



STAFF REPORT

9/26/2023

AGENDA ITEM

**TO: HONORABLE MAYOR
AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

**FROM: CARLO TOMAINO
CITY MANAGER**

**BY: COLLEEN T. DOAN
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR**

**CARLOS LUIS
PLANNING MANAGER**

SUBJECT: PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER AN AMENDMENT TO CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT 00-05 FOR AN EXISTING SELF-STORAGE FACILITY AT 2901 EAST PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY, AMENDING EXISTING AND ADDING NEW CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL AND FINDING THAT SAID ACTION IS CATEGORICALLY EXEMPT FROM THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) PURSUANT TO STATE CEQA GUIDELINES SECTION 15301

Summary:

Form of Notice: Notice was published in the Signal Tribune newspaper per Government Code §65091(a)(4) on September 15, 2023; mailed to property owners and residents within a 300' radius of the subject site on September 15, 2023; and posted in accordance with Signal Hill Municipal Code Section 1.08.010 at City Hall, Signal Hill Library, Reservoir Park, and Discovery Well Park on September 15, 2023.

Chis Mata, the authorized agent on behalf of the property owner, Signal Hill Self Storage LP, is requesting an amendment to Conditional Use Permit 00-05 to modify existing and add new conditions of approval for an existing self-storage facility located at 2901 East Pacific Coast Highway within Area 2 of SP-10, Pacific Coast Highway Specific Plan zoning district.

Recommendation:

Adopt a resolution approving the amendment to Conditional Use Permit 00-05 for the existing self-storage facility, entitled:

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SIGNAL HILL, CALIFORNIA, APPROVING AMENDMENTS TO CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT 00-05 FOR AN EXISTING SELF-STORAGE FACILITY AT 2901 EAST PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY WITHIN AREA 2 OF SP-10, PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY SPECIFIC PLAN AND FINDING THAT SAID ACTION IS CATEGORICALLY EXEMPT FROM THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) PURSUANT TO STATE CEQA GUIDELINES SECTION 15301

Fiscal Impact:

There is minimal fiscal impact associated with the recommended action.

Strategic Plan Objectives:

Goal No. 5: Ensure an enhanced quality of life for the residents.

Goal No. 6: Promote a transparent and open government.

Background:

On May 9, 2000, the Planning Commission considered Zoning Ordinance Amendment (ZOA) 00-05, Conditional Use Permit (CUP) 00-05, and Site Plan and Design Review 00-09 to conditionally permit self-storage facilities within Area 2 of SP-10, Pacific Coast Highway Specific Plan. At the conclusion of the public hearing, the Planning Commission recommended City Council adoption and approval of the proposed project.

On June 6, 2000, the City Council held a public hearing and considered the Planning Commission recommendation, and adopted and approved the ZOA, CUP, and Site Plan and Design Review, conditionally permitting the self-storage facility; a U-Haul rental use was not included as part of the CUP request or project approval.

Per City business license records, the business has operated since May of 2002. Operations of the business are subject to conditions of approval for CUP 00-05 which include site maintenance, operational standards, and hours of operation (Attachment A). There is no record of when the U-Haul rental business was established. Subsequently, in 2012, the current operators of the facility purchased the business. The current operators report that at the time they purchased the business, the U-Haul rental was part of the operations.

The City performs annual inspections of all properties with a CUP; inspections determine if businesses are operating in compliance with conditions of approval or if there are violations or issues of concern. If the inspection identifies violations or other issues, the City issues the business a request for corrective actions. In previous years, inspections for the self-storage facility resulted in requests for improved property maintenance (i.e., removal of trash and debris, removal of graffiti, maintenance of landscaping, storage of vehicles, and rodent control). The City had not received concerns regarding the U-Haul truck rental business prior to 2021.

In 2021, the City received a concern regarding the unlocked U-Haul trucks being used as overnight shelters. In 2022, the City received concerns from neighboring residents regarding the self-storage business including:

- Truck rental operations
- Customer and other unauthorized access to facility occurring from Ellis Avenue
- 24-hour access to the self-storage facility
- Illegal parking for loading and unloading by patrons of the self-storage facility
- Trash and debris left on property and in surrounding areas (i.e., sidewalks, parkways, streets, etc.)
- Vehicle gate on Ellis Avenue left unlocked after business hours
- Loitering in and around the self-storage facility
- Illicit activities

During preparation of the 2022 CUP review, staff determined the U-Haul truck rental business was related to the complaints received from residents throughout the year. In addition, staff determined the truck rental use was not approved as a permitted use under the CUP. Truck rental is listed as a prohibited use in the SP-10, Pacific Coast Highway Specific Plan zoning district.

On January 17, 2023, staff presented the CUP Annual Report to the Planning Commission. One resident spoke during the public comment and reported issues of concern regarding the operations, maintenance, and oversight of the self-storage facility and U-Haul rental business. As a result of staff's analysis of the self-storage facility, observed issues of concern, and resident concerns, staff recommended to the Planning Commission that the existing CUP 00-05 for Signal Hill Self Storage be brought back to a future public hearing with amended conditions of approval as follows:

- Discontinuance of the truck rental business
- Increased security lighting and cameras
- Increased oversight of operations

On January 24, 2023, staff presented the CUP Annual Report to the City Council (Attachment B). The same resident who spoke at the Planning Commission meeting also provided public comment at the City Council meeting, reporting issues of concern regarding the operations, maintenance, and oversight of the self-storage facility and U-Haul rental business. City Council directed staff to work with the business operator and address reported and observed concerns, and to bring CUP 00-05 back to a public hearing with amended conditions.

On February 17, 2023, the City Manager and Community Development Director met with the owner of Signal Hill Self Storage and explained the U-Haul truck rental business was not part of the approved CUP and not a permitted use in the SP-10 Pacific Coast Highway Specific Plan. Although the business owners' purchase apparently included the truck rental use, staff communicated the use would be discontinued as soon as practical. The City provided the business with a 60-day time limit to provide the owner time to manage the discontinuance, including required notification to employees. The business owner discontinued the truck rental operations within the 60-day period.

On August 15, 2023, the Planning Commission considered the proposed CUP amendment and thirty (30) new conditions of approval for Conditional Use Permit (CUP) 00-05. During the public hearing, the Planning Commission heard testimony from the operators and owner of Signal Hill Self Storage and comments from three members of the public. The business operators confirmed they reviewed all proposed forty-two (42) conditions of approval and agreed with all except for conditions No. 8, 9,

and 13. For City Council's information, staff is providing public comments and responses to comments in the analysis section of this report.

Analysis:

The property owner, Signal Hill Self Storage LP, authorized Chris Mata to act as agent for the project.

Site Description

The site is located on the north side of East Pacific Coast Highway, between Temple Avenue to the west, Orizaba Avenue to the east, Ellis Avenue adjacent to the northwest, and Gladys Avenue to the north. The site measures approximately 24,071 square feet and is currently developed with an existing self-storage facility, office space for the self-storage, parking garage, and surface parking spaces. The site also includes a gated driveway located on the angular northern portion of the site which is the vacated portion of Ellis Avenue. The site previously housed a convalescent hospital; the hospital was converted into a self-storage facility in 2002.



The existing zoning designations and land uses for the project site and adjacent properties are as follows:

| Direction | Zoning Designation | Existing Land Use |
|--------------|---|---|
| Project Site | Area 2, of SP -10, Pacific Coast Highway Specific Plan | Existing self-storage facility, garage parking, and surface parking |
| North | Residential High Density (RH) and SP -15 Cityview Residential Specific Plan | Multi-Family Residential Uses |
| South | City of Long Beach | Commercial Uses |
| East | SP-18 Pacificwalk Residential Specific Plan | Multi-Family Residential Uses |
| West | Area 2, of SP -10, Pacific Coast Highway Specific Plan | Motel Use |

Land Use

Pursuant to Section II, subsection 4 of the Pacific Coast Highway Specific Plan, self-storage facilities (public) are allowed subject to approval of a CUP. Self-storage facilities also must comply with development standards including off-street parking.

Signal Hill Self Storage Operations

The operations of a site with a CUP are governed by the Conditions of Approval, approved at the time the City grants the CUP. Please refer to Exhibit A of the CUP Resolution for the comprehensive amended and new Conditions of Approval for Amended CUP 00-05.

Signal Hill Self Storage occupies the entire building as the single tenant. As identified on the business operation plan submitted by Signal Hill Self Storage dated July 31, 2023, (Attachment C), the facility includes a total of 440 storage rental units available to the public for storage of personal or business items. Signal Hill Self Storage is open to the public seven days a week (closed on federal holidays) as follows:

- Monday through Friday 9:30 a.m. to 5:45 p.m.
- Saturday 9:30 a.m. to 5:45 p.m.
- Sunday 9:00 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.

The business operations plan submitted by the applicant provides that the business may operate with up to three employees (one Facility Operations Leader and two to three Operations Staff Members) during operating hours. Per Condition No. 8 of the existing CUP conditions, the self-storage component is allowed to operate from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.; however, the retail and office use is allowed to operate 24 hours a day. The recommended amended Condition No. 6 reflects the hours of operation provided in the business operation plan submitted by Signal Hill Self Storage, allowing the following business hours, and prohibiting any 24-hour operations:

- *Monday through Friday 9:30 a.m. to 5:45 p.m.*
- *Saturday 9:30 a.m. to 5:45 p.m.*
- *Sunday 9:00 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.*

- *24-hour operations shall be prohibited*
- *Closed on Federal Holidays*

As stated in the business operation plan, access to the facility is restricted during non-business hours. Each tenant of the facility is currently provided with a pin code granting access to the facility during business hours only. Since access is restricted during non-business hours, a new recommended Condition No. 7 would require the following:

Replacement of all pin code door locking systems with locks that remain locked from the exterior during both business and non-business hours. All doors shall be equipped with panic hardware. The operator/property owner shall confirm with Los Angeles County Fire Department and the City of Signal Hill Building and Safety Division if permits are required.

Only interior access (i.e., opening of doors) would be allowed to the facility during business hours. An associated recommended Condition No. 8 would require:

All self-storage patrons shall enter and check in through the front office for initial access to their storage units. Patron access onto Ellis Avenue shall only be provided from the interior of the self-storage facility once patrons have checked in at the front office. The pedestrian gate located on Ellis Avenue at the northwest corner of the property would be unlocked during business hours for patrons to access the main office after parking inside the gated drive aisle north of Ellis Avenue. The main doors located on the westerly side of the property and along the interior walkway from the pedestrian gate that provide access to the storage units shall remain locked from the outside.

The aerial photo below identifies the approximate locations of all exterior access doors and gates to the facility as well as the adjacency to the residential uses along Ellis Avenue. As noted in this report, the Conditions of Approval recommended by staff are intended to reduce the interaction between the business activities and the residential uses. This section of the report will specifically discuss staff's recommendations in response to resident concerns beginning with a condition that all doors along Ellis Avenue no longer have coded access and would be locked at all times with access permitted only from inside the facility.



An associated recommended Condition No. 11 would follow Signal Hill Self Storage's protocol of restricting elevator access without manager authorization, as provided in its security plan as follows:

All stairways providing access from the parking garage to the self-storage facility shall remain locked from the exterior and tenants shall only be allowed access after checking in with the front office. Stairway doors shall be equipped with panic hardware.

Condition No. 12 is recommended for all pedestrian gates, including the pedestrian gate on Ellis Avenue and the driveway gate as follows:

All pedestrian gates and the driveway gate shall remain locked during non-business hours. The pedestrian gate adjacent to Ellis Avenue shall have the locking system replaced with a system that provides pedestrian access during business hours in order to provide access to and from the surface parking lot located on private property to the facility. Pin code locking systems shall not be allowed on gates.

Condition No. 12 would require doors and gates to be equipped with panic hardware to ensure egress in the event of an emergency. The recommended condition further requires confirmation of Building and Fire Code compliance from the City's Building and Safety Division and the Los Angeles County Fire Department prior to initiating replacement of locks and panic hardware. The purpose of the recommended conditions is to reduce and further monitor customer activity on Ellis Avenue and into the storage unit areas and to require that all patrons check in at the office prior to accessing the site.

The business operation plan also states tenants are instructed where to load and unload items; however, exact locations are not clearly identified. A new Condition No. 13 is recommended requiring:

The operator/property owner shall require all loading and unloading of tenant items take place behind the gated driveway located off Ellis Avenue or in the parking garage located on the southerly portion (adjacent to Pacific Coast Highway) of the property.

Regarding the recommended new Condition No. 10 that would require tenants of the facility to check in with self-storage staff located in the office prior to accessing the facility, the recommended conditions further require:

A record of tenant access shall be maintained by staff and provided during each CUP annual review or upon request from City staff. Staff shall confirm person(s) are tenants of the facility prior to granting access. Staff shall inform tenants where to park vehicles for loading and unloading prior to accessing the facility. Information signage shall be posted on each access door located on the Ellis Avenue side of the property directing patrons to check in with staff in the office before accessing the facility.

During the CUP annual inspection, staff observed the site to have trash and debris in and around adjacent areas. There have also been complaints of trash and debris left on sidewalks, parkways, streets, and on private property. According to Signal Hill Self Storage's business operation plan, staff is instructed to maintain a clear zone adjacent to all fencing, including trash, storage carts, unauthorized vehicles on the facility and at the facility entrance. Existing Condition No. 4 requires private and public property within a 200-foot radius of the site to be maintained in a clean and sanitary state, free of trash and debris, including, but not limited to paper, cups, cans, bottles, and cardboard, which through its accumulation would create an adverse impact on surrounding properties. The condition requires Signal Hill Self Storage to routinely sweep the parking area and sidewalk adjacent to the facility and within 200' radius; and collect trash deposited in provided receptacles on an as needed basis to avoid overflow conditions. However, the inclusion of the 200-foot radius requires that the business clean/maintain other private property located in both Signal Hill and Long Beach belonging to other private owners, such as the adjacent businesses on Pacific Coast Highway, motel, and residential property, along with the maintenance of the roadway on Pacific Coast Highway. In discussion with the Planning Commission at the August 15, 2023, meeting, the Planning Commission recommended removal of the distance requirement so that the business owner is not held responsible for maintaining neighboring private or public properties.

To address property maintenance concerns, Condition No. 15, which would replace existing Condition No. 4 is proposed to read:

The operator/property owner shall maintain the site, including private and public property clean, free from trash and debris, neat, and in an orderly manner at all times. This includes all adjacent driveways, curbs, gutters, and sidewalks (public right-of-way). The property owner and business operator shall require staff to physically monitor the interior and exterior of the property including adjacent public right-of-way areas every hour during business hours of operation and maintain written and photo logs of monitoring. All trash and debris shall be removed and properly disposed of and shall be subject to the requirements of Chapter 8.12 of the Signal Hill Municipal Code.

To assist with property maintenance, a new Condition No. 16 is recommended:

The property owner/operators shall provide and post a telephone number along the northerly side of the building which members of the public may contact to report maintenance or security issues during all business hours of operation.

Business operations would be limited to storage unit/locker rentals, an administrative office for the self-storage facility, retail associated with the self-storage facility, and limited vehicle storage if surplus parking exists on the property. Vehicle storage would be required to be located inside the parking garage; no other business activities would be allowed, including but not limited to truck rentals and moving equipment rentals. New Conditions No. 17 and No. 21 are included to limit business operations.

The illegal parking reported by residents occurs on public streets. The following recommended Condition No. 14 is included to help eliminate illegal parking by patrons:

The operator/property owner shall provide written instructions identifying locations on private property where the parking, loading, and unloading for patrons may occur. Signs shall also be installed on the interior of the storage facility at all entrances and exits informing patrons parking, loading, and unloading may only take place on private property, inside the gated drive aisle off Ellis Avenue or inside the parking garage of the facility.

The Signal Hill Police Department (SHPD) is aware of resident concerns regarding illegal parking and are prepared to address and cite illegal activities as they see them occur and determine appropriate as a citable offense. Importantly, staff would note, SHPD receives numerous calls for service which are categorized and responded to based upon levels of priority, including the assessed emergency of the call, as well officer availability.

As part of the approval in 2000, Condition No. 5 required the operators to execute a Landscaping and Maintenance Agreement in a form acceptable to the City Attorney. After review of the project file, no agreement was included in the file. Staff recommends Condition No. 20 for maintenance to include the following language:

The property owner/operator shall provide the City with a copy of a previously executed agreement or shall submit a draft for the City to review and proceed to execute an approved agreement.

Other new conditions of approval proposed include that the facility shall maintain regular pest and rodent control in and around the facility; prohibit outdoor storage of materials, personal items, commercial items, vehicles, recreational vehicles, etc.; and prohibit installation of vending machines or other coin operated machines.

A matrix (Attachment D) is included, outlining the proposed changes to the existing conditions.

Signal Hill Self Storage Security Plan

Signal Hill Self Storage submitted a security plan dated July 31, 2023, (Attachment E), and identified

the following security protocols for the facility:

- Restricted access to the building by issuing individualized access codes to tenants of each level of the facility
- Video surveillance of the facility
- Hourly walkthroughs of the facility by staff
- Monitoring of parking areas
- Inspections of storage unit locks and verification if anyone is using the unit as habitable space
- Restricted elevator use

After business hour protocols include:

- Alarms (burglary and fire)
- Locked doors
- Closing of parking lot areas
- Video surveillance on 24-hour basis
- Night patrol including one drive by patrol by COMPatrol Security Services
- Additional lighting
- Locked gates

To further improve security operations, staff recommends deleting bullet one of the above proposed security plan items pursuant to new Conditions No. 7 and 8 which replace the pin entry system with locked doors only accessible from the inside following check-in at the office. Staff also recommends the following additional security conditions be included or modified:

- *The property owner and business operator shall submit a site plan and floor plan identifying locations of all existing surveillance camera locations.*
- *Video surveillance recordings shall be made available to Signal Hill Police Department (SHPD) upon request.*
- *Overnight patrol provided by private security company shall be at least twice a night. Security shall monitor the entire property including north and south sides of the facility. Security shall physically inspect and check gate and door locks to ensure these remain locked. Security company shall maintain a daily log that can be made available at the request of the City.*
- *At the discretion of the Chief of Police of the SHPD or the Community Development Director, additional security measures can be required, including on-site security services, if on-going criminal or nuisance activities are reported.*

Signal Hill Self Storage Initiated Measures

Signal Hill Self Storage replaced the exterior lighting along Ellis Avenue. The interior and exterior of the facility is monitored by video surveillance 24 hours a day. During a site inspection, cameras and upgraded lighting were observed along Ellis Avenue. Signal Hill Self Storage also retained a new manager for the facility responsible for the oversight of employees and the site. The new manager has been in communication with staff providing requested information and materials, including the

business operation plan and facility architectural plans (Attachment F).

Off-Street Parking

Pursuant to the off-street parking requirements of SP-10, a minimum of 26 parking spaces are required for a self-storage facility. Off-street parking requirements are also provided in the following manner:

- Two off-street parking spaces for caretaker's unit
- Three off-street parking spaces per 100 storage units
- One off-street parking space for every 50 square feet of office space

The existing facility has a total of 20 spaces located within the parking garage adjacent to Pacific Coast Highway. There are also a total of six parking spaces located along the private driveway off Ellis Avenue. The site does not have a caretaker's unit; however, there is a restroom that includes a shower; staff included a condition (Condition No. 35) requiring removal of the shower.

Should the operators/property owner explore other parking stall configurations, staff also recommends Condition No. 36, which would require submittal of plans to the City for review of an alternative parking configuration to verify if additional parking stalls can be accommodated and that the minimum number of parking stalls are complied with:

The operator/property owner shall submit plans to the City for review if an alternative parking configuration is proposed. Plans shall be reviewed and approved prior to commencing restriping.

Staff Responses to the Self-Storage Operators Public Comments from the August 15, 2023, Planning Commission Public Hearing

The self-storage operators had the following concerns with the proposed conditions identified below. Staff does not share the concerns raised by the operator nor does staff recommend modifying the proposed Conditions of Approval. The operator's concerns are shown in normal font, and staff responses are in *italic* font:

Condition No. 8 - Requiring patrons to enter and check in with the front office for initial access to the self-storage facility. Operators stated that requiring patrons to walk approximately 140-feet from the rear entry of the facility to the front office would not be conducive to the business. Operators requested to convert the time restricted parking along Ellis Avenue into a loading and unloading zone for patrons of the facility.

- *One of the main goals of the newly added conditions of approval is to remove as much business-related activity from Ellis Avenue as possible, due to its proximity to the adjacent residential neighborhood.*
- *Patrons would have the option of parking in the parking garage with entry from Pacific Coast Highway, or in the gated parking lot located off Ellis Avenue on the self-storage property. Patrons parking in the garage would walk between seven and 60 feet from their parking*

space to the front office. Garage parking would be required to be maintained for patron parking only once all existing stored vehicles are removed from the site as required by Condition No. 19.

- *The City's Traffic Safety Committee considered and is recommending prohibiting parking on the southeast side of Ellis Avenue adjacent to the self-storage facility. The Traffic Safety Committee will prepare a Resolution to change the green curb (two-hour parking) to red curb and add new signage prohibiting parking along Ellis Avenue, for City Council consideration at a future meeting.*

Condition No. 9 - Requiring patrons to check in at the front office prior to accessing the facility and requiring operators/property owners to maintain written tenant access logs to confirm person(s) or company are tenants. Operators stated that requiring patrons to walk around the building does not work and would be an inconvenience to their patrons.

- *This condition would ensure only authorized access to the facility by verifying at check-in that individuals are current tenants. Patrons would have the option of parking in the parking garage located along Pacific Coast Highway or in the gated parking lot located off Ellis Avenue. Patron parking in the garage would be in close proximity to the office.*

Condition No. 13 - Requiring all loading and unloading of tenant items take place behind the gated driveway located off Ellis Avenue or in the parking garage adjacent to Pacific Coast Highway. Operators stated that if loading/unloading parking area is removed on Ellis Avenue, all patrons would be required to park inside the gated parking area which would create a circulation issue. Specifically, 26-foot trucks would not be able to enter or exit the private property if cars are parked for loading and unloading. Furthermore, the 26-foot trucks would not be able to park in the garage parking due to ceiling height restrictions.

- *If cars are parked in designated stalls, large trucks would be able to access the site and park on private property to load and unload items. Specifically, large vehicles would be able to utilize the gated parking area located off Ellis Avenue. The applicant would also have the option of proposing an alternative parking stall configuration. Alternate parking configurations may yield additional circulation and access to the site for both standard vehicles and large vehicles.*

The owner of Signal Hill Self Storage also requested four parking permits to allow their employees to park in the permit parking on Ellis Avenue.

- *Parking permits are only issued to residents or guests of residents on Ellis Avenue.*

Staff Responses to Resident Public Comments from the August 15, 2023, Planning Commission Public Hearing

The following are issues raised from members of the public and staff responses in *italic* font:

Validity of Existing CUP

- *The CUP is valid, and the City issued Building Permits in October of 2001, approximately one year from CUP approval in 2000. The CUP project would have been determined to have commenced once permits were issued for the conversion of the convalescent hospital into the self-storage facility.*

Parking Enforcement

- *The Signal Hill Police Department (SHPD) is aware of the resident concerns regarding illegal parking and is prepared to address and cite illegal activities as they see them occur and determine that citations are appropriate. Police Officers regularly exercise discretion in the field regarding whether a potential violation warrants a citation. Importantly, SHPD receives numerous calls for service which are categorized and responded to based upon levels of priority, including the assessed emergency of the call, as well as officer availability and discretion.*

Pest/Rodent Infestation

- *The County of Los Angeles Public Health inspected the property three times in 2023. Although the Health Department provided corrections to the self-storage operator, it is worth noting County Health reports do not identify a rodent infestation on the property. Reports required corrective actions, and during the Health Department's third inspection, corrective actions were observed to have been completed and no further actions were required (Attachment G). Condition No. 30 would require regularly scheduled pest and rodent control measures be performed by a professional company and proof of regular pest control would be included in the CUP annual review.*

Illegal Dumping of Trash/Debris

- *Condition No. 15 would require the operators maintain the site and adjacent public right-of-way clean, free from trash and debris, and in an orderly manner at all times. The operators would also be required to physically monitor the property and adjacent public rights-of-way every hour and maintain written and photo logs of the monitoring.*

Access to Planning Commission Agenda and Meeting Material

- *In accordance with the public notice, agenda and meeting materials were made available on the City's website on August 11, 2023. In addition, on August 11, 2023, staff emailed a link to the City's Website and agenda packet to residents who requested a copy.*

Unauthorized Access to Self-Storage Facility

- *Condition No. 9 would require tenants of the facility to check in with the office prior to accessing the self-storage facility. Employees of the self-storage facility would verify and maintain a written log of persons accessing the site to ensure they are current tenants. Condition No. 7 would also require the removal of all pin code door locking systems with locks that remain locked from the outside. After a successful check in, locked doors would be accessible only from inside the self-storage facility.*

U-Haul Business

- *The City determined the U-Haul truck rental business to be unpermitted and was discontinued by the operators. Condition No. 21 would prohibit truck rentals and moving equipment rentals from operating in conjunction with the self-storage facility.*

Compliance Control

If numerous reports of concern from the community continue and are documented as nuisances, the CUP may be scheduled for re-review by the City Council, which may further modify the conditions of approval, or ultimately revoke the CUP, pursuant to SHMC Section 20.64.120. The City's longstanding practice is to work with the operator/property owner in obtaining voluntary compliance based on reported or documented concerns. However, if a property owner fails to take corrective actions to serious concerns in a timely manner, staff has the option to recommend initiating the revocation process based on documented evidence of repeated violations as part of the annual review process.

CEQA Categorical Exemption

This project is categorically exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Article 19, Section 15301 Class 1 as an Existing Facility (Class 1 Exemption). The proposed project qualifies for the Class 1 categorical exemption because the project does not involve expansion of the existing building or require offsite utility improvements and would allow the continuation of an existing self-storage facility, subject to new or amended conditions of approval (Attachment H).

None of the exceptions to the exemptions as set forth in State CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 apply. Specifically, the proposed Project:

- a. Is not located in a particularly sensitive environment. The subject site is located in an urbanized area where all necessary public services and facilities are available, and the surrounding area is not environmentally sensitive.
- b. There is no possibility of a cumulative impact of the same type of project in the same place over time. The proposed Project involves the continuation of a self-storage facility, subject to new or amended conditions of approval, in an existing commercial building. Once the Project is completed, the likelihood of a successive project on this site is low and probability of a cumulative impact is low.
- c. No Significant Effect. No adverse environmental impacts will occur as a result of the proposed Project's continued use of the existing building as a self-storage facility.
- d. Would not damage scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway.

- e. Is not located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.
- f. Would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

If the City Council approves the project, staff would file a Notice of Exemption with the County Clerk's Office and the Office of Planning Research within five business days of such approval.

Conclusion

Signal Hill Self Storage was constructed from an existing convalescent hospital facility. The property was not originally constructed for a self-storage facility and has constraints in terms of layout and function. Signal Hill Self Storage has been in operation since 2002 (CUP approved in 2000) and is annually inspected; at the City's request, the business owner removed the U-Haul rental business.

In the past, inspections yielding corrective actions were carried over to following year inspections or were identified to be reoccurring. The business operators were provided opportunities to address matters; however, given staff observation of ongoing violations over the years, and reported issues of concern, an amendment to the CUP would be the most appropriate approach to address violations and concerns. Originally, the CUP conditions included a total of twelve (12) conditions; the amended conditions now include a total of forty-two (42) conditions. The recommended conditions would require the business operator to actively monitor its business operations to ensure adherence to the conditions of approval. Going forward, the added and amended conditions would result in more detailed and comprehensive Annual CUP inspections.

Following a public hearing, the Planning Commission recommended City Council approval of the CUP amendment as presented by staff.

Attachments:

- A. CUP 00-05 Conditions of Approval (2000)
- B. January 24, 2023, City Council Staff Report - CUP Annual Report
- C. Signal Hill Self Storage Business Operation Plan
- D. Existing Year 2000 and Modified Year 2023 Conditions of Approval Matrix
- E. Signal Hill Self Storage Security Plan
- F. Project Plans
- G. County of Los Angeles Public Health Official Inspection Report of August 28, 2023
- H. CEQA Categorical Exemption
- I. August 15, 2023, Planning Commission Staff Report without Attachments
- J. CUP Resolution
- K. CUP Resolution Exhibit A