



CITY OF MANZANITA

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STAFF REPORT

TO: Manzanita Planning Commission
FROM: Walt Wendolowski, Contract City Planner
SUBJECT: Planning File #26040 - Variance
DATE: July 29, 2026

I. BACKGROUND

- A. **APPLICANT:** Steeplejack Burgers & Beers.
- B. **PROPERTY LOCATION:** The property is located on the north side of Laneda Avenue, 120 feet east of its intersection with North 5th Street. The site address is 519 Laneda Avenue, and the County Assessor places the property within Township 3 North; Range 10 West; Section 29AC; Tax Lot 14900.
- C. **PARCEL SIZE:** The property contains approximately 5,400 square feet.
- D. **EXISTING DEVELOPMENT:** The subject property contains a restaurant, fronts a public street, and is served by public facilities.
- E. **ZONING:** Commercial (C-1).
- F. **ADJACENT ZONING AND LAND USE:** Land to the west, east, and south is also located within the C-1 zone and contains a mix of commercial uses. Middle Housing 2 (MH-2) zoned property containing residences is located to the north.
- G. **REQUEST:** The applicant is requesting approval of a Variance to reduce required off-street parking spaces from four to two.
- H. **DECISION CRITERIA:** Review of this application shall be based on the following provisions in Ordinance 95-4: Section 3.040 (C-1 Zone); Section 4.090 (Off-Street Parking); and Article 8 (Variances).

II. APPLICATION SUMMARY

- A. The subject property contains an existing restaurant of approximately 1,600 square feet of floor area. Per Ordinance 95-4, Section 4.090.3.(m), a restaurant requires at least one off-street parking space per 400 square feet of area - in this case, the business requires four off-street spaces. Currently, the site contains four spaces: two in the rear yard served by an easement and two spaces fronting along Laneda Avenue.
- B. The applicant intends to make minor modifications to the building and grounds. Planned improvements call for the removal of the two parking spaces along Laneda Avenue. In turn, the applicant intends to place three benches and two barrels in the vacated spaces, thereby providing additional outdoor seating for the restaurant's customers. The proposed reduction in the amount of required parking requires approval of a variance before the improvements can occur.
- C. A Variance is subject to provisions in Article 8 of Ordinance 95-4, with the Planning Commission authorized to review the application. For the record, this request and review address only the proposed variance to the parking requirement in the C-1 zone.
- D. For the record, the City did not receive an area property owner or agency comments regarding the request.

III. CRITERIA AND FINDINGS - VARIANCE

- A. Article 8 contains the provisions to address variance applications. Section 8.010 notes the Planning Commission may authorize variances from the requirements of this Ordinance where it can be shown that owing to special and unusual circumstances related to a specific lot, strict application of the Ordinance would cause an undue or unnecessary hardship. No variance shall be granted to allow the use of property for a purpose not authorized within the zone in which the proposed use would be located.

FINDINGS: The proposal would modify a qualitative standard by decreasing the required number of parking spaces. Based on provisions in Ordinance 95-4, a variance is the only available option to permit the reduction.

- B. Section 8.020 establishes the specific review criteria. Each criterion, and associated findings, follows:
 - 1. Exceptional or extraordinary circumstances apply to the property and result from lot size or shape, topography, or other circumstances over which the owners of the property have no control.

FINDINGS: The applicant did not identify any exceptional or extraordinary circumstances to support the variance request.

Stating that, maintaining parking spaces off Laneda is problematic as vehicles must go back out to enter the street. This maneuver can be hazardous to vehicles and pedestrians. The location of parallel parking spaces near the driveway entrance further reduces sight distance for a driver. Therefore, maintaining the two required spaces may adversely impact vehicle and pedestrian safety.

2. The variance is necessary for the preservation of a property right of applicant substantially the same as owners of other property in the same zone or vicinity possess.

FINDINGS: The issue is whether the variance is necessary for the preservation of the owner's property rights. The site contains an active restaurant that the owner sees fit to continue investing in and current parking meets Ordinance standards. Reducing the required parking has the net effect of providing an additional "right" to the property owner as the vacated parking spaces now becomes available to seat additional customers.

3. The variance would not be materially detrimental to the purposes of the Ordinance, the Comprehensive Plan, or to property in the same zone or vicinity in which the property is located, or otherwise conflict with the objectives of any City policy.

FINDINGS: Ordinance 95-4 requires businesses, under most circumstances, to provide off-street parking. This is necessary to reduce on-street parking demand. The only exception are commercial developments along Laneda Avenue that are located on property containing less than 5,000 square feet in area. This exception does not apply to the subject site. Therefore, a reduction in parking is contrary to the intent of the parking standards in Ordinance 95-4.

4. Variance request is the minimum variance which would alleviate the hardship.

FINDINGS: As noted in item "1.", the applicant did not identify a particular hardship associated with the property that requires a decrease in parking of both spaces.

- C. While there may be benefits to vehicle and traffic safety, there is no evidence that the reduction in required parking is the result of an extraordinary condition or circumstance that is beyond the control of the property owner. Further, denial of the variance does not eliminate the owner's right to continue operating the restaurant.

Staff notes the applicant retains some options. First, as noted, if the site contains less than 5,000 square feet in area, then business does not require off-street parking. City staff presented this option to the applicant, suggesting they obtain a new survey to clarify the parcel size. Second, provisions in Ordinance 95-4, Section 4.080.14, allow for off-site parking (i.e., parking on another property). Provided the applicant can comply with the provisions in this Section, the applicant can eliminate Laneda Avenue spaces.

IV. RECOMMENDATION

City staff finds the proposal does not comply with the applicable Variance criteria and recommends the Planning Commission deny the request.

V. PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION

- A. The Planning Commission has the following options:
 - 1. Deny the application, adopting findings contained in the staff report;
 - 2. Deny the application, adopting modified findings; or,
 - 3. Approve the application, establishing findings, and conditions of approval, as to why the application complies with the decision criteria.
- B. Staff will prepare the appropriate Order for the Chair's signature.