

## **MINUTES**

### **Regular PEQC Meeting of the Planning and Environmental Quality Commission Tuesday, August 19, 2025**

#### **1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

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The meeting was called to order at 7:02 PM.

#### **2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

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Commissioner Stephen P. Langley led the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### **3. ROLL CALL**

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Present: Chair Ronald Wright-Scherr; Vice-Chair Jules Kanhan; Commissioner Steve Sherman; and Commissioner Stephen P. Langley. Employees present: Director of Community Development Greg Tsujiuchi; Assistant Director of Community Development Jo-Anne Burns; Assistant City Attorney Rosemary Koo; Planning Assistant Kevin La; and Planning Assistant Dayana Nava.

Commissioners Deryl Henderson was away on an excused absence.

#### **4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

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##### **4.A. June 17, 2025**

**MOTION:** A motion was made by Commissioner Langley and seconded by Vice-Chair Kanhan to approve the minutes of the meeting held on June 17, 2025:

The motion passed by a vote of 3-0 (Yea: Kanhan, Wright-Scherr and Langley)

**Abstain:** Sherman

**Absent:** Henderson

##### **4.B. July 15, 2025**

**MOTION:** A motion was made by Vice-Chair Kanhan and seconded by Chair Wright-Scherr to approve the minutes of the meeting held on July 15, 2025:

The motion passed by a vote of 3-0 (Yea: Kanhan, Wright-Scherr and Sherman)

**Abstain:** Langley

**Absent:** Henderson

## **5. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

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Administrative Analyst I, Georgina Placido, asked if there were any comments from the public and noted for the record that no member of the public wished to speak to the Planning Commission at this time.

## **6. PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS**

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### **6.A. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT #17-24 AND CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT #7-24 TO ALLOW PRIVATE VEHICLE STORAGE FACILITIES WITHIN TWO GENERAL INDUSTRIAL (M- 2) ZONED PROPERTIES**

A request for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP #7-24), to allow the operations of private vehicle storage facilities within two existing industrial buildings (totaling 23,334 square feet), located in the General Industrial (M-2) zone, in accordance with Gardena Municipal Code Section 18.460.030.C.9.

Environmental Consideration: The proposed project is being considered for a categorical exemption from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15301 (Class 1 - Existing Facilities), in that it consists of minor alterations of the existing structure in order to operate the requested use.

APPLICANT: Matthew Farah, Westside Collection Car Storage

LOCATION: 1608-1612 West 139th Street (APN: 6102-014-067 and -068)

Director of Community Development Greg Tsujiuchi, Assistant Director of Community Development Jo-Anne Burns and Assistant City Attorney Rosemary Koo were present and available to answer any questions.

Planning Assistant Kevin La presented the staff report and displayed the Vicinity Map and Zoning Map for the project site at 1608-1612 West 139th Street, which indicates that the area is located in the General Industrial (M-2) zone.

Mr. La also displayed pictures of the existing property which are four industrial condominium complex buildings. He noted that the applicant is only utilizing the rear two.

Mr. La gave an overview of the site plan which includes two industrial buildings located on separate industrial condominium parcels: both parcels combined is 0.9 acres in lot size, 35 parking spaces are being provided on site, and a shade sail will be installed between buildings.

Mr. La went over the 1608 Floor Plan that will have 45-Bendpak double lifts with storage space for a total of 90 vehicles and 15 motorcycles, and a car wash and detail bay. He displayed a picture

of the BendPak lift, noting that the applicant is currently operating. However, a conditional use permit has been submitted in an effort to comply with the Gardena Municipal Code.

Mr. La went over the 1612 Floor Plan that will have 24 BendPak double lifts with storage space for 48 vehicles and 10 motorcycles, an office, and member's lounge.

Mr. La gave an overview of the analysis, the hours of operation (7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. all days of the week), and the parking ratio, noting that the ratio of warehousing requires 31 parking spaces. However, the property is providing 35 parking spaces, so there will be four additional spaces.

Mr. La noted that public hearing notices were duly advertised in the Gardena Valley News and mailed to owners and occupants within 300' of the project site on July 31, 2025, and to date, no public comments regarding the project have been received.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

- ♦ Conduct the public hearing;
- ♦ Receive testimony from the public; and
- ♦ **Adopt Resolution No. PC 12-25** making the necessary findings and approving EA #17-24 and CUP #7-24, subject to the attached Conditions of Approval; and
- ♦ Direct staff to file a Notice of Exemption.

Mr. La informed the Commission that both the staff and applicant are present and available to answer any questions.

Chair Wright-Scherr announced that the Public Hearing was open.

The applicant, Matthew Farah, owner and founder of Westside Collection Car Storage, was asked to approach the podium. He provided some background information about himself, his business and shared his passion for cars.

Chair Wright-Scherr asked if any Commissioner had any questions.

Vice-Chair Kanhan inquired if Mr. Farah had any clients from Gardena. Mr. Farah replied that he was confident he did, although he had not checked the addresses of all his clients.

Chair Wright-Scherr asked whether any of the vehicles operated on electric batteries due to fire concerns and if Mr. Farah had a plan in place in case of a fire. Mr. Farah explained that his business exclusively stores collector vehicles that are used occasionally or on weekends. While they do not have a formal policy against storing electric vehicles, such requests are rare, as

it is not a common demand. He noted that the buildings are fully equipped with sprinklers and described in detail the procedures that are followed when parking an electric vehicle indoors.

Vice-Chair Kanhan then asked the staff if there were any businesses in Gardena similar to Mr. Farah's. Mr. La responded that, currently, there are no entitlements for any private vehicle storage facilities for private collections in the city.

Commissioner Langley inquired whether Mr. Farah has considered implementing a policy for electric vehicles and if there will be security guards on-site 24/7. Mr. Farah responded that the buildings are heavily fortified, featuring an 8-foot concrete wall surrounding the entire property, along with heavy iron gates. He noted that staffing the building around the clock is not practical, as he has installed motion detector cameras throughout the property.

Mr. Farah mentioned that he would consider an EV policy if his insurance company recommended it, but he has not yet thought about a policy that prohibits EVs. He understands that EV fires can be concerning, but they are actually quite rare. He also noted that there is not much demand for storing EV vehicles.

City staff confirmed that no public comments were submitted, and no members of the public wished to speak on the item.

Chair Wright-Scherr announced that the Public Hearing was closed.

**MOTION: A motion was made by Commissioner Langley and seconded by Chair Wright-Scherr to Adopt Resolution No. PC 12-25, subject to the attached Conditions of Approval and Direct staff to file a Notice of Exemption:**

**The motion passed by a vote of 4-0 (Yea: Kanhan, Wright-Scherr, Langley and Sherman)**

**Absent: Henderson**

**Director Tsujiuchi stated that the decision made during the public hearing will be final unless a written request for an appeal is filed, with the appropriate fee, to the City Clerk within ten calendar days from the date of adoption, or City Council calls this matter for review within the same ten-day period.**

**6.B. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESMENT # 7-25, CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT #2-25 TO ALLOW ON-SITE SALES AND CONSUMPTION OF BEER AND WINE IN A GENERAL COMMERCIAL (C-3) ZONED PROPERTY.**

A request for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP #2-25), per section 18.32.030.B of the Gardena Municipal Code, to allow the on-site sale and consumption of beer and wine within a new restaurant located in the General Commercial (C-3) zone.

Environmental Consideration: The project is being considered for a categorical exemption from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15301 (Class 1 – Existing Facilities).

Applicant: Vicky's Bubbly Café

Project Location: 14782 Crenshaw Boulevard.

Director of Community Development Greg Tsujiuchi, Assistant Director of Community Development Jo-Anne Burns and Assistant City Attorney Rosemary Koo were present and available to answer any questions.

Planning Assistant Dayana Nava presented the staff report, informing the Commission that the project is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Guideline Sections: 15301- Existing Facilities and 15300.2- Not subject to exceptions to the exemptions in CEQA.

Ms. Nava displayed the Vicinity Map of the project site location at 14782 Crenshaw Boulevard and the Zoning Map, which indicates that the property is in a General Commercial (C-3) zone.

Ms. Nava presented the Site Plan, indicating that the new restaurant will be located in the existing commercial strip known as Crenshaw Plaza. She mentioned that the applicant will not make any exterior improvements that would alter the existing building's footprint or the exterior facade.

Ms. Nava displayed a picture of the current Crenshaw Plaza, which consists of various retail stores and businesses, along with a shared parking lot serving the shopping plaza.

Ms. Nava provided an overview of the Project Floor Plan, detailing modifications made to accommodate the new restaurant, noting that there will be 14 seats available for customers.

Ms. Nava went over the analysis of the proposed restaurant, confirming that its use is permitted in the General Commercial (C-3) zone. However, a conditional use permit is required for the sale of alcoholic beverages for on- or off-premises consumption. The applicant must apply for and obtain an alcohol beverage license type 42 for on-site consumption in a public premises. Vicky's Bubbly Cafe will operate from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.

Ms. Nava further explained the alcohol license types relevant to Census Tract 6035.00, which includes a total of six businesses that hold alcohol licenses: (2) Type 41 Licenses; (2) Type 47 Licenses; and (2) Type 21 Licenses.

Ms. Nava noted that public hearing notices were duly advertised in the Gardena Valley News and mailed to owners and occupants within 300' of the project site on July 31, 2025, and to date no public comments regarding the project have been received.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

- ♦ Conduct the public hearing;
- ♦ Receive testimony from the public; and
- ♦ **Adopt Resolution No. PC 11-25**, making the necessary findings and approving Conditional Use Permit #2-25; and
- ♦ Environmental Assessment #7-25, subject to the attached Conditions of Approval; and Direct staff to file a Notice of Exemption.

Ms. Nava informed the Commission that both the staff and applicant are present and available to answer any questions.

Assistant Director Jo-Anne Burns wanted to clarify that the public convenience and necessity is something that the applicant would have to justify to the Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC). It is not a finding that the city would have to make for restaurants.

Chair Wright-Scherr announced that the Public Hearing was open.

Dr. Prince E. Arinze, the applicant for Vicky's Bubbly Cafe, introduced himself and elaborated on his vision for a proposed Nigerian restaurant. He noted that his wife has been in the catering business for 15 years, and they have now decided to open their own restaurant with the hope of bringing more business to the City of Gardena.

City staff confirmed that no public comments were submitted, and no members of the public wished to speak on the item.

Chair Wright-Scherr announced that the Public Hearing was closed.

**MOTION: A motion was made by Vice-Chair Kanhan and seconded by Chair Wright-Scherr to Adopt Resolution No. PC 11-25, subject to the Conditions of Approval and Direct staff to file a Notice of Exemption:**

**The motion passed by a vote of 4-0 (Yea: Kanhan, Wright-Scherr, Langley and Sherman)**

**Absent: Henderson**

Director Tsujiuchi stated that the decision made during the public hearing will be final unless a written request for an appeal is filed, with the appropriate fee, to the City Clerk within ten calendar days from the date of adoption, or City Council calls this matter for review within the same ten-day period.

**6.C. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESMENT (EA) #2-25; SITE PLAN REVIEW (SPR) #1-25; TENTATIVE PARCEL MAP (TPM) #1-25 TO ALLOW THE CONSTRUCTION OF THREE NEW TOWNHOME UNITS IN A MEDIUM DENSITY MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL (R-3) ZONED PROPERTY.**

A request for approval of an Environmental Assessment (EA #2-25) Site Plan Review (SPR #1-25) and Tentative Parcel Map (TPM #1-25; Tentative Parcel Map No. 84583) to allow for the construction a multifamily residential condominium development consisting of three (3) three-story townhome units (1,684 sf living area per unit, exclusive of a 550 sf garage and 100 sf deck) on a 7,405 sf lot in the Medium Density Multi-Family Residential (R-3) zone in accordance with Section 18.44.010.A and Chapter 17.08 of the Garden Municipal Code (GMC).

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATION (EA #2-25): The proposed project is being considered for a categorical exemption from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Guidelines Section 15303(b) (Class 3 - New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures), in that it consists of the construction and location of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures.

Applicant: Mason Zojaji

Project Location: 15903 Brighton Avenue

Director of Community Development Greg Tsujiuchi, Assistant Director of Community Development Jo-Anne Burns and Assistant City Attorney Rosemary Koo were present and available to answer any questions.

Planning Assistant Dayana Nava presented the staff report regarding the project located at 15903 Brighton Avenue.

Ms. Nava displayed a Vicinity Map to show the location of the project site, along with a Zoning Map indicating that the property is zoned (R-3).

Ms. Nava then presented the Site Plan, which involves the demolition of a single-family residence and the construction of three proposed townhomes, each featuring a two-car garage.

Ms. Nava noted that the residential use complies with the parking space requirements outlined in Chapter 18.40 of the Gardena Municipal Code (GMC). Each unit will include a two-car garage as well as two open guest parking spaces.

Additionally, Ms. Nava showcased images of the modern contemporary design renderings provided by the applicant, highlighting the proposed stucco color. She also displayed photos of the existing building currently on the project site.

Ms. Nava explained that in accordance with the subdivision map act and Chapter 17.08 of the Gardena Municipal Code (GMC) and Tentative Parcel Map, it is required for the subdivision of four (4) or fewer lots/parcels. The tentative parcel map would allow a total of three (3) multi-family residential units, each with its own parcel created with air space rights. The proposed Tentative Parcel Map No. 84583 was shown on the screen.

Ms. Nava noted that public hearing notices were duly advertised in the Gardena Valley News and mailed to owners and occupants within 300' of the project site on July 31, 2025, and to date no public comments regarding the project have been received.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

- ♦ Conduct the public hearing;
- ♦ Receive testimony from the public; and
- ♦ **Adopt Resolution No. PC 10-25, approving Environmental Assessment #2-25, Site Plan Review #1-25, and Tentative Parcel Map #1-25;** subject to the attached conditions of approval; and
- ♦ Direct staff to file a Notice of Exemption.

Ms. Nava informed the Commission that both the staff and applicant are present and available to answer any questions.

Chair Wright-Scherr asked if any members of the Commission had questions.

Chair Wright-Scherr then asked if any of the units were available for purchase by individual owners rather than for rental. Ms. Nava confirmed that the units are only for sale.

Chair Wright-Scherr announced that the Public Hearing was open.

Mr. Mason Zojaji, the applicant, introduced himself and described the proposed project, mentioning other cities where he has completed work.

Vice-Chair Kanhan inquired whether the proposed project would have only one entrance and if the driveway would be wide enough to support that entrance. Mr. Zojaji confirmed that there will be one entrance and assured that the driveway is wide enough.



Chair Wright-Scherr permitted Mr. Teh-Chen Song, a resident, to voice his concerns regarding the project. Mr. Song expressed his excitement about the new construction but raised issues about a temporary fence in front of the project site that encroaches onto his property line.

Mr. Zojaji clarified that the fence is temporary and is intended to ensure the safety of the site. He also informed the Commissioners that the property has already been surveyed, and the property lines have been determined and outlined.

Chair Wright-Scherr asked if the city has construction methods in place to ensure the project runs smoothly and keeps neighboring properties safe. Ms. Nava responded that the city recommends the applicant hire a land surveyor to accurately determine and officially document the property lines, especially since Mr. Zojaji is proposing vinyl fencing around the property perimeter.

Director Tsujiuchi informed Mr. Song that a Code Enforcement Officer would be sent to the property to assess whether the temporary fence is encroaching on his property or that of another neighbor. He assured Mr. Zojaji that if any issues are found with the temporary fence, he would be notified so he could address the concerns. Mr. Song was asked to leave his contact information with the staff.

Vice-Chair Kanhan then asked about the start and completion dates for the construction. Mr. Zojaji replied that he would begin as soon as the city allows him to proceed.

City staff confirmed that no additional public comments were submitted, and no members of the public wished to speak on the item.

Chair Wright-Scherr announced that the Public Hearing was closed.

There were no additional questions or comments made by any member of the Commission.

**MOTION: A motion was made by Vice-Chair Kanhan and seconded by Commissioner Langley to Adopt Resolution No. PC 10-25, Approving Site Plan Review #1-25, and Tentative Parcel Map #1-25; subject to the Conditions of Approval and Direct staff to file a Notice of Exemption:**

**The motion passed by a vote of 3-1 (Yea: Kanhan, Wright-Scherr, and Langley; Noes: Sherman)**

**Absent: Henderson**

**Director Tsujiuchi stated that the decision made during the public hearing will be final unless a written request for an appeal is filed, with the appropriate fee, to the City Clerk within ten calendar days from the date of adoption, or City Council calls this matter for review within the same ten-day period.**

## **7. OTHER ITEMS**

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No items.

## **8. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

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Director of Community Development, Greg Tsujiuchi, announced upcoming city events.

1. 22nd Annual Jazz Festival, Sunday, August 24, 2025, at Rowley Park. Gates open at 9:00 a.m.
2. Gardena's 95th Anniversary on Saturday, September 13, 2025; 6:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. at City Hall Lawn.
3. Gardena's Food, Wine & Brew, Saturday, September 27, 2025, from 12:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. at City Hall Lawn.

Mr. La reminded Commissioners about receiving tickets for both events and to inform staff if they are interested in attending the events. Director Tsujiuchi provided clarification about the number of tickets that each Commissioner can receive.

## **9. PLANNING & ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS**

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1. CHAIR WRIGHT-SCHERR - He stated that he attended the August 5th Summer Block Party and Backpack Giveaway event and was happy to see that everyone was having a great time.
2. COMMISSIONER LANGLEY - No items to report.
3. VICE-CHAIR KANHAN - He asked the Commissioners that if they are not interested in attending the events he would appreciate receiving their tickets.
4. COMMISSIONER SHERMAN - No items to report.

## **10. ADJOURNMENT**

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Chair Wright-Scherr adjourned the meeting at 8:04 PM.

APPROVED:

Respectfully submitted,



RONALD WRIGHT-SCHERR, CHAIR  
Planning and Environmental Quality Commission

By:



GREG TSUJIUCHI, SECRETARY  
Planning and Environmental Quality Commission