



Sterling Design Associates, llc

CIVIL ENGINEERS - LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

October 12, 2017

City of Aurora
Planning and Development Services
15151 E. Alameda Pkwy, 2nd Floor
Aurora, CO 80012

RE: Letter of Introduction for Starbucks Coffee Company, Gartrell and Dry Creek, Aurora, CO

Project Description

The project is for the construction of a Starbucks Coffee Shop café with indoor and outdoor seating and drive-thru service on Lot 4 of the Saddle Rock East Super Target Shopping Center. The property is currently zoned PD Commercial within the Saddle Rock East General Development Plan and one waiver to the Saddle Rock East Preliminary Development Plan design standards for the provision of vision glass adjacent to Gartrell is requested with this application and is discussed later in this letter.

This project is a proposed relocation of the existing store located just south of the intersection of E. Dry Creek Rd. and S. Gartrell Rd. The existing store is small and has a short drive-thru lane. It experiences regular peak hour traffic in the mornings that backs up cars out into the main shopping center drive and into the intersection of E. Dry Creek Rd. and S. Gartrell Rd.

Lot 4 is an approximately 1.04 acre parcel of land on the northeast corner of the intersection of S. Gartrell Rd and E. Dry Creek Rd. It fronts S. Gartrell Rd. and is north of the Super Target Shopping Center main entry drive from E. Dry Creek Rd. The size of the property and single use will allow for the development of a larger store with outdoor patio and a dedicated drive-thru lane that will contain the peak drive-thru traffic queues on site and provide for a more efficient and enjoyable customer experience while mitigating the negative traffic impacts to the intersection and shopping center the current location experiences.

A waiver is requested to section 4.4.3 of the commercial architectural standards of the Saddle Rock East Commercial PDP to allow for spandrel glass to be used in lieu of vision glass due to internal operations and interior building layout that does not allow for the use of vision glass. The standard for pad sites set forth in the PDP is "20% of the lineal frontage along Gartrell Parkway shall be vision glass to a height of 10 feet from finish floor. Spandrel glass may not be used in these glazing applications."

The spandrel glass proposed exceeds the minimum 20% and provides for 33% linear footage of glazing with a height of 11'-6" above finish floor along the west building elevation that faces S. Gartrell Rd. Furthermore, an architectural overhang similar to the other elevations of the building is provided with wall light sconces for full 360 degree architecture per the Saddle Rock East GDP and PDP.

Jay M. Newell, PE
Wayne T. Sterling, RLA, LEED AP

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As part of the proposal there are requirements for an Amendment to the Saddle Rock East Super Target Conceptual Site Plan (CSP) (Case No. 2003-6047) and a Major Amendment to the Saddle Rock East General Development Plan (GDP) (Case No. 1998-2007) and Saddle Rock East Preliminary Development Plan (PDP) (Case No. 2003-7008).

Section 2.3 – Allowed Uses of the Saddle Rock East PDP (Case No. 2003-7008) allows for drive-thru uses “no further north than the first lot north of Dry Creek” (Lot 4) however limits the quantity to one (1) “south of Hinsdale or E. of N/S Dr”. A drive-thru use (the existing Starbucks) was constructed on Lot 2 as part of the Saddle Rock East CSP (Case No. 2003-6047) therefore filling the permitted allowance of one (1) drive-thru. A Major Amendment to the Saddle Rock East GDP and PDP is being requested as part of this project to allow for more than one (1) drive-thru restaurant and to designate Lot 4 as the additional approved location for the drive-thru. Therefore, drive-thru restaurant uses will only be permitted on Lot 2 and Lot 4 within Commercial Parcel 16.

It was requested by staff that an amendment be sought during this same process in order to clarify language in the GDP with regards to 24-hour uses as it would pertain to other potential future uses within the Saddle Rock East GDP area. While unrelated to the proposed Starbucks development on Lot 2, the proposed amendment to section 3.3.4 b. of the Saddle Rock GDP will revise the GDP language to ensure consistency with City Zoning Code. Code Section 146-1252 outlines the rules for After-Hours Operations. As per code, “any retail, restaurant, personal service, or indoor recreational uses that abut a residential zone or use and operate between 12:00 p.m. and 6:00 am” is a conditional use subject to review at a Public Hearing before the Planning Commission. A site is defined as abutting a residential zone when it is located 300 feet or less from a residential zone, as measured in a straight line from the exterior of the business to the residential zone.” The proposed Starbucks on Lot 2 is greater than 300 feet from the nearest residential zone district, therefore the operating hours of 4:30am to 9:30pm would not require conditional use approval.

Project Team

Developer:

Vertical Construction Management
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Owner:

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Architect:

Rogue Architects
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Fort Worth, TX 76102
Attn: Jennifer Petty
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Civil Engineer/Landscape Architect:

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2009 W Littleton Blvd, #300
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Attn: Jon Spencer
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Surveyor:

Altura Land Consultants, llc
6551 S. Revere Parkway, #165
Centennial, CO 80111
Contact: Jesse Lugo

Existing Conditions

The site is a vacant pad lot, Lot 4 of the Saddle Rock East Commercial Subdivision. A previous Site Plan was approved for a proposed fuel station as part of the Saddle Rock East Super Target CSP (Case No. 2003-6047). While the rest of the shopping center developed, the fuel station was never built. The site sits roughly 7 feet above S. Gartrell Rd. Public improvements such as the public and private sidewalks and perimeter landscaping were installed and are existing surrounding the perimeter of the site. An existing monument sign for the shopping center is located at the southwest corner at the intersection of E. Dry Creek Rd. and S. Gartrell Rd.

Proposed Uses

The proposed development being requested on this site is for an approximately 2,500 square foot coffee shop with indoor seating, an outdoor patio, and an extended drive-thru lane. The site will include a parking lot with 25 parking spaces, 2 of which are van accessible and 6 bicycle spaces.

Proposed hours of operation are 4:30am-9:30pm Monday through Friday and 5:00am-9:30pm Saturday and Sunday. There will be two (2) shifts with a staff of roughly nine (9) partners working each shift.

Access

A single vehicular access point into this site will be located at the southeast corner connecting to the internal shopping center drive that connects with the entry off E. Dry Creek Rd. and S. Gartrell Rd. The access is located at the southeast corner of the property to enable sufficient room for peak hour stacks while maintaining good internal vehicular circulation. ADA pedestrian access is provided to the main shopping center sidewalk directly to the south which connects to the public walk along S. Gartrell Rd. This location is the best option that minimizes conflict with vehicular traffic and the drive-thru lane. Parking is located east of the building away from the frontage along S. Gartrell Rd.

Parking

Per the Aurora Municipal Code, Article 15, restaurants, "fast food with drive-through facilities" require the same parking as standard restaurants, which is 1 space per 3 seating accommodations, with an outdoor seating area allowed to be up to 1/3 the floor area of the indoor seating area without additional parking. It is estimated that the number of seats inside the building will be 69, which will require 23 spaces. Twenty-five (25) parking spaces are provided including two (2) handicap accessible spaces. Fifteen stacking spaces are provided in the drive-through lane between the drive-through entrance and the pickup window. One (1) bike space is required, three (3) racks the equivalent of six (6) spaces are provided.

Landscaping

The landscape requirements for this site, including the minimum landscape area required, number of street trees needed and buffer widths have been met. We are using xeriscape design principles with minimal turf being used and low water plants in both the site and right-of-way areas.

Building Architecture

The use of quality building materials, varied textures and harmonious colors is intended to compliment surrounding commercial development as well as to provide visual identity for the Starbucks facility. Building elevations are included with this submittal. The architecture team has explored various options

to try and work in the vision glass but it is not feasible with the operational requirements of the coffee shop. With the waiver request as described above that includes the glazing in excess of the 20% required in the PDP, the overhangs, and wall sconces, the proposed architecture is in conformance with the spirit and intent of the design standards and 360 degree architecture set forth in the GDP.

Site Plan Approval Criteria

Per Section 146-405 (F) of the Aurora Municipal Code, the following are approval criteria required for Site Plans:

1. Consistency with comprehensive plan. The proposed site plan is consistent with the provisions of the comprehensive plan, the City Code, and plans and policies adopted by city council that apply to the affected area. Amendments to the GDP and PDP are being requested to permit the use of more than one (1) drive-thru for the purpose of this proposal.
2. Impact on existing city infrastructure and public improvements. The proposed development does not result in undue or unnecessary burdens on the city's existing infrastructure and public improvements. Existing infrastructure is already in place for pedestrian and vehicular access, storm water conveyance, water and sanitary connections and associated dry utilities. The site will not further impact public infrastructure beyond what had already been planned for in the previous Saddle Rock East PDP and Saddle Rock East Super Target CSP.
3. Density. The project is not directly adjacent to any residential zones and no residential units are proposed. Required buffers and landscaping are being provided along public rights-of-way and internal shopping center drives.
4. Protection and appropriate use of environmental features and topography to enhance the development. The building has been located and the site designed to work with the existing topography and existing site elements such as the existing monument signs, landscaping, infrastructure, and surrounding shopping center while maintaining existing view corridors. Water quality, wildlife habitat of riparian corridors, wetlands, and floodplains are not affected by proposed development. Open space and natural areas are not impacted. Landscaping has been designed to be compatible with the neighborhood and community character.
5. Landscaped area. The Site Plan and proposed landscaping conform to landscaping standards of the Saddle Rock East GDP and PDP and City Code.
6. Internal efficiency of design. The proposed design of the site plan achieves internal efficiency for its users, including safe and convenient pedestrian access to common areas for recreation and other services, facilities, and amenities provided by the development. The proposed design provides for safe and convenient access for service and maintenance personnel performing routine duties related to but not limited to mail delivery and pick-up, utility meter reading, deliveries, and trash collection.
7. Control of nuisance impacts. The proposed development controls nuisance impacts on itself and surrounding land uses including heat and glare, traffic congestion, noise, arrangement of signs and lighting, features to prevent littering and accumulation of trash, the amount and quality of storm drainage, the provision of adequate light and air, compatible screening of rooftop mechanical units, and other factors deemed to affect public health, safety, and general welfare.

8. Urban design, building architecture, and landscape architecture. The site plan complies with the high quality of design set forth in the GDP and PDP standards. Use of high quality materials, colors and textures are included on the building and trash enclosure. Masonry Nichiha stone panels, brick, and stucco are proposed to complement the surrounding shopping center. 360 degree architecture is incorporated on all sides of the building through the use of overhead canopies, wing walls, and wall sconces. Stained concrete paving is proposed along the main pedestrian routes to accent the routes and match with the shopping center. Building foundation plantings soften the site and provide for a pedestrian scale to the proposed café.

9. Adequacy, accessibility, and connectivity of traffic and circulation plans. The site design has been carefully thought out to provide for a direct and safe pedestrian connection to the building from the shopping center and public sidewalk limiting the crossing of pedestrian and vehicular traffic to a single location. Traffic circulation is controlled to allow for ease of access to parking and the drive-thru lane while maintaining peak queueing on-site.

10. Street standards. No public or private streets are proposed or affected by this proposal.

11. Past Performance. It is noted that the city council and the planning commission are authorized to consider the past performance of an applicant in their consideration of the site plan.

GDP Amendment Approval Criteria

Per Section 146-403 (C) of the Aurora Municipal Code, the following are approval criteria required for GDP Amendments:

1. Approval of a General Development Plan may include necessary conditions and limitations on the approval. The planning and zoning commission and city council shall base their respective decisions for approval on whether the applicant has demonstrated that the proposed general development plan is consistent with the spirit and intent of the comprehensive plan, with the requirements of the Code, and with other policies and plans adopted by city council.

The proposed site plan is consistent with the spirit and intent of the provisions of the comprehensive plan, the City Code, and plans and policies adopted by city council that apply to the affected area. Furthermore, amendments to the GDP and PDP are being requested to permit the use of more than one (1) drive-thru for the purpose of this proposal and to clarify and ensure consistency for the criteria and process for after-hours uses.

2. Past Performance. The city council and the planning commission are authorized to consider the past performance of an applicant in their consideration of any General Development Plan. The city council may deny any approval of a General Development Plan if the applicant or developer thereof is determined to be in violation of any requirements, conditions, or representations on a prior development.

The developer does not have any prior history in the City of Aurora. It is the intent of the developer to adhere to the provisions set forth in the comprehensive plan, City Code, Saddle Rock East GDP and PDP to the greatest extent possible as shown in this proposal.

Project Schedule

The proposed project will be constructed in one phase as soon as permitting allows. The anticipated restaurant opening is early 2018.

We look forward to your feedback and working with you to develop an exceptional project for Starbucks and the City of Aurora. Please do not hesitate to call or email with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jon Spencer", followed by a long horizontal flourish line.

Jon Spencer, RLA
On behalf of Sterling Design Associates, LLC