



## PLANNING COMMISSION

Agenda Item No.: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: February 12, 2013

TO: Planning Commissioners

FROM: Planning Staff

SUBJECT: Determination Request: Whether Stone Brewery's proposal to screen their outdoor wastewater tanks with landscaping is in conformance with development standards of the Escondido Research and Technology Center (ERTC) Specific Plan.

**BACKGROUND –** Without processing an amendment to the Specific Plan for the ERTC, Section VI allows modifications to design features such as architecture and landscape elements (including fencing and walls) as long as the modifications are in conformance with the overall objectives, policies and development standards of the Specific Plan. The Director of Community Development has deemed the subject request in conformance with the Specific Plan policies and objectives, under Section VI of the Specific Plan. However, staff is seeking input from the Planning Commission to determine if the proposed additional landscaping to screen the outdoor wastewater tanks is in conformance with the Landscape Standards (Section E) for screening of visually-prominent outdoor storage and maintenance facilities.

Stone Brewery is proposing to expand its wastewater treatment facility (WWTF) at its existing brewery located at 1999 Citracado Parkway in the Escondido Research and Technology Center (ERTC). Over the next several years Stone expects to increase its brewing capacity at its current location which will increase their wastewater capacity need. Stone currently reclaims 40,000+ gallons of water each day that is used for equipment cleaning, cooling tower operation, and other non-brewing processes at Stone. To accommodate the additional wastewater, Stone is proposing to expand their WWTF with the flexibility to accommodate both their current and future treatment needs. The first phase of the expansion which is approved and under construction consists of two (2), 65,000 gallon stainless steel tanks, 27' high located at the southwest corner of the building. The second phase of the expansion will consist of installing three (3) additional stainless steel wastewater tanks at the same location. The tanks will be located behind the existing stone brewery building and will not be visible from Citracado Parkway. To help screen the tanks and the entire rear elevation from adjacent residential neighbors to the west, Stone is proposing to plant sixty (60) trees (15-gallon & 24-36" box size) at the top of the slope adjacent to the trail located immediately west of the Stone Brewery building.

The architectural standards in the ERTC Specific Plan for mechanical equipment such as HVAC, vents, stacks, and storage tanks require screening by means of a wall at least as high as the equipment and not less than 6-feet high and have open trellis type covers. Although the list includes storage tanks as requiring mechanical screens, the landscape standards for the ERTC requires

landscaping to screen visually-prominent outdoor storage, maintenance facilities and the rear of buildings along the western side. The applicants request is for the determination that the proposal to plant an additional 60 trees along the western boundary adjacent to the trail meets the intent of the ERTC Specific Plan to adequately screen outdoor storage tanks.

#### DISCUSSION-

Stone has submitted information to support the requested determination to plant sixty (60) additional trees along the western slope adjacent to the trail to help screen the tanks from the residences to the west. Stone Brewery believes that the portion of the Specific Plan that requires a wall to screen mechanical equipment is specifically directed to ground mounted mechanical equipment like HVAC units not necessarily water tanks or other equipment required for the manufacturing of beer. In addition, the applicant indicates that the tanks must be located adjacent to the existing WWTF, which reduces the area of the loading dock. Any constructed screen would encroach into the limited area of the truck bays. Stone has identified nine (9) residential homes to the west that have a clear view of the rear elevation of stone brewery. Five of those nine homes are located approximately 900' from the proposed tank locations and sit at an elevation that is 20-30 feet higher than the top of the tanks. The closest house is located approximately 500' from the proposed tank locations and sit at an elevation that is 50 feet lower than the top of the tanks. There is also existing 160' landscape buffer zone between the building and the western property line of ERTC. Stone feels that planting 60 trees will provide sufficient screening of not only the tanks but the entire rear elevation over time. The proposed trees are evergreen species selected from the ERTC Specific Plan tree list, that grow 20-30' tall.

Staff could support the determination that the proposed landscape screen is consistent with the ERTC Specific Plan and sufficient for the situation based on the location, type of outdoor storage tanks, the significant buffer area from the property line, and that the additional plantings will overtime provide a green visual screen to the residencies to the west.

Respectfully submitted,

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