



# **PLANNING COMMISSION**

## **AGENDA REPORT**

VI. 2

MEETING DATE: AUGUST 8, 2011

ITEM NUMBER:

**SUBJECT:** REVIEW OF ZONING APPLICATION ZA-11-08 FOR A MINOR CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO LEGALIZE EXTENDED HOURS (PAST 11PM) FOR SULTANA HOOKAH LOUNGE  
698 WEST 19<sup>TH</sup> STREET

**DATE:** JULY 28, 2011

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** REBECCA ROBBINS, ASSISTANT PLANNER  
(714) 754-5609 (RROBBINS@CI.COSTA-MESA.CA.US)

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### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The following application was denied by the Zoning Administrator on July 7, 2011 and called up for review on July 14, 2011.

Zoning Application ZA-11-08 is a request for a minor conditional use permit to legalize extended hours of operation past 11:00 p.m for Sultana Hookah Lounge. Code requires approval of a MCUP to operate past 11:00 p.m. because the property is within 200 feet (or less) of a residential zone. The proposed business hours are 5:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m., Monday through Thursday and 5:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m., Friday through Sunday.

### **APPLICANT**

The applicant is Emad Ahmed Elhasany.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Uphold the Zoning Administrator's denial by adoption of Planning Commission resolution.

### **BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS**

A full description and discussion of the project is contained within the Zoning Administrator's denial letter, attached in its entirety to this report (Attachment 3).

The City received 28 communications in opposition to the proposal, including a signed petition containing 24 signatures. No communications were received in support of the proposal.

In summary, the Zoning Administrator's justification's for denial were as follows:

- From January 2008 to February 2011, there is record of approximately 277 police service calls related to noise disturbances, fighting, and public drunkenness. Seventy-eight percent of those service calls occurred after 11:00 p.m.

- Legalization of the extended business hours past 11:00 p.m. was considered incompatible with neighboring residential uses. This is evidenced in the volume of service calls and the opposition letters from residents (e.g. Bethel Towers).
- The business had difficulty with operating in a manner that is compatible with existing businesses. This is based on complaints received from neighboring businesses for illegal parking and litter from patrons.
- The business owner had failed to fully rectify the problems in recent months (March – June 2011). Although he had made recent efforts to implement noise, security, and property maintenance measures, a total of 22 service calls initiated from resident complaints (and not routine police patrol) were received during the application processing period. Seventy-three percent of the calls occurred after hours.
- The history of police activity and complaints indicated that the extended hours would be inconsistent with a General Plan policy, which protects existing residential neighborhoods from the encroachment of incompatible or potentially disruptive land uses.

**ALTERNATIVES**

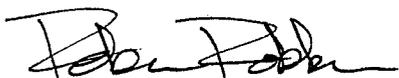
The Planning Commission has the following alternatives:

1. Uphold the Zoning Administrator’s denial of the extended hours of operation. This would require the business owner to limit his hours of operation of the hookah lounge to close at 11:00 p.m. and a similar request could not be submitted for six months.
2. Reverse the Zoning Administrator’s denial of the extended hours of operation. This would allow the hookah to operate past 11:00 p.m.

**CONCLUSION**

The Zoning Administrator denied the request to extend the business hours past 11:00 p.m., and this decision was based on the high volume of police activity after hours and complaints from both residents and neighboring businesses.

A significant degree of police resources have been consistently devoted to the hookah lounge to patrol the use and the surrounding area due to the after hours operations. From January 2008 through February 2011, approximately 78 percent of the 277 police service calls occurred after 11:00 p.m. After the zoning application was filed, operational changes were instituted which did not significantly reduce the service calls/complaints. Approximately 73 percent of the 22 service calls received from March 2011 through June 2011 occurred after 11:00 p.m.



REBECCA ROBBINS  
Assistant Planner



CLAIRE FLYNN, AICP  
Acting Assistant Development Svs. Director

- Attachments:
1. Draft Resolution
  2. Request for Review
  3. Zoning Administrator's letter of July 7, 2011
  4. Applicant's Project Description and Justification
  5. Location Map & Site Photos
  6. Plans
  7. Communications Received

Distribution: Interim Development Services Director  
Deputy City Attorney  
City Engineer  
Transportation Svs. Mgr.  
Fire Protection Analyst  
Staff (4)  
File (2)

Emad Ahmed Elhasany  
400 Merrimac Way, Apt 12  
Costa Mesa, CA 92626

Pietro Nicolas Di  
1800 Peninsula Pl  
Costa Mesa, Ca 92627-4593

File: 080811ZA1109Review	Date: 072811	Time: 4:45 p.m.
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RESOLUTION NO. PC-11-

**A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE  
CITY OF COSTA MESA DENYING ZONING APPLICATION ZA-  
11-08**

THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF COSTA MESA HEREBY RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

WHEREAS, an application was filed by Emad Ahmed Elhasany, authorized agent for property owner Nicolas Di Pietro, with respect to the real property located at 698 West 19<sup>th</sup> Street, requesting approval of a minor conditional use permit to legalize extended hours of operation past 11:00 p.m. (5:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m., Monday through Thursday and 5:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m., Friday through Sunday) for Sultana Hookah Lounge, in the C1 zone;

WHEREAS, the Zoning Administrator denied Minor Conditional Use Permit ZA-11-08 on July 7, 2011;

WHEREAS, Planning Commission Chair Colin McCarthy requested a review of ZA-11-08 on July 14, 2011;

WHEREAS, a duly noticed public hearing was held by the Planning Commission on August 8, 2011, with all persons provided an opportunity to speak for and against the proposed project.

BE IT RESOLVED that, based on the evidence in the record and the findings contained in Exhibit "A, the Planning Commission hereby **UPHOLDS** the Zoning Administrator's **DENIAL** of Zoning Application ZA-11-08 with respect to the property described above.

**PASSED AND ADOPTED this 8th day of August, 2011.**

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COLIN MCCARTHY  
Chair, Costa Mesa Planning Commission

## EXHIBIT "A"

**FINDINGS – DENIAL (ZA-11-08)**

1. The information presented substantially complies with Section 13-29(g)(2) of the Costa Mesa Municipal Code in that:

- a. The proposed use is not considered substantially compatible and harmonious with developments in the same general area.

The property containing the hookah lounge abuts a residentially-zoned property to the east containing a 270-unit, 18-story senior housing building (Bethel Towers) to the east. Bedrooms within Bethel Towers face west, towards the parking lot of the property containing the hookah lounge. With the history of services calls and neighboring resident and business complaints including noise and garbage spilling over onto their properties, customers leaving and entering the business past the Code permitted 11:00 p.m. would negatively impact the neighboring uses.

- b. Granting the MCUP will be materially detrimental to the general welfare of the public.

A significant degree of police resources have been consistently devoted to the hookah lounge to patrol the use and the surrounding area due to the after hours operations. From January 2008 through February 2011, approximately 78 percent of the 277 police service calls occurred after 11:00 p.m. During the application processing period since March 2011, improvements were made to the suite, and operational changes were instituted, approximately 73 percent of the 22 service calls received from March 2011 through June 2011 occurred after 11:00 p.m. Allowing extended hours of operation for the hookah lounge would continue the intrusion and adverse impacts on the neighboring properties.

- c. Granting the MCUP will allow a use which is not in accordance with the General Plan Designation.

General Plan Objective LU-1F to promotes minimizing blighting influences and maintain the integrity of stable neighborhoods and General Plan Objective HOU-1.2 which protects existing residential neighborhoods from the encroachment of incompatible or potentially disruptive land uses and/or activities. Given the proximity to residentially-zoned property and history of Police Department service calls to the property, this site is considered an inappropriate location for the proposed extended hours of operation for the hookah lounge.

2. The Costa Mesa Zoning Administrator has denied ZA-11-08. Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080(b)(5) and CEQA Guidelines Section 15270(a), CEQA does not apply to this project because it has been rejected and will not be carried out.
3. The project is exempt from Chapter XII, Article 3 Transportation System Management, of Title 13 of the Costa Mesa Municipal Code.

REC'D JUL 14 2011



City of Costa Mesa

- Appeal of Planning Commission Decision/Rehearing - \$1,220.00
- Appeal of Zoning Administrator/Staff Decision - \$690.00

APPLICATION FOR APPEAL, REHEARING, OR REVIEW

Applicant Name\* Colin McAnally  
 Address Planning Commission  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Representing \_\_\_\_\_

REQUEST FOR:  REHEARING  APPEAL  REVIEW\*\*

Decision of which appeal, rehearing, or review is requested: (give application number, if applicable, and the date of the decision, if known.)

2A 11-08  
698 W. 19th Street

Decision by: Zoning ADM

Reasons for requesting appeal, rehearing, or review:

Additional information to be provided by applicant.

Date: 7/14/11 Signature: Colin McAnally

\*If you are serving as the agent for another person, please identify the person you represent and provide proof of authorization.  
 \*\*Review may be requested only by Planning Commission, Planning Commission Member, City Council, or City Council Member

For office use only - do not write below this line

SCHEDULED FOR THE CITY COUNCIL/PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING OF:  
 If appeal, rehearing, or review is for a person or body other than City Council/Planning Commission, date of hearing of appeal, rehearing, or review:



# CITY OF COSTA MESA

P.O. BOX 1200 • 77 FAIR DRIVE • CALIFORNIA 92628-1200

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

July 7, 2011

Emad Ahmed Elhasany  
400 Merrimac Way, Apt 12  
Costa Mesa, CA 92626

**RE: ZONING APPLICATION ZA-11-08  
MINOR CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO LEGALIZE EXTENDED HOURS OF  
OPERATION FOR SULTANA HOOKAH LOUNGE  
698 WEST 19<sup>TH</sup> STREET, COSTA MESA**

Dear Mr. Elhasany:

Review of the minor conditional use permit for the above-referenced project has been completed. The application, as described in the attached project description, has been **denied**, based on the attached findings. The decision will become final at **5 p.m. on July 14, 2011**, unless appealed by an affected party (including filing of the necessary application and payment of the appropriate fee) or by a member of the Planning Commission or City Council.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please feel free to contact the project planner, Rebecca Robbins, at 714-754-5609 or via email at [rrobbins@ci.costa-mesa.ca.us](mailto:rrobbins@ci.costa-mesa.ca.us)

Sincerely,

~~WILLA BOUWENS-KILLÉEN, AICP~~  
Zoning Administrator

Attachments:      Project description  
                         Findings  
                         Conditions of approval and Code Requirements  
                         Conceptual Site Plan

cc:      Engineering  
         Fire Protection Analyst  
         Building Division

Nicolas Di Pietro  
1800 Peninsula Pl  
Costa Mesa, Ca 92627-4593

Moaz Emad Elhasany  
400 Merrimac Way, Apt 12  
Costa Mesa, CA 92626

7

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### *Project Location*

- Sultana Hookah Lounge occupies an approximately 1,480 square-foot suite within an existing multi-tenant development. The property is zoned C1 (Local Business) and has a General Plan designation of General Commercial.
- The property is surrounded by commercially zoned properties to the north, across Pomona Avenue to the west, and across West 19<sup>th</sup> Street to the south. The property located to the east is zoned R3 (Multiple Family Residential) and contains a 270-unit, 18-story senior housing building (Bethel Towers).

### *History*

- Sultana Hookah Lounge was issued a business license in January 2007; the current owners acquired the business in December 2007. The business was approved to operate between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m.
- In February 2011 a complaint was made to City Council that the hookah lounge was operating past 11:00 p.m. This minor conditional use permit application is a result of that complaint.
- The Police Department experienced a high volume of service calls to the area from January 2008 through February 2011 (277 service calls over 3 years, 2 months or an average of approximately 7 calls per month; with a peak of 13 calls in one of the months).

### *Proposed Extended Hours*

- The applicant requests to legalize extended hours of operation past 11:00 p.m. The proposed business hours are 5:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m., Monday through Thursday and 5:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m., Friday through Sunday. Since the business is located within 200 feet of a residential zone, a minor conditional use permit is required to operate past 11:00 p.m. No live entertainment and/or food or beverage sales are proposed.

### *Analysis*

Staff is unable to support the extended hours of operation past 11:00 p.m. for the following reasons:

- High volume of police service calls involving noise disturbances and public drunkenness. A significant degree of police resources have been consistently devoted to the hookah lounge to patrol the use and the surrounding area due to the after hours operations. From January 2008 through February 2011, approximately 78 percent of the 277 police service calls occurred after 11:00 p.m. with the majority of service calls involving noise/music disturbances, fighting, and public drunkenness.
- Proposal to extend business hours past 11:00PM is considered incompatible with neighboring residential uses. The subject property abuts a residentially-zoned property containing a 270-unit, 18-story senior housing building (Bethel Towers) to the east. Bedrooms within Bethel Towers face west, towards the parking lot of the property containing the hookah lounge. Resident's complaints and communications received

state high levels of noise late in the evening by customers in the parking lot of the hookah lounge and incidences of vandalism.

Based on the history of services calls to, and disturbances at, the property, customers leaving and entering the business past the approved 11:00 p.m. closing time will negatively impact the neighboring sensitive residential use.

- The business has difficulty with operating in a manner that is compatible with existing businesses. Communications have been received from neighboring businesses stating patrons of the hookah lounge illegally park on their property and leave garbage (i.e. alcoholic beverage bottles) for the neighboring businesses to clean up.
- The business owner has failed to fully rectify the problems in recent months (March – June 2011). Police service calls continue despite the applicant's recent efforts to control disturbances.

Working with Planning staff, the applicant made improvements to the suite and modified some operational aspects of the business to try and address complaints. These improvements included installing security cameras, increasing the lighting inside the business and the parking lot, adding sound proofing materials to the rear door and keeping it closed to reduce noise spillover, and reducing the size and quantity of music speakers.

Staff recognizes these improvements; however, 22 service calls occurred in the last four months when these business practices were in place. Approximately 73 percent of the service calls during this period transpired after 11:00 p.m. Therefore, staff does not consider these measures sufficient to warrant the extended hours of operation.

- Inconsistency with the General Plan. The proposed in not consistent with General Plan Objective LU-1F to minimize blighting influences and maintain the integrity of stable neighborhoods and General Plan Objective HOU-1.2 which protects existing residential neighborhoods from the encroachment of incompatible or potentially disruptive land uses and/or activities. Given the proximity to residentially-zoned property and history of Police Department service calls to the property, this site is considered an inappropriate location for the proposed extended hours of operation for the hookah lounge.

## **FINDINGS**

1. The information presented substantially complies with Section 13-29(g)(2) of the Costa Mesa Municipal Code in that:
  - a. The proposed use is not considered substantially compatible and harmonious with developments in the same general area.

The property containing the hookah lounge abuts a residentially-zoned property to the east containing a 270-unit, 18-story senior housing building (Bethel Towers) to the east. Bedrooms within Bethel Towers face west, towards the parking lot of the property containing the hookah lounge. With the history of services calls and

neighboring resident and business complaints including noise and garbage spilling over onto their properties, customers leaving and entering the business past the Code permitted 11:00 p.m. would negatively impact the neighboring uses.

- b. Granting the MCUP will be materially detrimental to the general welfare of the public.

A significant degree of police resources have been consistently devoted to the hookah lounge to patrol the use and the surrounding area due to the after hours operations. From January 2008 through February 2011, approximately 78 percent of the 277 police service calls occurred after 11:00 p.m. Even after the zoning application was filed, improvements were made to the suite, and operational changes were instituted, approximately 73 percent of the 22 service calls received from March 2011 through June 2011 occurred after 11:00 p.m. Allowing extended hours of operation for the hookah lounge would continue the intrusion and adverse impacts on the neighboring properties.

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2. The Costa Mesa Zoning Administrator has denied ZA-11-08. Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080(b)(5) and CEQA Guidelines Section 15270(a), CEQA does not apply to this project because it has been rejected and will not be carried out.
3. The project is exempt from Chapter XII, Article 3 Transportation System Management, of Title 13 of the Costa Mesa Municipal Code.

## *Sultana Hookah Lounge*

Dear Committee

This is Sultana Hookah Lounge Located at 698 W 19<sup>th</sup> St on the corner of 19<sup>th</sup> St and Pomona Ave We are an established Business since 1999, Ever since 1999 we didn't have any complains, Citations, Shut downs, or any criminal activities and we also supported the police numerous amount of times with any illegal activities such as: Calling the police or waiving them down ect... After we were aware that we were disturbing the peace we started a construction project part of the project is installing a soundproof glass replacing all the glass that surround the business and also a soundproof door to replace all the doors in the business and we also have security in the parking lot during our business hour, being a night time that we are, we open at 7 Pm we will be forced out of business because our business requires to be a night time business and we depend on the night time to make money to keep us in business and I understand that over 80% of Costa Mesa are categorized as a small business and I also understand that Costa Mesa works as hard as it can to satisfy everyone (Businesses and Citizens). All we ask for is to get permission to close at 2am in the weekdays and 3am in the weekends and please keep in mind the years that past when we were in business and we were unaware of the law that forces us to close at 11pm and our closing time during the whole year was 2am in the weekdays and 4am in the weekends and there was no complains to the point that code enforcement and the Costa Mesa Police Station were not aware that we were open past 11pm and also please keep in mind that our business does not attract any violence what so ever being a business or "Lounge" we cannot allow alcohol or allow people to drink inside with those facts in mind please respond to us as soon as you have a decision.

Thank you very much  
And have a nice day

Sincerely

*Sultana Hookah Lounge*

In compliance to your request of documents for the minor conditional use permit (za-11-08) we have done a lot of additions to our business (sultana hookah lounge). To better suit your comfortability and knowledge as a request to support the extended hours and operation, we have added the following...

1. Security discription

A. We have installed secutiry camera's inside the business and outside of the parking lot with 24 hour video recording and night vision.

B. We have doubled our lighting inside the business. We had 4 light's inside and now we have 8 bright light's.

C. We have installed 3 extremely bright flood light's in the parking lot that illuminates the entire parking lot.

D. We have contacted a security company to make a contract to have a on site security guard here at night.

The reason we have not contracted

the security officer is because we were told to contact officer Travino and see exactly what he wanted us to have.

We have contacted officer Travino and are waiting for his answer on what exactly is needed.

2. Soundproofing

A. We only have 1 door in the rear of the business. We have changed the door from a thin standard door to a thicker (80" tall x 35" wide x 1.75" thick). We also have added a soundproofing foam and fabric to reduce sound travel.

B. We are also keeping this door closed during business hours to reduce sound travel. We used to have it open before.

C. We also used to have 4 large speaker's with subwoofer's and they were set up as a surround sound type set-up. They were removed and replaced with 2 small speaker's without subwoofer's and a low output. The speaker's are now pointed twords the front of the building to reduce sound travel to the neighbor's. This has made a tremendous difference in the amount of sound that travels outside of the business and you can almost not hear anything from outside. We have not had any police contact or complaint's since this was changed to the new layout so it should be good for both us and our neighbor's.

3. Floor plan of the business and labeled use's for each area

A. We have included a layout of our business and labeled use's for each area on a seperate sheet of paper.

4. Certification letter for the mailing labels

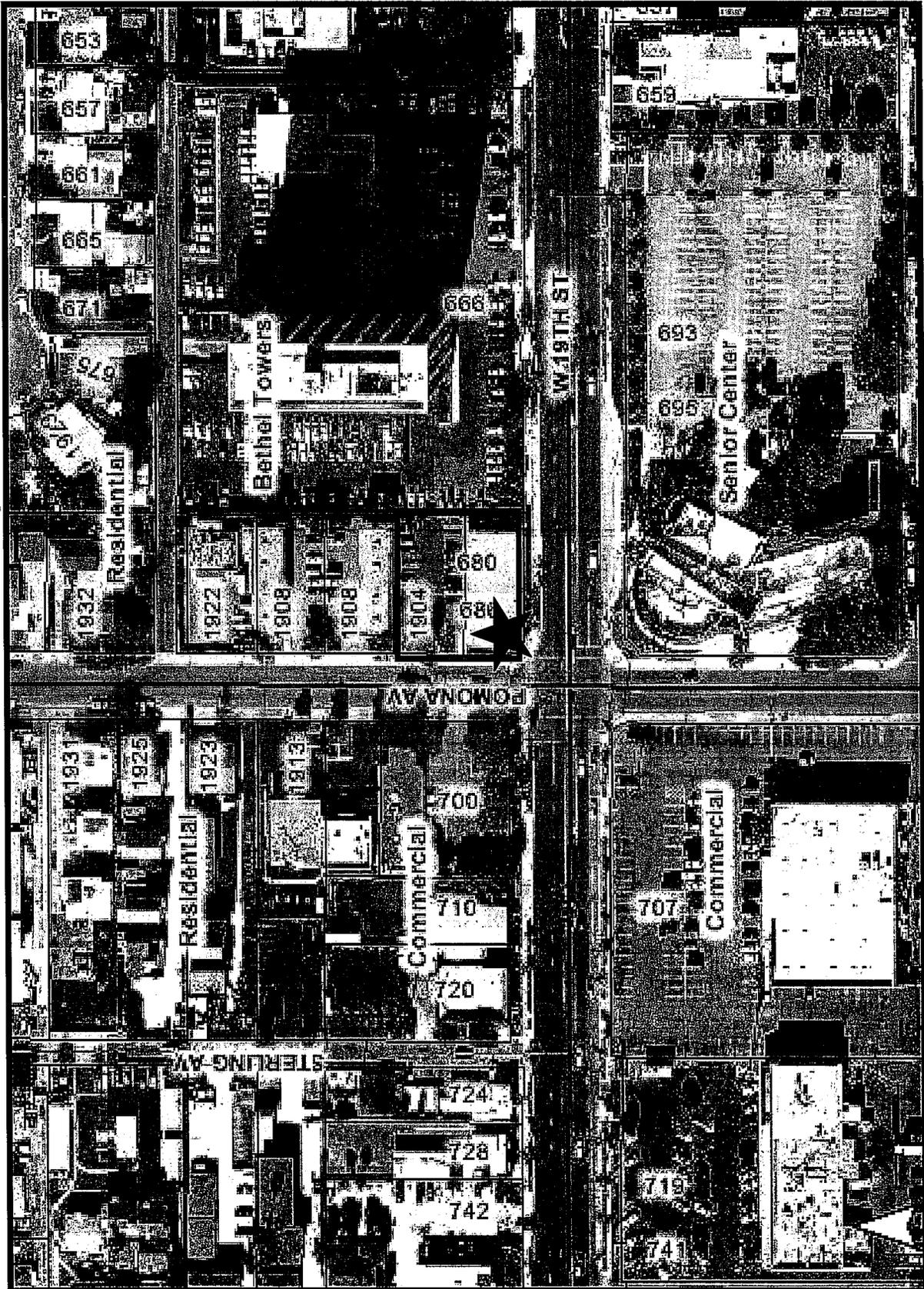
A. We have submitted the certified letter for the mailing labels to you before and the city of Costa Mesa's secretary said they are still on file.

This should conclude your request as we reviewed your requirement's and are working with anything you might need to help you and us have a safer business. If you should have any further request's or requirement's please let us know and we will be happy to add them as soon as possible. We appologize for not having these addition's sooner and look forward to keeping the peace and not having any more police contact in the future.

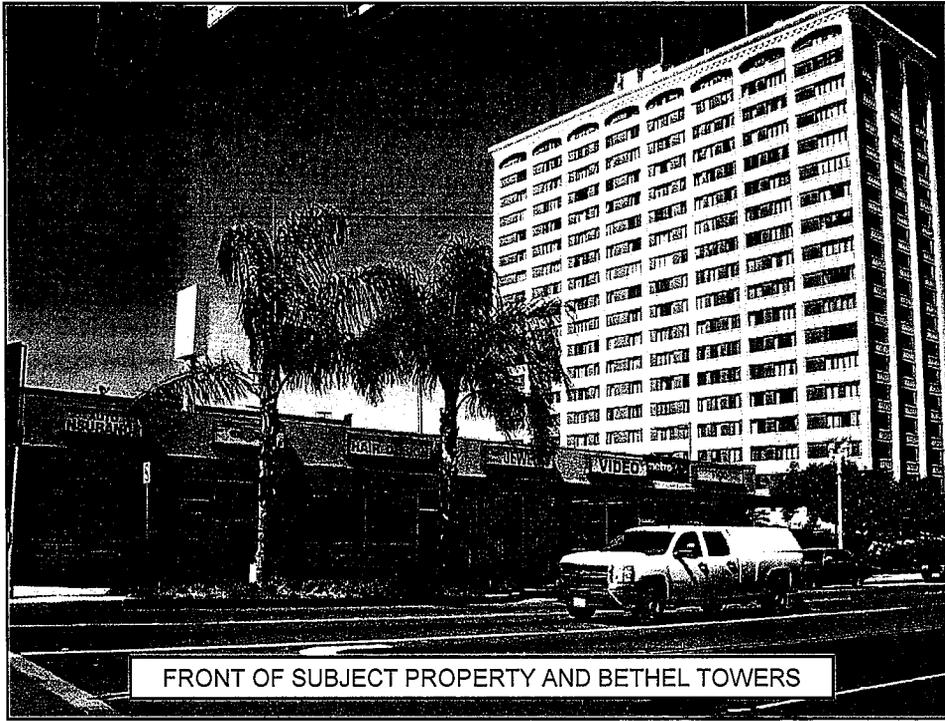
Thank you,

Sultana Hookah Lounge  
698 West 19th St.  
Costa Mesa, CA 92627  
(909)754-5611

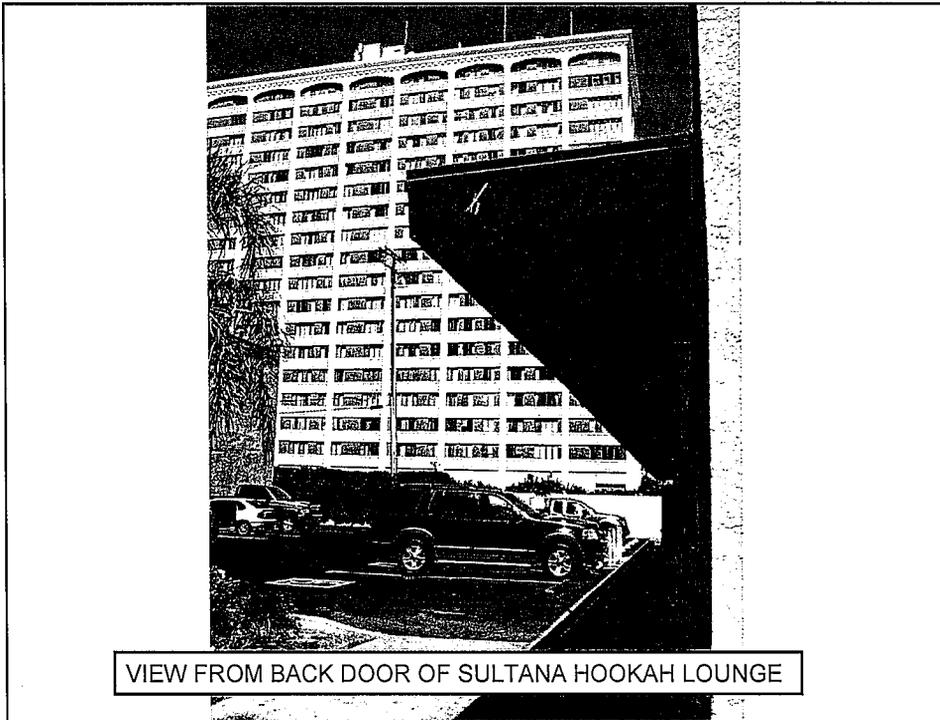
Location Map



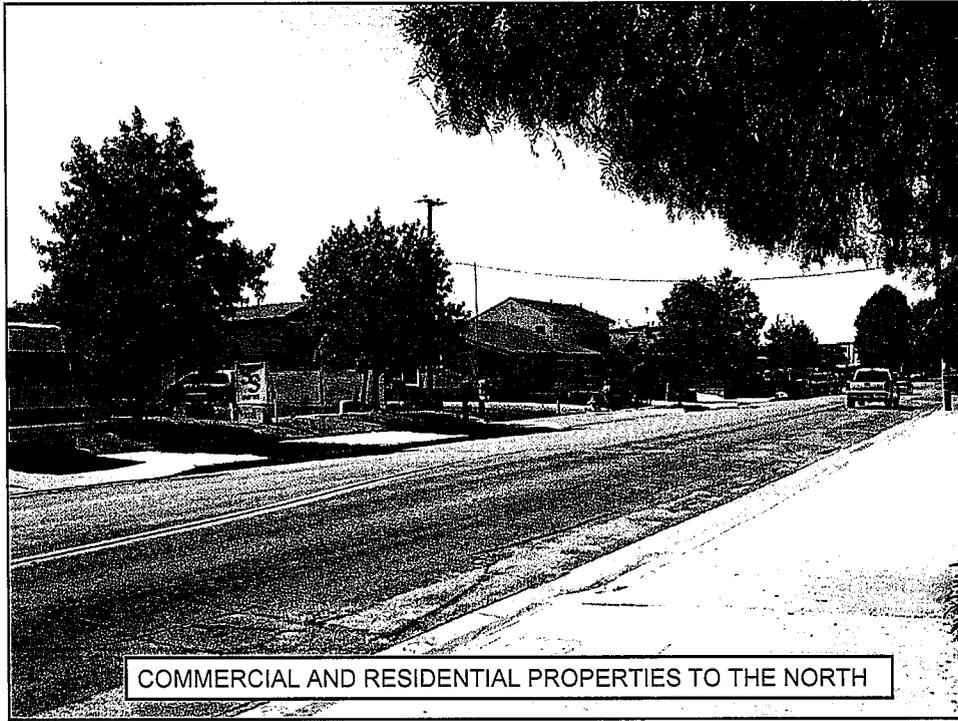
★ 698 W 19th Street  
Sultana Hookah Lounge



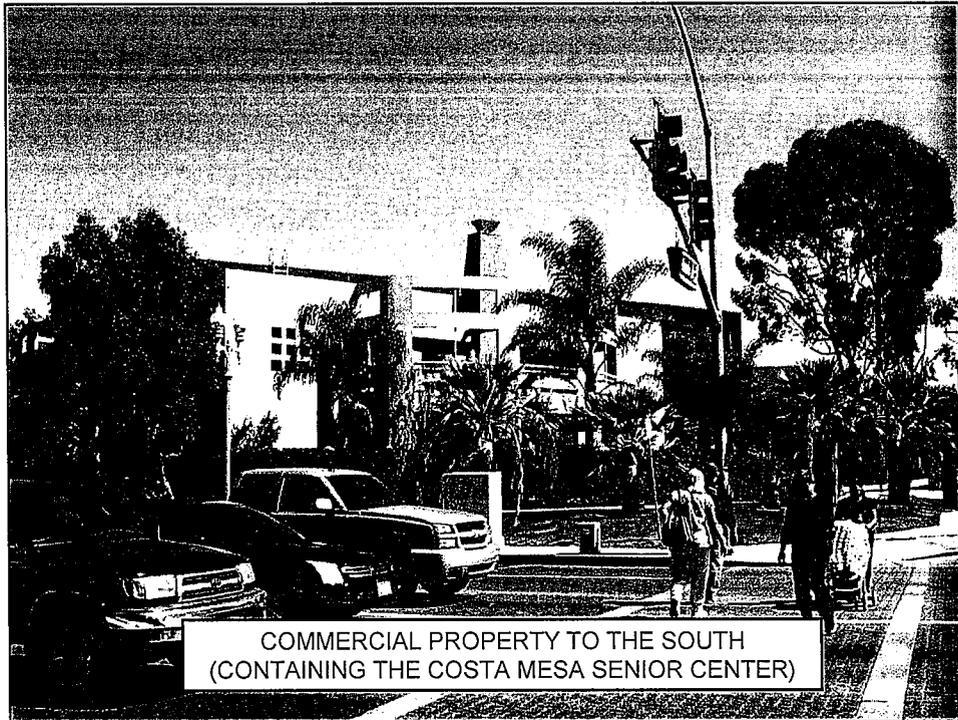
FRONT OF SUBJECT PROPERTY AND BETHEL TOWERS



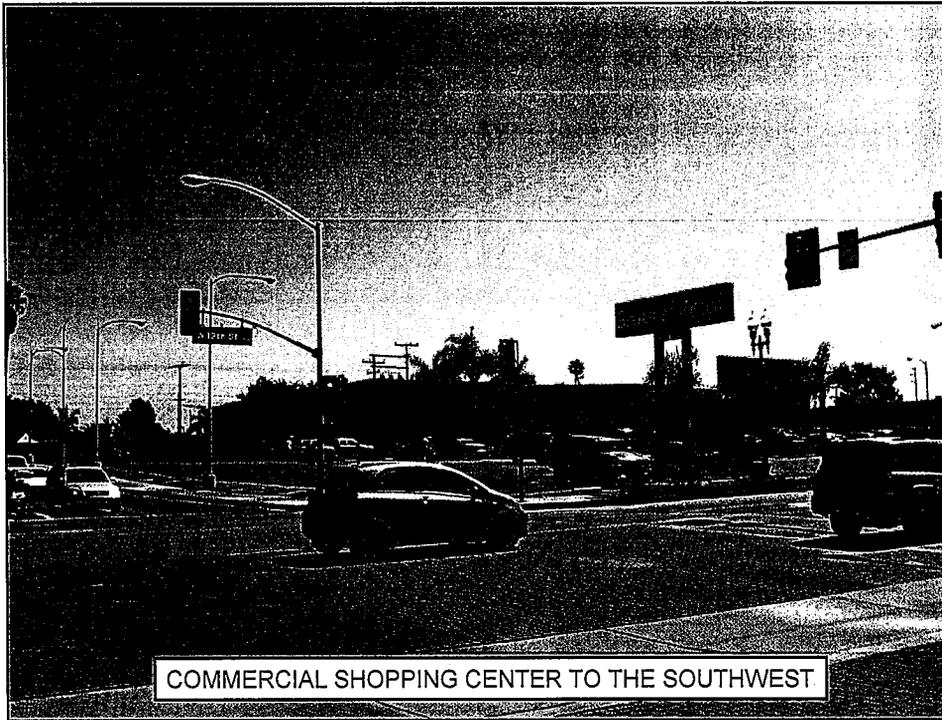
VIEW FROM BACK DOOR OF SULTANA HOOKAH LOUNGE



COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES TO THE NORTH



COMMERCIAL PROPERTY TO THE SOUTH  
(CONTAINING THE COSTA MESA SENIOR CENTER)

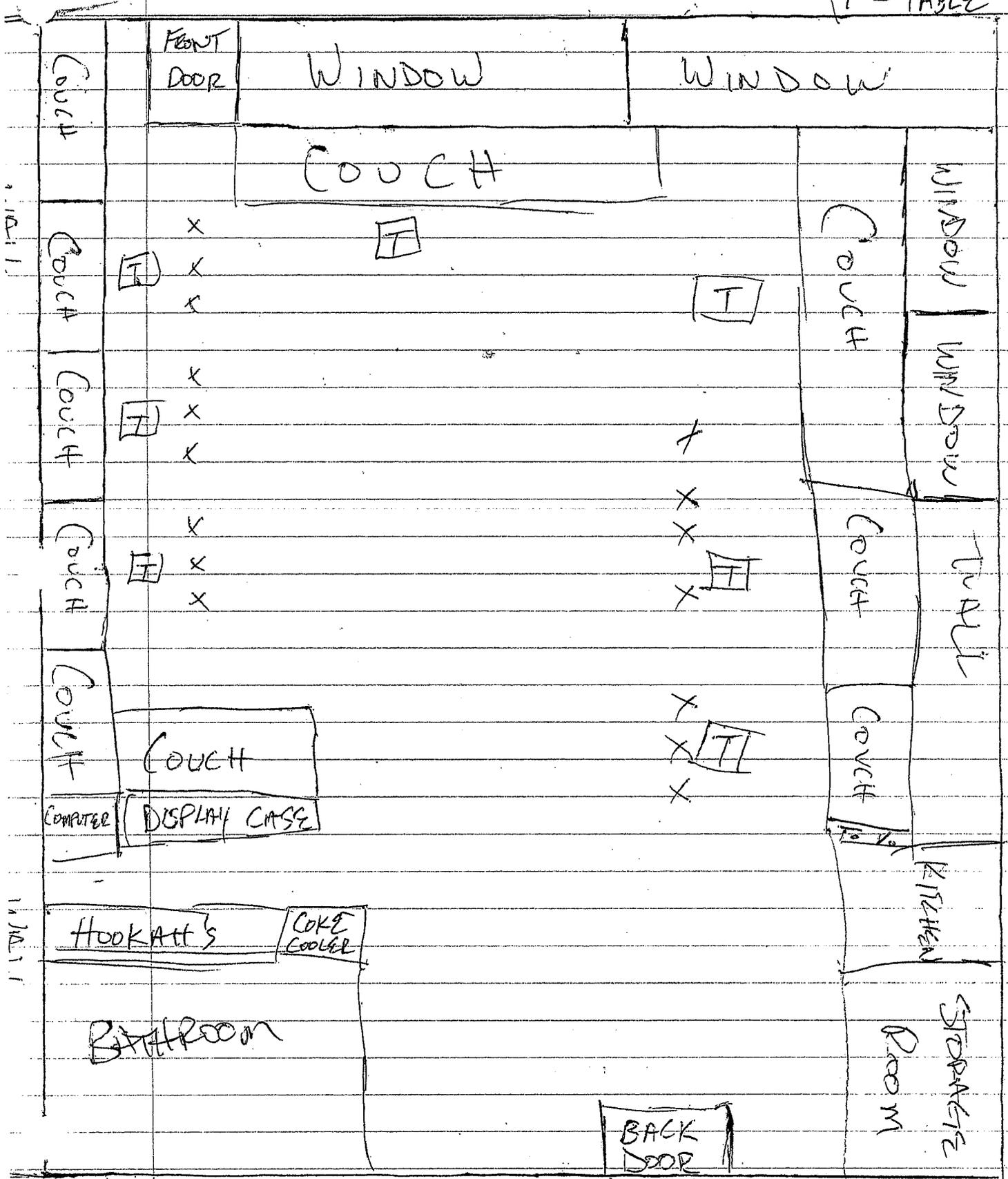


COMMERCIAL SHOPPING CENTER TO THE SOUTHWEST

SULTANA STORE FLOOR PLAN

ATTACHMENT 6

X = CHAIR  
T = TABLE



BASIC FLOOR PLAN

FRONT DOOR

Lounge area

Lounge area

Bathroom

Tobacco Room

Back Door

Storage

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**From:** Daniel E. Wilderman [mailto: [REDACTED]]  
**Sent:** Friday, July 01, 2011 5:25 PM  
**To:** PLANNING COMMISSION  
**Subject:** Proposal for hours increase for conditional use permit - Hookah Lounge

Dear Sirs,

I understand that the Costa Mesa Zoning Administrator will be making a ruling regarding the hours for the Hookah Lounge, extending them into the small hours of the morning.

I am the Resident Administrator of Bethel Towers. I (and about 150 of our senior adult residents) have the misfortune of having our bedrooms on the west side of the building, facing the Hookah Lounge and its parking lot behind the establishment.

It is a common experience for us to be awakened by the customers late in the evening. The (mostly) young people flow out into the parking lot behind the establishment; often talking loudly, sometimes yelling or even fighting with one-another, sometimes throwing their empty beer bottles over the fence into our parking lot. (I wouldn't attempt to estimate how many times over the five years I have been here, but frequently our residents bring the empty bottles to the office.) A few times the bottles have hit a car parked nose in to the dividing fence and left a mark. In at least one case the windshield was cracked.

It is difficult to overstate how distressing it is to our senior adult residents to be awakened out of their sleep by the late night noise directly related to the Hookah lounge. To have this public disturbance extending into the post-midnight hours adds insult to injury. In addition, (for our particular population, many of whom are in poor health) the loss of sleep involved can be a serious medical issue. Once awakened, many of them find it impossible to get back to sleep.

I realize that the proprietor of this cancer distribution center is not wholly responsible for the conduct of his customers after they leave; however this is a residential area as far as Bethel Towers is concerned; and a vulnerable group of residents at that.

Please be kind to our senior residents and deny this change in use permit. Perhaps that would encourage the proprietor to move his operation to an area where his customers' rowdy conduct would have less impact on folks who want little more than a good night's sleep.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dan Wilderman  
Resident Administrator

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For more information please visit <http://www.messagelabs.com/email>

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**From:** marc stirbl [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 30, 2011 8:10 PM  
**To:** ROBBINS, REBECCA  
**Subject:** deny application ZA-11-08

to:  
Rebecca Robbins  
Planning Commission  
Costa Mesa, CA

June 30, 2011

Re: Application ZA-11-08

Dear Ms. Robbins,

Please deny extended open hours of Hooka Lounge at corner of 19th & Pomona Ave. 7 - 11 P.M. is enough. They stay open, illegally, well past 2 A.M. every night, encouraging the misconduct of their customer based drunken youth with nothing better to do than create mess and noise.

We at Sano Medical Clinic (across the street from Hooka Lounge) are forced to clean up Hooka Lounge's customers messes. They illegally park here, leave their garbage, bottles and vomit here most nights for us to clean up the next day; some patrons of Hooka Lounge have even passed out in the parking lot all night.

We believe, with all the evidence before us, that it would be irresponsible to grant Hooka Lounge's request to stay open past 11; inviting drunks and irresponsible youth to create more disturbance in this quiet community. This largely residential area is not suitable for Hooka Lounge; close to schools, senior residents and a medical clinic; being forced to deal with the mess they create.

Sincerely,

Marc Stirbl  
Property Manager  
Sano Medical Clinic  
700 West, 19th Street,  
Costa Mesa, CA. 92627, U.S.

Mobile: [REDACTED]

To the City of Costa Mesa Planning Commission.

Re: application - 11  
Hooker Lounge hours

Gentlemen

This request must be denied on the solid grounds  
Nuisance escalations: the current operations of  
this business are a nuisance to the residences.

- 1) Hildegard Gonzalez
- 2) Faustino Vernaldono
- 3) Jose LOPEZ
- 4) Martin Lopez
- 5) Berta Robicatti
- Leticia Comales
- Sno Medical - all Staff
- Helmi Alata Manu
- Don Wilberma
- Sebastian
- 9) Lisseth Trejo
- 10) Steve C
- 11) Damaris
- 12) Quijano
- 13) James H. Richardson
- 14) Phillip Lawrence
- 15) George Lopez
- 16) Carmen Lopez
- Mental affict
- 17) Dr. James Stible
- 18) Menina Diaz
- 19) Aralia Diaz
- 20) Gilberto Trejo
- 21) Maria M E
- 22) Verberito Alvarado
- 23) Norma
- 24) Comales

From: Donna [REDACTED]  
Sent: Wednesday, July 06, 2011 8:46 PM  
To: PLANNING COMMISSION  
Subject: RE: App: AZ-11-08

Re: Application AZ-11-08 Hooka Lounge

Dear Planning Commission,

Words cannot adequately express the unhealthy and disrespectful disruptions that Hooka Lounge has created in this area over the past 3+ years. Prior to Hooka Lounge's presence this was a relatively quiet neighborhood with good willed families, lots of children, families strolling at night with their children, senior residences, etc.

Now, Hooka Lounge opens their doors and the noise and disregard for the neighbors begins. Disruption, violence and fear permeate much of the time. They have invited an unhealthy element to pervade. I respectfully beg you to limit their license to operate only in areas where residents do not live so close (i.e. Bethyl Towers, homes on other side of S&S Mini Mart, etc.).

1) How is it that they can light a fire in a rickety old BBQ stand, next to a flimsy wood door with veneer peeling off, under an old, dry wooden fascia / roof; the fire and sparks from burning coals in the wind left unattended much of the time?

2) What reason did City Hall grant them a license to have a noisy business here in the first place? Why weren't they regulated to an industrial or business complex that is an adequate distance away from residents? Or at least required to sound proof the inside and keep customers from clustering, drinking, yelling and rampaging in the parking lot. . . . of course that would not help . . . we have requested them to do that for at least 3 years and they do it for one night and then "when the dust settles" quickly they are back to their violent and hostile disruptions.

Currently anyone who complains about the Hooka Lounge is subjected to threats, violent name calling, intimidation, extremely loud revving of souped up engines from monster trucks / cars (11 PM - 4 AM); without regard or care for neighbors, ignoring/defying the fact that they are in a community of other people. I went their one night to ask them to quiet down and an senior from Bethal Towers called out the window saying "please . . . quiet down, shut up" The young man (boy in a man's body), Ryan, violently yelled back [while I am standing there trying to reason with him], "YOU shut the f--- up old man" [he claims to be a Christian!]; does this give you an idea as to the atmosphere created here.

I am often afraid to walk my dog after dark. . . . I and all others in this neighborhood should feel safe, free to stroll with our families and pets after dark; free to conduct the business I want to conduct after dark without customers being afraid to come here because of the obvious noise and threat.

Their blatant disregard for others is seen, heard and felt by anyone within earshot. They deliberately draw attention to themselves [at all hours] with loud yelling, screaming outside; loud bass music all night; loud cars with loud boom box bass music blasting at all hours . . . . in essence making others pay a price for their misguided success. Aren't all of us in this neighborhood entitled to the quiet enjoyment of our rentals? Why is it that I must hire an attorney to "oppose" them [putting me in jeopardy] in order to start my business here (guided meditations, Reiki Practice workshops, children art workshops).

Yesterday as I drove by, out from the door of Hooka Lounge a young man yelled loudly, "YOU F--- BITCH" . . . . whether it was meant for me or someone else makes no difference; it gives you an idea of the atmosphere created by most of their "friends", i.e. patrons and "boys" who help Miso operate the Hooka Lounge.

The Hooka Lounge simply should not be allowed a license to practice here in this neighborhood. It is inappropriate and unhealthy to allow violent attitudes prevail in any neighborhood, by a business that has done nothing but disturb people since the city approved a license for them to operate in a residential area. They have made countless unkept promises and brought in an element verging on criminal to this family orientated area.

Isn't it time for Costa Mesa to do the right thing by requiring Hooka Lounge to move their business to an area not occupied by families, children and the few businesses that are respectful to this community they are a part of?

Again, please, revoke their license or require them to move to maintain it. Enough is enough!

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration regarding this matter.

Sincerely,  
Donna Magrina  
[REDACTED]