



8/8/2013

VIA EMAIL

David Hung, Associate Planner
City of Sacramento Community Development Department
300 Richards Boulevard
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Family Dollar Store (P13-034)

Dear Mr. Hung:

WALKSacramento has reviewed the project routing for Family Dollar Store proposed for the southwest corner of Franklin Boulevard and Mack Road. The project would construct a 9,180 square foot neighborhood discount store. A lot line adjustment would create a 1.09 acre parcel for the store on what is currently a 1.89 acre parcel within the approved, but vacant, Franklin Point shopping center.

The proposed store would serve the Parkway and Valley Hi/North Laguna neighborhoods. A one-half mile radius area around the project site contains many single-family homes, several apartment complexes and several community-sized shopping centers. There are over 20,000 people living within one mile of the project site and much of the surrounding area has good street connectivity.

Development projects that lead to more walking and active travel are critical to our community's future. Human beings need moderate exercise, such as walking, for about 30 minutes a day in order to prevent the development of chronic disease and overweight. Only 38% of the population in the Sacramento region is active at this minimal level, often due to limitations placed by a built environment not suited to walking and other types of physically active travel. A 30-minute walk is about one and a half miles. If more people could obtain regular exercise by walking and bicycling to their regular destinations, in lieu of driving, it could yield significant health improvements to the resident population of this area. Reduced driving would also decrease vehicle emissions and the prevalence of asthma, cardiovascular disease, and other air pollution-related conditions. More trips by walking and bicycling could help reduce the current expensive burden on the health care system of providing medical care to more and more people with chronic conditions due to inactivity and poor air quality.

The Franklin Point shopping center, in which this project is proposed to be located, was important to the community when it was entitled in 2009. Although the gas station in the center was highly controversial and it would be replaced by the Family Dollar Store, some of the conditions that applied to Franklin Point should be applied to the Family Dollar Store.

The building should be located closer to the street without parking in front to provide for safer pedestrian access. The City of Sacramento 2030 General Plan LU 6.1 envisions

suburban corridors that balance vehicular circulation with retail, service, and housing land uses in a pedestrian-friendly environment. Accordingly, buildings should be close to the street and parking should be behind or between buildings. Even though the Franklin Point project was approved prior to the adoption of the 2030 General Plan and subsequent zoning code amendments, the minimum building setbacks in the PUD Guidelines for the project were amended from 50 feet to 20 feet to provide a pedestrian environment. Locating the building close to the street would also match the relationship that Building 1 and Building 4 have to the street in the approved Franklin Point project.

Eliminating potential conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles will increase the safety of Family Dollar Store patrons and employees that choose to walk to the store and it may also increase the number of walk trips to the store because it's safer and more convenient. The staff report to City Council March 10, 2009 stated that the Planning Commission, "to improve and enhance pedestrian walkways and connectivity internally and externally, and to encourage alternate modes of transportation, added several conditions to the project related to parking and circulation." One of the conditions was that the minimum number of parking spaces shall also be the maximum number and this condition was included in Resolution R2009-143. A reduction in the number of parking spaces provided as part of the Family Dollar Store project should make it more feasible to move the building closer to the street.

Therefore, to create a pedestrian-friendly environment for patrons of the Family Dollar Store and the general public, **WALKSacramento recommends locating the building closer to the street and removing parking and drive aisles between the building and the street.**

Trees, especially canopy trees, provide for a cooler and more visually pleasant walking environment. The site plan for the Family Dollar Store includes more than a dozen large trees that will provide shading for the parking lot, but there is little shading that will directly benefit pedestrians. The site plan, even with the proposed 75-foot setback, should have trees planted along the sidewalk to provide shade for pedestrians. Moving the building to a setback of about 20 feet or slightly more would result in the trees being closer to the sidewalk. However, the Franklin Point project is required by Resolution 2009-143 to "Revise the Landscape Plan and increase the number of street trees planted along both the Mack Road and the Franklin Blvd. frontage. If feasible, the spacing of the street trees should be 25' on-center." Therefore, **WALKSacramento recommends street trees be planted within the landscape planter along Mack Road and Franklin Boulevard.**

The flower carpet planting area at the street corner shown on the landscape plan will look nice, but it is within the "desire line" for pedestrians travelling from the south sidewalk of Mack Road to the west sidewalk on Franklin Boulevard. Even carpet roses may not stand up to pedestrians "cutting the corner". Converting this area to hardscape would provide several benefits. It would not result in damaged landscaping. It would provide pedestrians wanting to cross the street a safe place to wait for the "walk" signal. It could also be used as the entrance to a new walkway to the building. The current site

plan has poor pedestrian access from the sidewalks, and the lack of a walkway from the street corner to the store entrance is the most egregious.

The placement of two proposed walkways from the sidewalks are inappropriate and may partially derive from the site plan for Franklin Point, which had a walkway from Franklin midway between the corner and the driveway. That location made sense because it kept the walkway away from the gas station drive-thru car wash exit at the southeast corner of the building.

To make the sidewalks more convenient for pedestrians, and therefore better utilized, the parking drive aisle walkway shown between the Franklin Boulevard sidewalk and the east side of building should be located between the south end of the bus stop access and the landscape planter at the southeast corner of the building, and the walkway along the east side of the building should be extended to meet the newly located parking drive aisle walkway.

The parking drive aisle walkway shown between the Mack Road sidewalk and north side of building should be located between the east side of the landscape planter at the east corner of the driveway and the walkway along the north side of the building at the landscape planter at the northwest corner of the building.

To provide appropriate walkway location, **WALKSacramento recommends moving the existing sidewalk-to-building walkways to near the driveways and adding a walkway from the street corner to the building corner.**

Shade for pedestrians waiting at the street corner could be provided by some large-canopy trees planed behind the corner planting area (or hardscape plaza area, if our recommendation is incorporated). **WALKSacramento recommends adding two large trees near the street corner.**

WALKSacramento is working to support increased physical activity such as walking and bicycling in local neighborhoods as well as helping to create community environments that support walking and bicycling. The benefits include improved physical fitness, less motor vehicle traffic congestion, better air quality, and a stronger sense of cohesion and safety in local neighborhoods.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments and recommendations. If you have questions or need additional information, please contact me at (916) 446-9255 or cholm@walksacramento.org.

Sincerely,
Chris Holm
Project Analyst

Enclosure: Development Checklist for Biking and Walking



DEVELOPMENT CHECKLIST for BIKING and WALKING

*Prepared by WALKSacramento and SABA (Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates)
September 2012*

This checklist is provided to give an indication of design, engineering, and policy elements that we consider when reviewing development projects.

POLICIES

- Walking and biking is a priority
- Adopted a policy to develop a full multi-modal and ADA accessible transportation system

Project Review and Comment

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- Pedestrian Master Plan
- Bicycle Master Plan
- Regional Blueprint
- Regional Blueprint Consistent General Plans
- Adopted Climate Action Plans
- Subdivision ordinances to support pedestrian and bicycle access and safety
- Zoning ordinance to support pedestrian and bicycle access and safety

ENGINEERING

- SIDEWALKS & BIKELANES ON BOTH SIDES OF MAJOR ROADWAYS
 - Pedestrian Level of Service “C” or better on arterials
 - Bicycle Level of Service “C” or better on arterials
- SAFE CROSSINGS FOR PEDESTRIANS
 - every 300-600 feet on major arterials
 - well lit, marked crosswalks
 - audible signals & count-down signals
 - median refuge islands
- SPEED MANAGEMENT
 - Speed limits based on safety of pedestrians and bicyclists
 - Implement “road diets” where there is excess lane capacity
- STREET DESIGN STANDARDS
 - Maximize pedestrian and bicyclist safety
 - Sidewalks buffered by trees and landscaping on major arterials
 - Vertical curbs
 - 5’ minimum sidewalk widths, 8’ in front of schools
 - 6’ minimum bike lanes on busy streets

- ❑ **INTERSECTIONS**
 - Median refuge islands for pedestrians
 - Signal timing to enable safe passage
 - Signal detection for bicyclists
 - Crossings on all 4 legs of intersections

- ❑ **ELIMINATE BARRIERS**
 - Freeway, railroad, river and creek crossings
 - Obstructions in sidewalks and bike lanes

NEW DEVELOPMENT – REQUIRE

- ❑ Walking & bicycling circulation plans for all new development
- ❑ Direct and convenient connections to activity centers, including schools, stores, parks, transit
- ❑ Mixed uses and other transit supporting uses within ¼ mile of light rail stations or bus stops with frequent service
- ❑ Minimum width streets
- ❑ Maximum block length of 400'
- ❑ 4-lane maximum for arterials; Recommend 2 lanes wherever possible

NEW DEVELOPMENT – DISCOURAGE

- ❑ Cul-de-sacs (unless it includes bike/ped connections)
- ❑ Gated and/or walled communities
- ❑ Meandering sidewalks
- ❑ Inappropriate uses near transit (gas stations, drive-thru restaurants, mini storage and other auto dependent uses)

BUILDINGS – REQUIRE

- ❑ Direct access for pedestrians from the street
- ❑ Attractive and convenient stairways
- ❑ Bicycle parking – long & short term
- ❑ Shower & clothing lockers

OLDER NEIGHBORHOODS

- ❑ Improve street crossings
- ❑ Reduce speeds
- ❑ Provide new connections
- ❑ Create short cuts for walkers and bicyclists by purchase of properties or other means
- ❑ Provide sidewalks on both sides of major streets

Policy Review and Comment

ENFORCEMENT & MAINTENANCE

- ❑ Enforce speed limits
- ❑ Enforce crosswalk rules – conduct crosswalk sting operations
- ❑ Enforce restrictions against parking on sidewalks
- ❑ Enforce bicycle rules including riding with traffic, lights at night, stopping at red lights
- ❑ Implement CVC 267 setting speed limits based on pedestrian and bicyclist safety
- ❑ Sweep streets and fix hazards
- ❑ Repair and replace broken sidewalks

EDUCATION

- ❑ Train staff on pedestrian and bicycle facility design.
- ❑ Train development community about pedestrian and bicycle planning and safety issues
- ❑ Bicycle skills training

FUNDING

- ❑ Include pedestrian and bicycle facilities in capital improvement programs
- ❑ Include pedestrian and bicycle facilities as a part of roadway widening and improvement projects
- ❑ Support Measure A pedestrian and bicycle facility allocation
- ❑ Set priorities based on safety and latent demand
- ❑ SACOG Community Design grants & Bike/Ped grants
- ❑ California Bicycle transportation Account
- ❑ Safe Routes to School

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