



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 24-031, **Version:** 1

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**PLN22-0030;** Consideration of Administrative Site Plan Review, Conditional Use Permit, and Administrative Exception (Height) to allow the construction and operation of a new 48-foot-tall approximately 79,840-square-foot warehouse/distribution facility on a 3.6-acre lot located at 1700 Doolittle Drive. Zoning District: Industrial General (IG); Alameda County Assessor's Parcel Number 079A-0385-002-06; W.P. Carey Inc. (applicant); Build (CA) QRS 12-24 Inc. (property owner) (Continued from May 4, 2023)

### **SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This item was previously noticed and scheduled for the May 4, 2023, meeting of the Board of Zoning Adjustments, but was continued to a date uncertain at the request of the applicant.

The applicant plans to construct an approximately 79,840-square-foot industrial building with approximately 12,400 square feet of office space on a mezzanine and approximately 67,440 square feet of warehouse space and 15 loading docks on a 3.6-acre site. The building would have a footprint of approximately 67,440 square feet and stand approximately 48 feet in height. There would be 86 passenger vehicle parking spaces and 10 bicycle parking spaces.

The applicant is requesting BZA approval of Administrative Site Plan Review to allow the development of the proposed industrial building, associated site improvements, and landscaping, an Administrative Exception (Height) to allow the building to be up to 48 feet in height, and a Conditional Use Permit to authorize -Warehouse - Storage Facilities and -Warehouse - Wholesale/Retail Distribution uses on site, which are conditionally permitted uses in the IG Zoning District. There is no tenant identified at this time. Pursuant to Zoning Code Section 5.06.400 and 5.12.108, the Administrative Site Plan Review, Conditional Use Permit, and Administrative Exception (Height) are being processed concurrently and the BZA is the decision maker as the highest review authority of the requested entitlements.

Staff recommends that the BZA adopt the attached Resolution approving the Administrative Site Plan Review, Conditional Use Permit, and Administrative Exception (Height) for the construction and operation of a new 48-foot-tall approximately 79,840-square-foot warehouse/distribution facility on a 3.6-acre lot located at 1700 Doolittle Drive, PLN22-0030, based on the recommended Findings of Fact and subject to the recommended Conditions of Approval.

### **RELATIONSHIP TO SURROUNDING AREA**

The subject property is located at 1700 Doolittle Drive, near the intersection of Williams Street. The project has street frontage along Doolittle Drive and Williams Street, but does not occupy the corner, which is a separate lot. The 3.6-acre site has been paved and used as a parking lot for many years.

The subject parcel and the adjacent properties are zoned IG. Properties across Doolittle Drive and

Williams Street are also zoned IG. Fire Station 10 is adjacent to the subject site along the Williams Street frontage. Properties southwest of the subject site across both Doolittle Drive and Williams Street are zoned Commercial Neighborhood (CN), Multiple Family Residential (RM 1800), and Residential Single Family (RS). The nearest residential properties are approximately 285 feet southwest of the site and are accessed from various residential streets that intersect with Doolittle Drive and Williams Street.

## **PROPOSAL**

The applicant proposes to construct an industrial building of approximately 79,840 square feet with approximately 12,400 square feet of office space on a mezzanine and approximately 67,440 square feet of warehouse space served by 15 loading docks. Eighty-six passenger vehicle parking spaces and 10 bicycle parking spaces would be provided.

The building would be approximately 48 feet in height. The exterior would be composed of concrete painted gray and white and blue-tinted glass. Landscaping is proposed along the Doolittle Drive frontage. Landscaping in the parking area will serve as a detention basin to collect and passively treat stormwater runoff. The main frontage and access are proposed along Doolittle Drive; access from Williams Street would be for passenger vehicles only. The project plans are included as Exhibit A to Attachment 1.

## **STAFF ANALYSIS**

### **Administrative Site Plan Review**

#### **Design Analysis**

The building is of a modern style, which is consistent with recently constructed industrial buildings in this area. It will be constructed primarily of concrete panels painted shades of white and gray. Windows will be comprised of blue-tinted glass panes separated by black mullions. The building will be taller than adjacent industrial buildings, and consistent with modern industrial buildings, which are designed to allow high-pile storage. The proposed building meets or exceeds the setback requirements, facilitating fire access. Adjacent structures are similarly located away from property lines.

Due to the site's configuration, it is not feasible for the 15 proposed loading docks to be completely screened from off-site views. The loading docks would be recessed and screened from view from Doolittle Drive by the building but would be somewhat visible from Williams Drive between Fire Station 10 and the building at the intersection of Doolittle Drive and Williams Street. The Hummus Heaven building situated at the corner of Doolittle Drive and Williams Street, which is not part of this proposal, will help shield the residential area from this site, as will commercial development along Doolittle Drive south of Williams Street. Trees are proposed throughout the site that will provide additional screening from off-site views.

The project has been reviewed by the Alameda County Fire Department, Engineering and Transportation Division, Building Division, and Environmental Services Division to ensure that the proposal would meet applicable health and safety requirements. Recommended conditions of

approval from reviewing departments and agencies are included as part of the draft Resolution for the project (Attachment 1).

## Development Standards

The proposed project has been evaluated for conformity with all applicable development standards. With the approval of the requested Administrative Exception (Height), the project would meet all applicable development standards in the Zoning Code.

*Setbacks and Emergency Vehicle Access:* The project has been designed to comply with applicable setback requirements for new buildings in the IG Zoning District. Doolittle Drive is planned to be widened by 12 feet along the property frontage. Due to existing development (Hummus Heaven) at the corner of Doolittle Drive and Williams Street, widening will not occur at this time. However, in anticipation of the widening, the property owner will make an offer of dedication to the City to accommodate the widening and the building is proposed to be built 10 feet from the eventual property line, consistent with the front setback requirements in the IG zone. The building is proposed to be set back six feet from the side and rear property lines, although there is no minimum side or rear setback required. Proposed emergency exits are proposed along the side and rear of the building.

*Lot Coverage and Floor Area Ratio:* The maximum allowed lot coverage in the IG zone is 75 percent; the building would cover 43 percent of the lot. The General Plan allows a floor area ratio of 1.0, and the proposal would have a floor area ratio of 0.51:1.

*Parking:* Required parking is 1 space per 300 square feet of office space and 1 space per 1,500 square feet of warehouse space, for a total of 86 required spaces. The applicant proposes 86 parking spaces, meeting the required number of spaces. One tree is required for every six parking spaces (15 trees) and 19 are proposed to be planted, exceeding the parking lot landscaping requirement. Additional landscaping will be provided along both frontages and in the parking lot. Parking for freight trucks will occur at each loading dock with no additional parking for freight trucks. Overnight parking will be prohibited. Bike parking will include five short-term and five long-term spaces.

The subject site is located adjacent to a stop for the North Loop of the San Leandro LINKS Shuttle, a free, public, first/last mile shuttle between the San Leandro BART station and West San Leandro. The LINKS Shuttle connects the site to the San Leandro BART station and runs on 30-minute headways, which will reduce the demand for parking on-site.

*Trash Enclosure:* A trash enclosure is proposed near the easterly property line, and would be screened from view from the public right of way.

*Lighting:* The site would be lit with shielded LEDs mounted on poles and wall sconces. Lighting from the site would add a nighttime glow in the immediate vicinity of the property. That glow will extend a few feet into the public right of way on Doolittle Drive and Williams Street, but is not expected to extend onto private properties across the street from the subject site.

*Landscaping:* The property frontages along Doolittle Drive and Williams Street will be landscaped with a mix of trees, shrubs, and groundcover, softening the building and parking areas. Along the

Doolittle Drive frontage, landscaping ranges from 10 feet to more than 16 feet in width. Ten feet of landscaping would line the Williams Street frontage. The parking lot would include 19 trees, exceeding the required 1:6 ratio. Including the landscaped stormwater treatment basins in the parking lot, 13 percent of the lot will be landscaped, exceeding the five percent minimum landscape area required in the IG District.

### **Administrative Exception (Height)**

The applicant has proposed a 48-foot-tall building to accommodate high-piled storage and allow maximum flexibility for potential tenants. The maximum building height in the IG zone is 50 feet with approval of an Administrative Exception (Height). The building would be consistent with the height of other buildings in San Leandro's industrial zones. The subject site lies in an Airport Safety Zone (Zone 6), in the Oakland International Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan, which allows buildings of up to 50 feet in height. Per a recommendation from the Airport Land Use Commission, a Condition of Approval has been proposed requiring the dedication of an aviation easement to protect the use of airspace above the building.

### **Conditional Use Permit**

The applicant is seeking a Conditional Use Permit to allow -Warehouse - Storage Facilities and - Warehouse - Wholesale/Retail Distribution uses in the proposed new building. As noted, the site is surrounded by other IG District properties. Staff recommends approval of the proposed Conditional Use Permit subject to compliance with recommended conditions of approval that address operational characteristics and ensure compatibility with adjacent uses.

### **Findings of Fact**

To recommend approval of the proposed Site Plan Review, Conditional Use Permit and Administrative Exception (Height), the BZA must make certain findings of facts and/or determination pursuant to the Zoning Code. Staff has analyzed the proposal and determined that the following required findings can be made.

#### **Site Plan Review**

1. The project is in compliance with the minimum requirements of this Code and are arranged as to achieve the intent of such requirements by providing a harmonious and orderly development that is compatible with its surroundings. Parking, loading, storage, and service areas are appropriately screened by building placement, orientation walls, and/or landscaping.

*The proposed project complies with all of the minimum requirements of the Zoning Code and is harmonious and compatible with the surrounding industrial developments. Parking, loading, and service areas are screened to the extent possible given the site configuration. The building is appropriately designed and similar in style to other modern industrial buildings. Landscaping along street frontages and in parking areas will soften the industrial nature of the development and provide further screening.*

2. The building(s) has(have) adequate articulation, with appropriate window placement, use of detailing, and/or changes in building planes to provide visual interest. The exterior materials,

finishes, detailing, and colors are compatible with those of surrounding structures. Visually incompatible elements, such as roof-mounted utilities, are fully screened from public view.

*Windows along the Doolittle Drive frontage are appropriately placed in office and warehouse areas. Color blocking and materials add additional interest and break up the building massing. Roof-mounted utilities will not be visible from public view.*

3. The landscaping complements the architectural design, with an appropriate balance of trees, shrubs, and living groundcovers, and provides adequate screening and shading of parking lots and/or driveways.

*The proposed site landscaping will complement the building design and provide adequate screening and shading of parking areas.*

4. Detail features, such as signs, fences, and lighting for buildings, parking lots, and/or driveways are visually consistent with the architectural and landscape design and minimize off-site glare.

*Signage will be subject to approval of a Master Sign Program and will be visually consistent with the architectural and landscape designs. Fencing will be set back more than 100 feet from both Doolittle Drive and Williams Street. The property will be lit with LEDs mounted in poles and sconces with LED lighting. Light at the property lines will not be obtrusive at the residences located south and west of the intersection of Doolittle Drive and Williams Street and will not contribute to off-site glare.*

### Conditional Use Permit

1. The proposed location of the use is in accord with the objectives of this Code and the purposes of the district in which the site is located.

*The subject site is located in the IG zone at the intersection of two truck routes. The proposed location of the use is in accord with the objectives of the Zoning Code and the purposes of the IG District, which includes “to provide and protect existing industrial sites and allow for continued operation of existing general industry, subject to performance standards and buffering requirements to minimize potential environmental impacts.”*

2. The proposed location of the use and the proposed conditions under which it would be operated or maintained will be consistent with the General Plan; will not be detrimental to the public health, safety or welfare of persons residing, or working in, or adjacent to, the neighborhood of such use; and will not be detrimental to properties or improvements in the vicinity, or to the general welfare of the City.

*The use will be compatible with the surrounding area, which is largely comprised of industrial uses. The proposed use would be subject to certain limitations through the recommended conditions of approval to avoid adverse effects on adjacent uses and properties. The proposed use as conditioned to operate in an orderly manner within the site and noise impacts would be minimal as the use would be subject to the City’s noise ordinance. The recommended conditions of approval will maintain the character of the industrial area, promote the use of the existing industrial area, and prevent impacts to the adjacent uses. Additionally, construction*

*activities will be required to comply with the Bay Area Air Quality Management District's basic control measures for reducing PM<sub>10</sub> construction emissions, Table 8-1). Other activities on site will be subject to various local and state laws. Compliance with applicable regulations and conditions of approval will ensure the project is not detrimental to nearby residents, employees, or the community at large. In addition, several General Plan policies would apply to the project.*

3. The proposed use will comply with the provisions of this Code, including any specific condition required for the proposed use in the district in which it would be located.

*The City will require ongoing compliance with all development standards and conditions of approval, as indicated in the Conditions of Approval for this project. Failure to adhere to Conditions of Approval is grounds for a revocation hearing.*

4. The proposed use will not create adverse impacts on traffic or create demands exceeding the capacity of public services and facilities, which cannot be mitigated.

*The proposed project has been reviewed with respect to its impact on traffic and other facilities and public services. Staff has determined that no impacts greater than those anticipated in the general plan and its environmental impact report would occur and the facility will not create adverse impacts on traffic or create demands exceeding the capacity of public services.*

#### Administrative Exception (Height)

1. The proposal would not be detrimental to public health, safety or welfare and would not cause undue damage, hardship, nuisance or other detriment to persons or property in the vicinity.

*The proposed administrative exception for height would not be detrimental to public health, safety or welfare and would not cause undue damage, hardship, nuisance or other detriment to persons or property in the vicinity due to the industrial nature of the surrounding area and the review by Airport Land Use Commission staff. The recommended conditions of approval will maintain the character of the industrial area, promote the use of the existing industrial area, and prevent impacts to the adjacent uses.*

#### **GENERAL PLAN CONFORMITY**

The proposal is consistent with numerous General Plan policies, as provided in Attachment 8 - General Plan Goals and Policies.

#### **PUBLIC OUTREACH**

A notice of public hearing was published for this project in the East Bay Times Daily Review newspaper, at City Hall and on the property, and by mail to property owners within 500 feet of the subject property. This item received standard noticing for the February 1, 2024 meeting of the Board of Zoning Adjustments.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

This project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per CEQA Guidelines, Section 15332, In-Fill Development Projects (Class 32). In order to qualify for a Class 32 exemption, a project must meet the criteria below and must not be subject to any of the exceptions to the exemption, which would preclude it from using the exemption.

1. The project is consistent with the applicable general plan designation and all applicable general plan policies as well as with applicable zoning designation and regulations.  
*As discussed above, the project is consistent with numerous General Plan policies. The project is consistent with the General Industrial General Plan Land Use designation, which supports a mix of industrial uses. The project would be developed in accordance with the development standards for the IG Zone.*
2. The proposed development occurs within city limits on a project site of no more than five acres substantially surrounded by urban uses.  
*The project would be located within city limits on a project site less than five acres that is substantially surrounded by urban uses.*
3. The project site has no value as habitat for endangered, rare, or threatened species.  
*The project site has no value as habitat for endangered, rare or threatened species because it is fully disturbed, and characterized by an existing paved asphalt surface.*
4. Approval of the project would not result in any significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality.  
*A Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) Screening Evaluation (Attachment 4) concluded that the project would not result in any significant traffic effects because the estimated VMT per employee associated with the project would not exceed the threshold of significance recommended by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research for VMT impacts (15-percent below existing regional VMT per employee). A detailed Noise Analysis (Attachment 5) concluded that the project would not result in any construction, operational or off-site traffic noise impacts that would exceed significance thresholds. The project would be required to comply with the City's Noise Ordinance. An Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions Analysis (Attachment 6) concluded that the project would not generate any significant impacts on air quality.*
5. The site can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services.  
*The project site is located in an area that can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services.*

A project may meet all the requirements to qualify for one or more categorical exemption, but if any of the exceptions set forth in CEQA Guidelines Section 15322 applies to a project, then it would preclude the project from using any of the exemptions. The exceptions to the exemptions do not apply to the project because the project site is not in an environmentally sensitive location. There are no significant cumulative impacts that are identified for the project, the construction and operation of

an industrial facility at an industrially zoned site is not unusual and will not have a significant effect on the environment, the project is not close to and would not impact a designated scenic highway, and it is not on any of the State's lists of hazardous sites.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Board of Zoning Adjustments adopt a Resolution approving Administrative Site Plan Review, Conditional Use Permit, and Administrative Exception (Height) for the construction and operation of a new 48-foot-tall approximately 79,840-square-foot warehouse/distribution facility on a 3.6-acre lot located at 1700 Doolittle Drive, PLN22-0030, based on the Findings of Fact and subject to the recommended Conditions of Approval. The proposal, as conditioned, conforms to the General Plan, Zoning Code, and required findings.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1: Resolution 2024-XXX

Exhibit A: Project Plans

Attachment 2: Vicinity Map

Attachment 3: Traffic Analysis, Urban Crossroads, September 1, 2022

Attachment 4: Vehicle Miles Traveled Screening Evaluation, Urban Crossroads, September 1, 2022

Attachment 5: Noise Impact Analysis, Urban Crossroads, June 9, 2022

Attachment 6: Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Evaluations, Urban Crossroads, December 12, 2022

Attachment 7: Mobile Source Health Risk Assessment, Urban Crossroads, August 16, 2023

Attachment 8: General Plan Goals and Policies

### **PREPARED BY:**

Cindy Lemaire, AICP, Senior Planner  
Planning Division