



MEMORANDUM

TO: Architectural Review Committee

FROM: Andrew Perez, Planning Manager

BY: Patrick Holub, Associate Planner

SUBJECT: Consideration of Architectural Details Associated with Plot Plan Review 23-014; Installation of a Two-Space Permanent Parklet; Location – 106 East Branch Street; Applicant – Casey O’Connor, Villa Cantina

DATE: September 18, 2023

SUMMARY OF ACTION:

Review the proposed architectural details associated with the application for a permanent parklet and make a recommendation to the Community Development Director.

IMPACT ON FINANCIAL AND PERSONNEL RESOURCES:

Costs to support a permanent parklet program include in-house and/or contractual services for manual street sweeping, barrier adjustments, inspection and maintenance, and general program administration. Parklet applicants will fully cover the costs of the permanent parklets through permitting fees, rental costs associated with the loss of City property, and rental fees for physical barriers.

RECOMMENDATION:

Make a recommendation to the Community Development Director regarding the proposed architectural details for PPR23-014.

BACKGROUND:

The COVID-19 pandemic that began in 2020 created a public health crisis and unprecedented economic impacts throughout the country, State, and at the local level. In the City of Arroyo Grande (City), local businesses have been economically impacted by this public health emergency, especially restaurants, hotels, and retail establishments. This created both a significant challenge for the City - with an urgent need to support both public health and economic recovery of local businesses - as well as a unique opportunity to re-imagine how the City’s public right-of-way can be utilized to improve long-term community vibrancy and economic vitality. In response to the initial COVID-19 reopening process, the City adopted Resolution 5007 on June 23, 2020,

Architectural Review Committee

Consideration of Architectural Details Associated with Plot Plan Review 23-014; Installation of a Two-Space Permanent Parklet; Location – 106 East Branch Street; Applicant – Casey O’Connor, Villa Cantina

September 18, 2023

Page 2

authorizing the Community Development Director to waive application fees for encroachment permits and Minor Use Permits/Temporary Use Permits for restaurants that were seeking additional outdoor dining space (Attachment 1). Starting in July of 2020, the City facilitated the installation of five temporary parklets for eight individual restaurant businesses in the Village. At the time when Doc Bernstein’s closed, the parklet they shared with Humdinger Brewing was reduced in size by one parking space. With this exception, each of the original temporary parklets remain in use today.

Existing parklets within the Village displace a total of fourteen (14) parking spaces, which include partial spaces that can only support smaller vehicles. There are a total of sixty-one (61) on-street parking spaces along East and West Branch Streets in the Village. The parking spaces lost to parklets currently account for approximately twenty-three percent (23%) of the on-street parking in the Village. Attachment 2 includes a map of the locations and photos of the existing parklets.

In late 2021 the City published a survey requesting feedback from the community regarding the existing parklets. More than 600 comments were received, with the vast majority of responses indicating support for parklets. Respondents also indicated that if an outdoor dining establishment included a parklet, they were more likely to visit such an establishment by a margin of 68% to 26%, with about 6% unsure.

On November 23, 2021, the City Council held a study session on the status of the temporary parklet program and discussed the potential for a permanent parklet program. Council expressed concerns with various aspects of parklets, including the number, their proximity to each other, the safety of users, the amount of staff time dedicated to a permanent program, their consistency with the historic downtown, design of the parklets, and costs. Council directed staff to return with the framework of a program that evaluated and provided recommendations on the following issues:

1. Associated costs for application, rent, encroachment, and in-lieu parking;
2. Safety considerations;
3. Suggested design standards;
4. A cap on the number of parklets;

On April 12, 2022, the City Council conducted an additional study session to consider a proposed permanent parklet program. During the study session, the City Council provided comments regarding each point and asked that the Architectural Review Committee (ARC) help develop the objective design standards for the parklets. On August 1, 2022, the ARC reviewed proposed objective design standards developed by staff and made a number of recommendations, which were incorporated into the proposed Ordinance.

Architectural Review Committee

Consideration of Architectural Details Associated with Plot Plan Review 23-014; Installation of a Two-Space Permanent Parklet; Location – 106 East Branch Street; Applicant – Casey O’Connor, Villa Cantina

September 18, 2023

Page 3

On September 6, 2022, a proposed Ordinance implementing the permanent parklet program was presented to the Planning Commission (PC), which provided further recommendations and forwarded it to the City Council for introduction and adoption. The recommendations from the Planning Commission included:

1. Exclude the five (5) space buffer required between parklets and remove the maximum of fifteen (15) parking spaces occupied by parklets.
2. Keep the two (2) space maximum for each individual parklet.

The City Council introduced [Ordinance 719](#) on September 27, 2022 (Attachment 3). The Ordinance was then adopted by the City Council on October 11, 2022, and became effective November 11, 2022. The provisions of Ordinance 719 have been incorporated into [Arroyo Grande Municipal Code \(AGMC\) Section 16.52.250](#).

On July 3, 2023, the Architectural Review Committee reviewed architectural details and configuration options associated with the safety barriers for the permanent parklets, choosing a configuration with no gaps and flush connections with square planters at each end.

On July 17, 2023, the Architectural Review Committee reviewed color options for the chosen barrier configuration, choosing “Sand Tan Light Sand Blast (LSB).”

ANALYSIS OF ISSUES:

Project Description

The applicant is proposing a two-space permanent parklet with street furniture consisting of seven (7) square tables and two (2) rectangular pergolas for shade. The proposed pergolas are constructed with wooden beams, black metal brackets for attachment and brown fabric for shade. The furniture for the proposed permanent parklet will be the same as is currently installed for the existing, temporary parklet and the appearance of the furniture is not proposed to change. The applicant is proposing to plant penstemon varieties in the planters at the ends of the parklet. The proposed parklet would be connected to the proposed one-space parklet for Hubbalicious Sweet Shoppe at 110 East Branch Street, which is scheduled for review by the ARC on this agenda.

The combined parklet is proposed to extend in front of Heritage Salon, however, due to the current configuration of Villa Cantina’s parklet and the requirement to reduce the overall length, no additional parking spaces will be encumbered by the two combined parklets as compared to Villa Cantina’s existing parklet. The property owner of the building that includes Hubbalicious Sweet Shoppe, Heritage Salon and the subject business has consented to the proposed placement of the parklets.

Architectural Review Committee

Consideration of Architectural Details Associated with Plot Plan Review 23-014; Installation of a Two-Space Permanent Parklet; Location – 106 East Branch Street; Applicant – Casey O’Connor, Villa Cantina

September 18, 2023

Page 4

An elevation showing a rendering of the safety barriers in front of the applicant’s business is included as Attachment 5. Photos showing the colors and materials of the proposed parklet furniture is included as Attachment 6.

Design Guidelines

The Design Guidelines and Standards for the Historic Character Overlay District (“the Guidelines”) require that any new construction or exterior alterations to structures in the Historic Character Overlay District receive review by the Architectural Review Committee (ARC). Furthermore, Ordinance 719 requires that all parklets be consistent with the Guidelines. ARC is being asked to review the proposed permanent parklet proposals and make a recommendation to the Community Development Director regarding their consistency with the Guidelines and other requirements.

Each of the proposed parklets are within the City’s Village Core Downtown (VCD) zoning district. According to the Guidelines, an objective of the VCD district is to maintain and enhance an active street frontage with commercial uses that attract pedestrians. Furthermore, the Guidelines state that visual continuity should be maintained through site design and compatibility of scale and materials.

In the VCD district, brick and stone masonry construction is common. Many of the buildings in this district retain many architectural features of “brick front” construction. Another common material is wood siding, especially clapboard or weatherboard. Although similar architectural styles are evident, and many elements are common, there is no one predominant architectural style, and elements are often combined in creative ways. The historic character, however, is maintained. Materials of similar design, color and texture may be considered.

An excerpt of the Village Design Guidelines is included as Attachment 7.

Municipal Code

Performance standards adopted as part of Ordinance 719 have been incorporated into [AGMC16.52.250](#) and are intended to regulate use of the parklets in a way that maintains the character of the Village and clearly delineates the responsibilities of the parklet owner with regard to maintenance, ADA access, safety, circulation and inspection requirements.

For the ARC’s consideration, the following performance standards relate to parklet furniture and other appurtenances owned and maintained by the business owner:

1. Parklets shall be consistent with the village design guidelines.
2. The primary materials shall be stone, brick, wood, decorative concrete or composite wood. Wood materials such as lattice and T1-11 plywood siding, are prohibited.

Architectural Review Committee

Consideration of Architectural Details Associated with Plot Plan Review 23-014; Installation of a Two-Space Permanent Parklet; Location – 106 East Branch Street; Applicant – Casey O’Connor, Villa Cantina

September 18, 2023

Page 5

3. Color schemes shall consist of one primary color and one secondary color unless natural wood is used.
4. Areas for the storage of trash, recycling, and green waste receptacles shall not be visible from the public right of way and all waste receptacles shall be emptied and maintained by the applicant in a neat and sanitary order. Parklets shall be kept clean and neat.

Conditions of Approval

In addition to the performance standards contained within Ordinance 719, the City’s Public Works Department has developed a list of conditions for parklet operators that will be inspected on a bi-monthly basis by the City’s Engineering Inspector. Those conditions are the following:

1. The applicant shall remove debris and trash daily.
2. Nothing can extend into the street or sidewalk beyond the vertical plane created by the concrete parklet barrier.
3. All parklet components must be safe, in working order, and free from tears.
4. Pest abatement is the responsibility of the parklet renter.
5. The applicant shall keep plants in planters healthy, contained, and free of weeds.
6. The applicant shall regularly sweep the area surrounding the parklet that City street sweepers are unable to reach.
7. Domestic water shall not be used for cleaning except for public health and safety. Any water used must be disposed of properly. No standing water.
8. The applicant shall not paint or otherwise deface the concrete barriers or planters.
9. Parklet decking shall be flush with the sidewalk.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Review the proposal and make a recommendation for approval to the Community Development Director;
2. Review the proposal and make a recommendation for approval with conditions to the Community Development Director; or
3. Provide other direction to staff.

ADVANTAGES:

Approval of the permanent parklet application will allow the City to replace the existing parklets with ones that are more attractive and intended for permanent placement. Additionally, approval of the permanent parklets will allow the City to begin collecting rent money for the use of the parklets. Continued use of the parklets provides business owners with additional outdoor dining options, contributing to the walkability of the Village and contributing to economic development for the City and the businesses.

DISADVANTAGES:

Architectural Review Committee

Consideration of Architectural Details Associated with Plot Plan Review 23-014;
Installation of a Two-Space Permanent Parklet; Location – 106 East Branch Street;
Applicant – Casey O’Connor, Villa Cantina

September 18, 2023

Page 6

None identified.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

The project was reviewed in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and determined to be categorically exempt per Section 15301(c) of the Guidelines regarding the alteration of existing highways and streets, sidewalks, gutters, bicycle and pedestrian trails, and similar facilities that do not create additional automobile lanes.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION AND COMMENTS:

The Agenda was posted at City Hall and on the City’s website in accordance with Government Code Section 54954.2.

Attachments:

1. Resolution 5007
2. Parklet Location Map and Photos
3. Ordinance 719
4. City Approved Parklet Plant List
5. Parklet Elevation Rendering
6. Parklet Site Plan, Furniture Colors & Materials
7. Village Design Guidelines