: CUP#3476 – Conditional Use Permit and Expressive Use Permit to allow the sales of alcoholic beverages for on-site consumption in a proposed bar/cocktail lounge; a conditional use permit to allow commercial entertainment (billiards and live entertainment); and an expressive use permit to allow dancing. Approved January 12, 1999.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The applicant, Volkswagen Pasadena, has submitted a Certificate of Exception application to allow a lot line adjustment that would consolidate four adjacent parcels (APN 5746-022-045, 5746-022-042, 5746-022-047, 5746-022-070) into one parcel. The parcel resulting from the boundary adjustment would total 114,019 square feet, approximately 2.6 acres.

The lot consolidation would facilitate the expansion of the vehicle display area for the existing Vehicle Sales and Leasing use by Volkswagen Pasadena. In order to expand the vehicle display area the existing restaurant building at 162 North Sierra Madre Boulevard would be demolished.

ANALYSIS:

Applicants may request a Certificate of Exception application for a lot line adjustment between two or more adjacent parcels, where: 1) the land taken from one parcel is added to the adjacent parcel; and 2) a greater number of parcels than originally existed is not thereby created. The Hearing Officer may approve a Certificate of Exception provided the resulting parcel(s) conform to the General Plan, any applicable Specific Plan, and zoning and building ordinances. The table below summarizes the existing parcels sizes:

Parcel #	Address	Assessor's Number	Lot Area (square feet)
Parcel #1	130 N. Sierra Madre Blvd.	5746-022-070	93,087
Parcel #2	152 N. Sierra Madre Blvd.	5746-022-042	4,214
Parcel #3	162 N. Sierra Madre Blvd.	5746-022-045	9,210
Parcel #4	163 Cook Ave.	5746-022-047	7,508
Total			114,019

The applicant's proposal would consolidate all four parcels into a single parcel. The proposal has been analyzed for consistency with applicable provisions of the Zoning Code in the chart below.

Development Feature	Requirement	Proposed Project	Analysis	
<i>EPSP-d1-CG– General Development Standards for New Lots</i>				
Minimum Lot Area	Determined through the subdivision process	114,019 square feet	Determined to be sufficient.	
Maximum Lot Width	Determined through the subdivision process	N Sierra Madre Blvd.: 500 feet E Walnut St.: 350 feet	Determined to be sufficient.	
Minimum Setbacks	Front	5 feet	135 feet existing (No change)	Complies
	Rear	None	57 feet existing (No change)	Complies
	Sides	None	0 feet West side existing 35 feet East side existing (No change)	Complies
Maximum Floor Area Ratio	None	.22 existing .20 proposed	Complies	

As demonstrated in the table above the lot resulting from the proposed consolidation, and all existing development on the lot, would comply with all development standards of the specific plan and zoning ordinance. All future development would be required to comply with the standards in place at the time proposed.

GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY:

The proposed project, a mapping action consolidating four lots into one lot, is consistent with the General Plan Objectives and Policies. The General Plan Land Use Diagram prescribes standards for density and intensity for development sites. No increase in density would occur on the resultant lot, as the proposed lot line adjustment would facilitate the demolition of a vacant building. The consolidation would comply with General Plan Policy 1.2 (Targeted Growth), by creating a project site that is more suitable for development in an infill area of vacant or underutilized land. Additionally, the project would support General Plan Policy 11.1 (Business Expansion and Growth). The proposed consolidation would allow Volkswagen Pasadena to expand their business area, supporting the continuance and growth of the existing use on the subject site.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

This project has been determined to be exempt from environmental review pursuant to the guidelines of the California Environmental Quality Act (Public Resources Code §21080(b)(9); Administrative Code, Title 14, Chapter 3, §15311, Class 11, (Accessory Structures); and there are no features that distinguish this project from others in the exempt class; therefore, there are no unusual circumstances. Section 15311 exempts the construction, or placement of minor structures accessory to (appurtenant to) existing commercial, industrial, or institutional facilities, including but not limited to small parking lots. This request is limited to adjusting the property lines between adjacent parcels to facilitate the expansion of a vehicle display area/parking lot. Further, the project will not result in a substantial adverse change to a historic resource.

REVIEW BY OTHER CITY DEPARTMENTS:

The project was reviewed by the Department of Public Works, Department of Transportation, and Design and Historic Preservation Section. No comments or conditions were received. Planning Division conditions of approval have been included in this report (Attachment B).

CONCLUSION:

It is staff's assessment, based on the analysis of the project, that the findings necessary for approving the Certificate of Exception can be made as provided in Attachment A of this report. The consolidation of the four existing parcels into one legal parcel would comply with all development standards of the Zoning Ordinance and policies of the General Plan. Any future development on the subject property would be required to conform to the development standards of the underlying zoning district and the Building Code in place at the time of any construction activity. Therefore, staff recommends that the Hearing Officer approve the application with the recommended findings in Attachment A and the recommended Conditions of Approval in Attachment B.

Attachments:

Attachment A: Recommended Findings

Attachment B: Recommended Conditions of Approval

ATTACHMENT A
SPECIFIC FINDINGS FOR CERTIFICATE OF EXCEPTION #387

Certificate of Exception – Lot Line Adjustment to consolidate four lots into one lot.

1. *The parcel resulting from the lot line adjustment will conform to the local general plan, any applicable specific plan, any applicable coastal plan, and zoning and building ordinances.* The proposed project, a mapping action consolidating four lots into one lot, is consistent with the General Plan Objectives and Policies. No increase in density or conflict with the land use designation would occur on the resultant lot. The consolidation would comply with General Plan Policy 1.2 (Targeted Growth), by creating a project site that is more suitable for development in an infill area of vacant or underutilized land. Additionally, the project would support General Plan Policy 11.1 (Business Expansion and Growth). The proposed consolidation would allow Volkswagen Pasadena to expand their inventory display area, supporting the continuance and growth of the existing use on the subject site. Any future development on the site would be required to conform to the development standards of the specific plan, underlining zoning district, and Building Code.

ATTACHMENT B
CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL FOR CERTIFICATE OF EXCEPTION #387

The applicant or successor in interest shall meet the following conditions:

General

1. The plan set submitted for building permits and/or future development shall substantially conform to the site/floor plans submitted and stamped "Approved at Hearing, November 17, 2021" except as modified herein.
2. The right granted under this application must be enacted within 24 months from the effective date of approval. It shall expire and become void, unless a renewal is approved in compliance with Section 16.18.060 of the Pasadena Municipal Code
3. The approval of this application authorizes the consolidation of parcels APN 5746-022-045, 5746-022-042, 5746-022-047, and 5746-022-070 into one legal parcel, as depicted on the approved site plan.
4. The applicant or successor in interest shall provide to the Zoning Administrator a legal description of the parcel resulting from the Lot Line Adjustment. The legal description shall be prepared by a licensed civil engineer or land surveyor and shall include the wet stamp and signature of the author. The legal description shall substantially conform to the plans submitted with this application.
5. The applicant or successor in interest shall be responsible for recording with the Los Angeles County Recorder a Certificate of Compliance that has been approved by the Zoning Administrator. . This lot line adjustment is not effective unless and until it is recorded with the Los Angeles County Recorder.
6. The applicant or successor in interest shall meet the applicable code requirements of all City Departments.