

DOLPHIN GREEN CAR WASH

2190 S. El Camino Real, Oceanside

Description and Justification

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

The City of Oceanside has returned to a Level One Drought Watch from a Level Two, thanks to the extraordinary conservation efforts of its citizens and the improved water supply conditions statewide. Though this lower level of drought response will replace specific state-mandated restrictions to conserve water, Oceanside will maintain Level One water use efficiency measures to ensure adequate water supplies should drought conditions continue. Wasteful water use, such as runoff and over watering, are still prohibited in Oceanside and can result in a fine. “Mandatory Water Use Efficiency Measures” in “the Save Water Program” on the City’s website list many requirements that the citizens must abide. One of the mandatory water use rules set by the City is:

“Wash vehicles using a bucket and hand-held hose equipped with a positive shut-off nozzle; a professional car wash is preferred to keep pollutants out of storm drains.”

“The Clean Water Program” also on the City’s website further lists the followings:

“One of the most threatening and widespread contaminates of storm water is soaps resulting from the washing of cars. When carried to local waterbodies after entering storm drains, soaps cause excessive algae to grow, ultimately starving the water of oxygen when the algae begin to decompose. Additionally, soaps destroy the mucus layer in fish, which protects them from harmful parasites, and alters the aquatic environment.”

“Wash your car at a commercial car wash rather than washing it yourself at home. Commercial car washes reuse wash water and discharge the water to the sanitary sewer system. Not only do they protect storm water by not discharging soaps into the street, they help us conserve water.”

Dirty car windows will reduce visibility, particularly at night, and clean and shining cars show the pride of ownership. Many citizens do clean their cars regularly, as people must take showers. The above paragraphs show that the City of Oceanside recognizes the value of commercial car washes, because they use less water to wash, recycle their waste

water and prevent detergent and soapy water getting into storm drains. There are still not enough commercial car washes in Oceanside to wash so many cars in the City.

The City also established “the Green Oceanside Campaign” for these purposes:

“To educate residents, businesses and visitors about how to be better stewards of the earth and to implement programs that protect and conserve natural resources. Through collaboration and partnerships between City departments, local businesses, community groups, schools and residents, the Green Oceanside Campaign provides an avenue for the public to learn how to actively protect the environment through community involvement and engagement. The Green Oceanside Campaign offers numerous opportunities for people to participate in events and programs that provide a direct benefit to the local environment while reducing the City’s carbon footprint beyond its jurisdictional boundaries.”

The above three programs promoted by the City of Oceanside have encouraged us to develop a green car wash project to help Oceanside residents in their car washing needs. This proposed green and modern car wash will meet their needs through an efficient, modern and environment-friendly way.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Our car wash project is located at the northeast corner of El Camino Real and Via Las Rosas in the City of Oceanside and has an easy access through the low-traffic Via Las Rosas. On this commercial lot of 1.20 Acres, we propose to build two relatively small one-story buildings:

Building 1: Including car wash tunnel, equipment room, offices, after-wash service facility, customer waiting room and ADA rest room, with a building area of 4,310 S.F.

Building 2: Including equipment room, with a small building area of 256 S.F.

Particularly, we want to use green technologies to save precious resources, such as water and electricity, and to promote a cleaner and natural environment. Our project will include:

1. A sophisticated waste water treatment system to store and clean waste water for reuse.
2. A storm water reclamation system to reduce the outflow of storm water from the

property and to use the storm water in car washing. The current storm water run-off from Via Las Rosas to the golf course to the east will be reduced.

3. A solar photovoltaic system for electricity.
4. Roof vents for natural light and venting.
5. Water saving faucets, urinal, toilet, etc.
6. An instant water heater under every sink.
7. LED light fixtures throughout the project.
8. Artificial turf lawn.
9. Drought resistant landscaping plants.
10. Water-saving drip irrigation system.
11. Bio-degradable and environmentally friendly chemicals for car washing.
12. Modern and low-water-consumption equipment to wash and polish cars.
13. Three bins to separate general wastes, recyclable waste and organic waste, and all bins are housed in a covered enclosure.
14. About 43% of the land is reserved as an open space for migrating birds and endangered species.
15. Small amount of waste water is dumped into the sewer, instead of the storm drains.

These are the reasons for calling our project “Dolphin Green Car Wash”. “Dolphin” in our name will tell people that it is a fun and clean place to wash their cars. If time and cost allow, we plan to apply to the U.S. Green Building Council for a LEED certification. This project is a low environmental impact development. More than 50% of land is reserved for landscaping and wild life migration corridor. The architectural design is of Mediterranean style, which is pleasing, high-class and inviting to people. The height of the two elegant architectural towers is 35’ above ground.

Car washing is mostly an impulse and incidental purchase. This project will draw customers from the adjacent El Camino Real. Such cars are already there, so this car wash will increase very few traffic counts on El Camino Real by not attracting cars from out of the area. The entrance to the project is from the low traffic dead-end street, Via Las Rosas. This green car wash uses a hybrid model of a full-service car wash and an express car wash. There are two queuing lanes to accommodate 10 waiting cars, which are plenty for our car wash model. There is ample parking with 24 parking spaces.

BUSINESS OPERATION

The residents in the City of Oceanside do have a need to wash their cars; however, washing cars on driveways will harm the environment due to the run-off of detergent and soapy water. Our proposal will use many green technologies to support the Green Oceanside Campaign, including reclamation of waste water, reclamation of storm water, harvesting of solar energy for running equipment, and the use of bio-degradable chemicals.

We will use modern car wash equipment to reduce manpower and water usage, automatic pay stations to accept cash or credit cards with minimal cashier's help, and a solar photovoltaic system to cut electricity cost, so we can pass those cost savings to consumers. The interior of the car wash tunnel will be clean and bright and has high tech LED signs, so customers will feel clean, safe and delightful. Our car wash will have modern on-line equipment to blow dry the cars and to polish car exteriors. It also offers interior cleaning service as a full-service car wash and many vacuum stalls to clean the interior by customers themselves. The operating hours will be adjusted according to customers' needs, with the longest possible hours of operation being from 7:00 am to 10:00 pm. The limited amount of escaped noise from the drying blowers will be confined with concrete walls. Our operation will not bother residential homes, because the surrounding areas are shopping centers and offices.

SITE HISTORY

The subject site was originally approved by the City Council of the City of Oceanside on April 23, 1986 to build a 90-unit motel under Resolution No. 86-69. We paid \$61,721.93 for various permit fees and pulled a building permit (Permit No. 73822) on December 21, 1989. We spent a tremendous amount of money to do site grading, crib walls, building walls, etc. At that time, the El Camino Real/Via Las Rosas intersection was blocked. We spent over \$180,000 for off-site improvements to open that intersection with new medians, curbs, sidewalks, additional traffic lanes, traffic signals, street drainage system, etc. We ran into serious construction delays and cost over-runs, thus the construction loan bank would not extend the loan and the project was aborted in 1992.

In 2006, we were told by the City Planning Department that our CUP for a motel was still valid because we had already constructed building walls. However, one of the project partners would not dare to try again on a motel project, so Ken Wang had to buy out that partner's shares to move the project forward. We also spent \$50,000.00 to buy a Comfort Inn franchise and hired an architect to upgrade the architectural plans, still faithfully following the originally approved designs. We spent lots of money trying to restart the

motel project. Unfortunately, our motel project was turned down by the City in 2009, because the Zoning Ordinance Section 4308(B).5 invalids a CUP if there is no construction activity for over five years. This ordinance was added in 2002 but did not show up in the printed version of the Oceanside Ordinances as late as in 2008, so many people were not aware of this provision.

Now, the project site still has two big crib walls, tall concrete building walls and four small building pads at different elevations: 172, 162, 172 and 181 feet above sea level. Although the site is secured by chain-link fences, some young people still sneak in, gather there, and paint graffiti again and again. It has looked like an abandoned and dangerous construction site on the busy El Camino Real for the past thirty years. The proposed car wash development will fit into this complicated site, remove this eyesore, help the environment and improve the local economy.

CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT

The site was totally graded and retaining walls and building walls were built under an approved CUP in 1986. We are re-developing a developed site. Due to the proposed automobile-related usage, a new CUP is required for the re-development.

CONCLUSION

An exciting and environment-friendly green car wash is proposed at an abandoned construction site on El Camino Real just north of Freeway 78. This project will follow the guidelines of the Save Water Program, the Clean Water Program and the Green Oceanside Campaign, which have been promoted by the City of Oceanside. A sophisticated water reclamation system will clean waste water for reuse, a storm water reclamation system will reduce the run-off of storm water from the property, and a solar photovoltaic system will generate electricity for running equipment. We will use bio-degradable detergents, water-saving equipment and fixtures, artificial turf for landscaping, etc. in order to be a true green facility. Modern technology and new car wash equipment will provide an excellent car washing and polishing job using less labor. It will be a bright, clean and fun car wash facility.

We have tried to sell the subject property for many years, but we could not sell because this complicated multi-level construction site and its narrow L-shape land have

make it very difficult for someone to develop a reasonable commercial project. The main property developer, Kenneth Wang, is already 74 years old and is making his last try to re-develop this site. Your help in approving this first green car wash in the County of San Diego and eliminating this eyesore on the busy El Camino Real is deeply appreciated.