Case File Number CMDV13256

October 2, 2013

Location: 31 4<sup>th</sup> St

Assessor's Parcel Numbers: 018-0440-003-01

Proposal: To allow a Group Assembly Commercial activity (basketball

courts) and accessory office and food sales.

Applicant / Kevin Gregory

**Phone Number:** (925) 348-4891

Owner: John Breznikar

Planning Permits Required: Major Interim CUP to allow a non-residential development 25,000

sf or greater and a Minor Variance for parking

Estuary Plan: Mixed Use District

Zoning: M-20/S-4

Environmental Exempt, Section 15301 of the State CEQA Guidelines:

Determination: Existing Facilities;

Section 15183 of the State CEQA Guidelines:

Projects Consistent with a Community Plan, General Plan or

Zoning

Historic Status: Non historic property

Service Delivery District: Metro

City Council District: 3

Date Filed: September 10, 2013

Staff Recommendation: Approve with conditions

**Finality of Decision:** Appealable to City Council within 10 days

For Further Information: Contact case planner Robert D. Merkamp, Planner III at

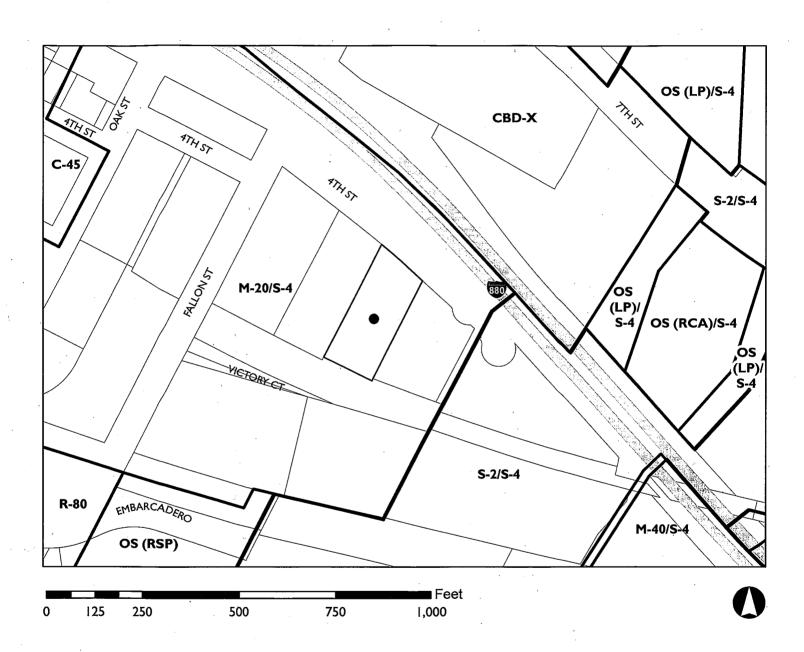
(510) 238-6283 or rmerkamp@oaklandnet.com

## **SUMMARY**

The applicant requests Planning Commission approval of a Major Conditional Use Permit, a Minor Variance and Regular Design Review to establish a Group Assembly Commercial activity consisting of an approximately 38,000 square foot indoor sports facility providing basketball, volleyball and other indoor sports and fitness activities. Accessory areas such as locker rooms, a snack bar, a small retail concession and employee offices will round out the facility. The floor space devoted to the Assembly space will be about 28,560 square feet.

Staff recommends approval of the requested permit, as conditioned, subject to the attached Findings and Conditions of Approval.

# CITY OF OAKLAND PLANNING COMMISSION



Case File:

**CMDVI3256** 

Applicant:

Kevin Gregory

Address:

31 4th Street

Zone:

M-20/S-4

## PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

The property consists of a 43,000 square foot lot off of 4<sup>th</sup> St situated along the west side of Interstate 880. The lot contains an existing warehouse type structure that is approximately 47 years old. To the north are similar structures that contain a restaurant supply company; to the west is a large parking lot that is owned by the same owner as the subject lot. To the south is a corporation yard for BART. The area is commercial/industrial in nature and it is on the south end of the Jack London District. The structure was formerly used as a warehouse.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

## Background

The purpose of the project is to establish a Group Assembly Commercial Activity at this site. The applicant would do interior renovations to the existing structure (aside from areas for potential business signs, no exterior work, footprint and/or volume change is proposed) to convert it into a facility that could host a number of athletic Group Assembly activities, primarily basketball.

## **ESTUARY PLAN ANALYSIS**

The Oakland Estuary Plan identifies the Mixed Use District Estuary Plan land use classification as an area containing a large number of potential uses including light manufacturing, warehousing, retail, restaurant, office, residential, work/live, parks and assembly uses. The General Plan Conformity guidelines were silent on the topic of whether the Mixed Use District allowed Assembly uses but a clear reading of the actual text from the Estuary Plan indicates that assembly and entertainment uses are contemplated in this district as part of a broader mixture of activities. Given the broad nature of the Mixed Use District and its proximity to the waterfront and Jack London entertainment district, the City views allowing a Group Assembly use at this location as being in conformance with the Estuary Policy Plan. To that end, the Zoning Manager issued a General Plan Determination letter on August 27, 2013 to the property owner and all other property owners within 300' of the subject property finding that Group Assembly Commercial was in conformance with the Estuary Plan. No opposition and no appeal to the General Plan Determination was made.

## **ZONING ANALYSIS**

The site is located within the M-20 Light Manufacturing Zone. During an early review of the proposal, it was found that this use was inconsistent with what was generally allowed in this zoning district. A review of the text of the Estuary Plan, however, references assembly uses as being part of the envisioned use of this district. The ultimate goal will be to create new zoning districts within the Jack London area that more closely align to the estuary plan as this "disconnect" between the Zoning and Estuary Plan occurs in several areas. The citywide rezoning in 2011 corrected this issue for most of the city but did not include the Estuary area as it is being worked on section by section.

As mentioned above, a General Plan Determination was made finding that the project was consistent with the Estuary Plan in August 2013. The guidelines to determine General Plan conformity recommend staff identify a best fit zone for specific regulations to be imposed. Staff recommends utilization of the C-45 zone. This zone is similar to the intent of the Mixed Use District in that it allows a broad mixture of uses from residential to business and is a common zoning in the Jack London District.

Staff finds the proposal to be consistent with the Planning Code.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION**

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines categorically exempts specific types of projects from environmental review. Section 15301 of the State CEQA Guidelines exempts projects involving interior renovations of existing facilities. The applicant does not propose any physical expansion of the building and is therefore exempt from further Environmental Review.

## KEY ISSUES AND IMPACTS

#### **Parking**

The applicant is also requesting a parking variance for this use. The parking regulations for Group Assembly require 1 space per 80 square feet of floor area in assembly halls without fixed seats. Taken as a whole, the facility would require 282 parking spaces, plus any additional spaces as determined by the Director of City Planning. The applicant is proposing to operate with 143 spaces (130 spaces in the lot accessed from Fallon and 13 spaces accessed from 4<sup>th</sup> Street to the rear).

Staff supports the variance for the following reasons. The Group Assembly category is a broad category encompassing many different businesses, including movie theaters, dance halls, gymnasiums, event halls for things such as wedding receptions and nightclubs. We anticipate this activity to require less parking than many other Group Assembly activities. Four basketball courts require a lot of empty space for participants to play but do so without a lot of people so we believe that the parking requirements for this particular Group Assembly activity are excessive. Further, we anticipate that much of the use of this facility will be done after school, at night and on weekends when many of the neighboring businesses are closed. This should lead to a minimization of potential conflicts for street parking in the area. There is also ample on street parking in the area, even during the day time hours, that should be able to absorb any excess demand. Finally, staff would note that the code has a similar definition for Group Assembly Civic (this was not applicable as that is generally for City run facilities), which imposes only the requirement that the Director make a determination as to the parking needs of the property.

Given these factors, we feel it is appropriate to grant a parking variance for this activity.

The applicant has also verbally committed to staff that if parking were to become a problem he would work to secure additional off-site parking.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 1. Affirm staff's environmental determination.
- 2. Approve the Major Conditional Use Permit, Minor Variance and Regular Design Review subject to the attached Findings, Additional Findings, and Conditions.

Prepared by:

ROBERT D. MERK.

Planner III

Approved by:

SCOTT MILLER Zoning Manager

Approved for forwarding to the City Planning Commission:

RACHEL FLYNN, Director

Department of Planning and Building

## **ATTACHMENTS:**

- A. Findings for Approval
- B. Conditions of Approval
- C. Plans

## **Attachment A: Findings**

This proposal meets the required findings under <u>General Use Permit Criteria (OMC Sec. 17.134.050)</u> and <u>Variance Findings (OMC Sec. 17.128.070(B))</u> as set forth below. Required findings are shown in **bold** type; explanations as to why these findings can be made are in normal type.

## GENERAL USE PERMIT CRITERIA (OMC SEC. 17.134.050)

A. That the location, size, design, and operating characteristics of the proposed development will be compatible with and will not adversely affect the livability or appropriate development of abutting properties and the surrounding neighborhood, with consideration to be given to harmony in scale, bulk, coverage, and density; to the availability of civic facilities and utilities; to harmful effect, if any, upon desirable neighborhood character; to the generation of traffic and the capacity of surrounding streets; and to any other relevant impact of the development;

The proposal involves the repurposing of an existing warehouse for a recreational and assembly commercial activity. It will be used for basketball, volleyball and other athletic assembly uses. It will provide opportunities for youth basketball, after school events. The project does not involve a physical expansion of the facility and should work well with the surrounding commercial/industrial neighborhood as much of the activity of this business would be expected evenings and weekends after those businesses are typically closed.

B. That the location, design, and site planning of the proposed development will provide a convenient and functional living, working, shopping, or civic environment, and will be as attractive as the nature of the use and its location and setting warrant;

The project will enhance the neighborhood by providing recreational athletic opportunities that will serve both the neighborhood and the City.

C. That the proposed development will enhance the successful operation of the surrounding area in its basic community functions, or will provide an essential service to the community or region;

The proposal will enhance recreational athletic opportunities by area residents, visitors, merchants, and shoppers.

D. That the proposal conforms to all applicable regular design review criteria set forth in the regular design review procedure at Section 17.136.050

The proposal conforms to design review criteria as described in a following section of this attachment.

E. That the proposal conforms in all significant respects with the Oakland General Plan and with any other applicable guidelines or criteria, district plan or development control map which has been adopted by the Planning Commission or City Council.

The site is located in a Mixed Use District area under the Estuary Plan. The intent of the Mixed Use District Estuary Plan land use classification as an area containing a large number of potential uses including light manufacturing, warehousing, retail, restaurant, office, residential, work/live, parks and assembly uses. This project therefore meets the goals of this Estuary Plan Area.

F. For proposals involving a One- or Two-Family Residential Facility: If the conditional use permit concerns a regulation governing maximum height, minimum yards, maximum lot coverage, or maximum floor area ratio, the proposal also conforms with at least one of the following additional criteria:

. Page 7

- 1. The proposal when viewed in its entirety will not adversely impact abutting residences to the side, rear, or directly across the street with respect to solar access, view blockage and privacy to a degree greater than that which would be possible if the residence were built according to the applicable regulation, and, for conditional use permits that allow height increases, the proposal provides detailing, articulation or other design treatments that mitigate any bulk created by the additional height; or
- 2. At least sixty (60) percent of the lots in the immediate context are already developed and the proposal would not exceed the corresponding as-built condition on these lots, and, for conditional use permits that allow height increases, the proposal provides detailing, articulation or other design treatments that mitigate any bulk created by the additional height. The immediate context shall consist of the five (5) closest lots on each side of the project site plus the ten (10) closest lots on the opposite side of the street (see illustration I-4b); however, the Director of City Planning may make an alternative determination of immediate context based on specific site conditions. Such

determination shall be in writing and included as part of any decision on any conditional use permit.

This finding is inapplicable; the proposal does not involve a house or duplex, but a non-residential Facility.

## VARIANCE CRITERIA (OMC SEC. 17.148.050)

- 1. Strict compliance with the specified regulations would result in practical difficulty or unnecessary hardship inconsistent with the purposes of the Zoning Regulations, due to unique physical or topographic circumstances or conditions of design; or, as an alternative in the case of a minor variance, that such strict compliance would preclude an effective design solution improving livability, operational efficiency, or appearance:
  - The applicant is asking for a reduction in the required parking from 282 spaces to 137. Staff supports the Variance as we believe that the parking is adequate to deal with the expected demand of the activity. The parking standards for Group Assembly Commercial are written to deal with the more intense businesses under that use classification such as movie theaters and dance halls. This is for athletic and recreational uses and is large due to the nature of the sports involved, not due to the number of participants.
- 2. Strict compliance with the regulations would deprive the applicant of privileges enjoyed by owners of similarly zoned property; or as an alternative in the case of a minor variance, that such strict compliance would preclude an effective design solution fulfilling the basic intent of the applicable regulation:
  - Staff believes there is adequate on-site parking for this activity and involves as little disruption to the existing neighborhood as possible.
- 3. The variance, if granted, will not adversely affect the character, livability, or appropriate development of abutting properties or the surrounding area, and will not be detrimental to the public welfare or contrary to adopted plans or development policy:
  - The proposal will not adversely impact the surrounding neighborhood, a mix of commercial/industrial properties. This facility will likely see the most business during the evening hours and weekends when this neighborhood is often quiet and there is ample on street parking.

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4. The variance will not constitute a grant of special privilege inconsistent with limitations imposed on similarly zoned properties or inconsistent with the purposes of the Zoning Regulations:

The granting of this variance would not represent a special privilege. The Group Assembly Commercial use category is a broad category including businesses like gyms, theaters, halls for weddings and other receptions, athletic fields, and dance clubs. The parking regulations are written with the

5. That the elements of the proposal requiring the variance (e.g. elements such as buildings, walls, fences, driveways, garages and carports, etc.) conform with the Regular Design Review criteria set forth in the design review procedure at Section 17.136.050:

The applicant does not propose any exterior changes.

6. That the proposal conforms in all significant respects with the Oakland General Plan and with any other applicable guidelines or criteria, district plan, or development control map which have been adopted by the Planning Commission or City Council:

The site is located in a Mixed Use District area under the Estuary Plan. The intent of the Mixed Use District Estuary Plan land use classification as an area containing a large number of potential uses including light manufacturing, warehousing, retail, restaurant, office, residential, work/live, parks and assembly uses. This project therefore meets the goals of this Estuary Plan Area.

- 7. For proposals involving one or two residential dwelling units on a lot: That, if the variance would relax a regulation governing maximum height, minimum yards, maximum lot coverage or building length along side lot lines, the proposal also conforms with at least one of the following criteria:
  - a. The proposal when viewed in its entirety will not adversely impact abutting residences to the side, rear, or directly across the street with respect to solar access, view blockage and privacy to a degree greater than that which would be possible if the residence were built according to the applicable regulation and, for height variances, the proposal provides detailing, articulation or other design treatments that mitigate any bulk created by the additional height:

-OR-

b. Over 60 percent of the lots in the immediate vicinity are already developed and the proposal does not exceed the corresponding as-built condition on these lots and, for height variances, the proposal provides detailing, articulation or other design treatments that mitigate any bulk created by the additional height. The immediate context shall consist of the five closest lots on each side of the project site, plus the ten closest lots on the opposite side of the street (see Illustration I-4b); however, the Director of City Planning may make an alternative determination of immediate context based on specific site conditions. Such determination shall be in writing and included as part of any decision on any variance.

This does not apply as this is a non-residential project.

## **Attachment B: Conditions of Approval**

## 1. Approved Use

## Ongoing

- a) The project shall be constructed and operated in accordance with the authorized use as described in the application materials and the plans dated September 9, 2013 and submitted to the City on September 10, 2013, and as amended by the following conditions. Any additional uses or facilities other than those approved with this permit, as described in the project description and the approved plans, will require a separate application and approval. Any deviation from the approved drawings, Conditions of Approval or use shall require prior written approval from the Director of City Planning or designee.
- b) This action by the **Planning Commission** ("this Approval") includes the approvals set forth below. This Approval includes:

Major Conditional Use Permit and a Minor Variance to approve a Group Assembly Commercial Activity consisting of an indoor athletic facility and accessory snack bars, offices and retail.

## 2. Effective Date, Expiration, Extensions and Extinguishment

## **Ongoing**

Unless a different termination date is prescribed, this Approval shall expire **two (2) years** from the approval date, unless within such period all necessary permits for construction or alteration have been issued, or the authorized activities have commenced in the case of a permit not involving construction or alteration. Upon written request and payment of appropriate fees submitted no later than the expiration date of this permit, the Director of City Planning or designee may grant a one-year extension of this date, with additional extensions subject to approval by the approving body. Expiration of any necessary building permit for this project may invalidate this Approval if the said extension period has also expired.

## 3. Scope of This Approval; Major and Minor Changes

#### **Ongoing**

The project is approved pursuant to the **Planning Code** only. Minor changes to approved plans may be approved administratively by the Director of City Planning or designee. Major changes to the approved plans shall be reviewed by the Director of City Planning or designee to determine whether such changes require submittal and approval of a revision to the approved project by the approving body or a new, completely independent permit.

## 4. Conformance with other Requirements

## Prior to issuance of a demolition, grading, P-job, or other construction related permit

- a) The project applicant shall comply with all other applicable federal, state, regional and/or local laws/codes, requirements, regulations, and guidelines, including but not limited to those imposed by the City's Building Services Division, the City's Fire Marshal, and the City's Public Works Agency. Compliance with other applicable requirements may require changes to the approved use and/or plans. These changes shall be processed in accordance with the procedures contained in Condition of Approval #3.
- b) The applicant shall submit approved building plans for project-specific needs related to fire protection to the Fire Services Division for review and approval, including, but not limited to automatic extinguishing systems, water supply improvements and hydrants, fire department access, elevated walking pathways, safety railings, emergency access and lighting.

## 5. Conformance to Approved Plans; Modification of Conditions or Revocation

a) Site shall be kept in a blight/nuisance-free condition. Any existing blight or nuisance shall be abated within 60-90 days of approval, unless an earlier date is specified elsewhere.

b) Violation of any term, Conditions of Approval or project description relating to the Conditions of Approval is unlawful, prohibited, and a violation of the Oakland Municipal Code. The City of Oakland reserves the right to initiate civil and/or criminal enforcement and/or abatement proceedings, or after notice and public hearing, to revoke the Approvals or alter these Conditions of Approval if it is found that there is violation of any of the Conditions of Approval or the provisions of the Planning Code or Municipal Code, or the project operates as or causes a public nuisance. This provision is not intended to, nor does it, limit in any manner whatsoever the ability of the City to take appropriate enforcement actions. The project applicant shall be responsible for paying fees in accordance with the City's Master Fee Schedule for inspections conducted by the City or a City-designated third-party to investigate alleged violations of the Conditions of Approval.

## 6. Signed Copy of the Conditions of Approval

A copy of the approval letter and Conditions of Approval shall be signed by the property owner, notarized, and submitted with each set of permit plans to the appropriate City agency for this project.

## 7. Indemnification

## **Ongoing**

- a. To the maximum extent permitted by law, the applicant shall defend (with counsel acceptable to the City), indemnify, and hold harmless the City of Oakland, the Oakland City Council, the City of Oakland Redevelopment Agency, the Oakland City Planning Commission and its respective agents, officers, and employees (hereafter collectively called City) from any liability, damages, claim, judgment, loss (direct or indirect)action, causes of action, or proceeding (including legal costs, attorneys' fees, expert witness or consultant fees, City Attorney or staff time, expenses or costs) (collectively called "Action") against the City to attack, set aside, void or annul, (1) an approval by the City relating to a development-related application or subdivision or (2) implementation of an approved development-related project. The City may elect, in its sole discretion, to participate in the defense of said Action and the applicant shall reimburse the City for its reasonable legal costs and attorneys' fees.
- b. Within ten (10) calendar days of the filing of any Action as specified in subsection A above, the applicant shall execute a Letter of Agreement with the City, acceptable to the Office of the City Attorney, which memorializes the above obligations. These obligations and the Letter of Agreement shall survive termination, extinguishment or invalidation of the approval. Failure to timely execute the Letter of Agreement does not relieve the applicant of any of the obligations contained in this condition or other requirements or Conditions of Approval that may be imposed by the City.

## 8. Compliance with Conditions of Approval

#### Ongoing

The project applicant shall be responsible for compliance with the recommendations in any submitted and approved technical report and all the Conditions of Approval set forth below at its sole cost and expense, and subject to review and approval of the City of Oakland.

## 9. Severability

## Ongoing

Approval of the project would not have been granted but for the applicability and validity of each and every one of the specified Conditions of Approval, and if one or more of such Conditions of Approval is found to be invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, this Approval would not have been granted without requiring other valid Conditions of Approval consistent with achieving the same purpose and intent of such Approval.

## 10. Noise Control

## Ongoing throughout demolition, grading, and/or construction

To reduce noise impacts due to construction, the project applicant shall require construction contractors to implement a site-specific noise reduction program, subject to the Planning and Zoning Division and the Building Services Division review and approval, which includes the following measures:

- a) Equipment and trucks used for project construction shall utilize the best available noise control techniques (e.g., improved mufflers, equipment redesign, use of intake silencers, ducts, engine enclosures and acoustically-attenuating shields or shrouds, wherever feasible).
- b) Except as provided herein. Impact tools (e.g., jack hammers, pavement breakers, and rock drills) used for project construction shall be hydraulically or electrically powered to avoid noise associated with compressed air exhaust from pneumatically powered tools. However, where use of pneumatic tools is unavoidable, an exhaust muffler on the compressed air exhaust shall be used; this muffler can lower noise levels from the exhaust by up to about 10 dBA. External jackets on the tools themselves shall be used, if such jackets are commercially available and this could achieve a reduction of 5 dBA. Quieter procedures shall be used, such as drills rather than impact equipment, whenever such procedures are available and consistent with construction procedures.
- c) Stationary noise sources shall be located as far from adjacent receptors as possible, and they shall be muffled and enclosed within temporary sheds, incorporate insulation barriers, or <u>use</u> other measures <u>as determined by the City to provide equivalent noise reduction</u>.
- d) The noisiest phases of construction shall be limited to less than 10 days at a time.

  Exceptions may be allowed if the City determines an extension is necessary and all available noise reduction controls are implemented.

#### 11. Noise Complaint Procedures

## Ongoing throughout demolition, grading, and/or construction

Prior to the issuance of each building permit, along with the submission of construction documents, the project applicant shall submit to the Building Services Division a list of measures to respond to and track complaints pertaining to construction noise. These measures shall include:

- a) A procedure and phone numbers for notifying the Building Services Division staff and Oakland Police Department; (during regular construction hours and off-hours);
- b) A sign posted on-site pertaining with permitted construction days and hours and complaint procedures and who to notify in the event of a problem. The sign shall also include a listing of both the City and construction contractor's telephone numbers (during regular construction hours and off-hours);

- c) The designation of an on-site construction complaint and enforcement manager for the project;
- d) Notification of neighbors and occupants within 300 feet of the project construction area at least 30 days in advance of extreme noise generating activities about the estimated duration of the activity; and
- e) A preconstruction meeting shall be held with the job inspectors and the general contractor/on-site project manager to confirm that noise measures and practices (including construction hours, neighborhood notification, posted signs, etc.) are completed.

## 12. Operational Noise-General

## Ongoing.

Noise levels from the activity, property, or any mechanical equipment on site shall comply with the performance standards of Section 17.120 of the Oakland Planning Code and Section 8.18 of the Oakland Municipal Code. If noise levels exceed these standards, the activity causing the noise shall be abated until appropriate noise reduction measures have been installed and compliance verified by the Planning and Zoning Division and Building Services.

## 13. Hazards Best Management Practices

## Prior to commencement of demolition, grading, or construction

The project applicant and construction contractor shall ensure that construction of Best Management Practices (BMPs) are implemented as part of construction to minimize the potential negative effects to groundwater and soils. These shall include the following:

- a) Follow manufacture's recommendations on use, storage, and disposal of chemical products used in construction;
- b) Avoid overtopping construction equipment fuel gas tanks;
- c) During routine maintenance of construction equipment, properly contain and remove grease and oils:
- d) Properly dispose of discarded containers of fuels and other chemicals.
- e) Ensure that construction would not have a significant impact on the environment or pose a substantial health risk to construction workers and the occupants of the proposed development. Soil sampling and chemical analyses of samples shall be performed to determine the extent of potential contamination beneath all UST's, elevator shafts, clarifiers, and subsurface hydraulic lifts when on-site demolition, or construction activities would potentially affect a particular development or building.
- f) If soil, groundwater or other environmental medium with suspected contamination is encountered unexpectedly during construction activities (e.g., identified by odor or visual staining, or if any underground storage tanks, abandoned drums or other hazardous materials or wastes are encountered), the applicant shall cease work in the vicinity of the suspect material, the area shall be secured as necessary, and the applicant shall take all appropriate measures to protect human health and the environment. Appropriate measures shall include notification of regulatory agency(ies) and implementation of the actions described in the City's Standard Conditions of Approval, as necessary, to identify the nature and extent of contamination. Work shall not resume in the area(s) affected until the measures have been implemented under the oversight of the City or regulatory agency, as appropriate.

## SPECIFIC CONDITIONS

## 14. Signage

Ongoing

All business signs will be reviewed and approved by the Department of Planning and Building for all necessary permits (including but not limited to Design Review and a Building Permit) and approved by the director or by her designee prior to installation.

#### 15. Parking Management Plan

Prior to expanded activity, and ongoing

The applicant shall prepare for Zoning Manager approval a Parking Management Plan which provides for all events with over 300 persons congregating at the business on this property (inside and/or outside). The plan shall provide an acceptable mix of off-site parking lots; event staff available to assist visitors with finding parking, extra bicycle parking; transit information and/or passes to customers and/or other commonly implemented strategies. The applicant shall follow the plan. After 6 months or the second event generating over 300 persons, whichever occurs first, monitoring by staff will confirm that the events are in compliance, and if not, shall request a formal Parking Management Plan compliance review by the Planning Commission. If a compliance review by the Planning Commission is determined necessary by staff, the applicant shall be required to pay a reconsideration fee (currently \$1,803.87) and submit for Planning Commission review.

APPROVED BY:		
City Planning Commission:	(date)	(vote)

