



LANDSCAPE REVIEW BOARD MEMORANDUM

From: The Office of the City Manager **Date:** May 8, 2017

Subject: LRB 2017-01 Public Hearing and consideration of a request from Rovin, Inc. for a variance to Section 114-71 (Landscaping regulations) and Section 114-72 (Buffer yard regulations) of the North Richland Hills Code of Ordinances for property located at 6720 NE Loop 820.

Presenter: Clayton Husband, Principal Planner

Summary:

Rovin, Inc. is requesting a variance from the landscaping and buffering standards on 12.847 acres located on the south side of NE Loop 820 between Rufe Snow Drive and Redondo Street. The developer proposes to construct two full service restaurants on the property and is requesting variances from the landscaping and buffering standards as they relate to landscape setbacks, parking lot landscaping, buffer yards between nonresidential and residential property, and Freeway Corridor Overlay criteria.

General Description:

The landscaping and buffering standards that apply to this property are found in *Article III, Landscaping and Buffering Regulations* of Chapter 114 - Vegetation of the Code of Ordinances. The Development Review Committee reviewed the landscape plan for the property as part of the site plan application for the project.

The applicant's proposed plan is attached. The plan meets the requirements of the landscaping and buffering regulations with the exception of the standards described in the below table. The table summarizes the applicable standards and describes the applicant's proposal to mitigate the deficiency.

STANDARD	REQUIRED	PROPOSED
Sec. 114-71(g) Landscape setback	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 10-foot landscape setback adjacent to all public streets (Freeway Corridor overlay)• 1 large tree per 50 feet of street frontage (17 trees required)• 10 small shrubs per 50 feet of street frontage (163 shrubs required)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 10-foot landscape setback adjacent to Loop 820 complies for 100% of frontage• Waiver requested: 818 feet of street frontage with eight (8) existing trees and zero (0) shrubs• 24% of frontage includes perennial / buffalo grass mix
Sec. 114-71(h) Parking lot screening	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 30-inch tall screening shrubs spaced 3 feet on center (75 shrubs required adjacent to parking lot)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Waiver requested; no mitigation

STANDARD	REQUIRED	PROPOSED
Sec. 114-71(i) Parking lot landscaping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One (1) large tree per 20 parking spaces (24 trees required) • 5% of parking lot area landscaped (7,997 sq ft required) • All parking spaces within 100 feet of canopy tree 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14 large trees in parking lot (1 tree per 34 parking spaces) • 4% of parking lot area landscaped (6,478 sq ft) • 70% of parking spaces within 100 feet of canopy tree (333 or 475 spaces)
Sec. 114-71(k) Landscape setback for properties within the Freeway Corridor Overlay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hardscape: low wall or urban design monuments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Split cedar rail fence with stone columns and cedar gate in lieu of hardscape
Sec. 114-72 (c)(4) Buffer Requirements for properties within Freeway Corridor Overlay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8-foot masonry screening wall with Lueders limestone elements • 15-foot buffer yard • 1 large tree per 30 linear feet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Masonry screening wall complies • 10-foot buffer yard • One (1) Italian cypress per 30 linear feet

The request is being processed as a variance application, which would waive certain landscaping standards for the restaurant development. The Board may include appropriate conditions as part of the approval of a variance request. The affirmative vote of four Board members is required to approve a variance.

RESTAURANT THEME: The applicant proposes to construct two full service restaurants that carry a unique rural/industrial theme to the building architecture. The building architecture was previously reviewed and approved by City Council through a Planned Development zoning change request. The site landscaping is intended to complement the architectural theme by creating a more informal landscape with minimal landscape material. This landscaping style will differ dramatically from the intended theme of the Freeway Corridor Overlay that the City has established, which includes deciduous canopy trees and limestone hardscaping along Loop 820. The intent of the applicant, however, is to create an authentic experience and increase visibility to the property from the freeway.

GAS PIPELINE: A gas pipeline exists on the southern boundary of the property. As such, large canopy trees cannot be installed within the residential landscape setback. The root systems of larger trees would likely threaten the integrity of the pipeline and limit visibility during routine aerial inspections. Instead, the applicant is proposing smaller Italian Cypress ornamental trees on 30-foot spacing. The root systems and canopies of these trees are much smaller and less intrusive than a larger canopy tree. While the adjacent Taco Cabana site also has Italian Cypress trees in this location, they are spaced 12-foot on center and have small shrubs and grasses to complement them.

There are no supplemental shrubs/grasses proposed with this landscape variance request. The Italian Cypress trees are proposed to be spaced 30-foot on center in a 10-foot bed of crushed granite between the parking lot and the 8-foot masonry wall.



The wall and the depth of the proposed crushed granite landscape setback will be consistent with the Taco Cabana site pictured above. The Italian Cypress trees, however, will be spaced at 30 feet rather than the 12 feet shown in the photo; and no shrubs/grasses are proposed. Shrubs/grasses would be permitted by the pipeline company.

Recommendation:

Approve LRB 2017-01.