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**Planning  
Department**

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**STAFF REPORT**

Item #   **#5**  

**To:** Lemoore Planning Commission  
**From:** Gloria Hobbs, Assistant Planner  
**Review Date:** April 25, 2011  
**Subject:** Site Plan Review #2011-01 – Leprino Foods West Plant – Revision to Landscape Plan

**A. General Information:**

1. **Applicant/Owner:** Leprino Foods Company  
Attn: John Alby  
490 "F" Street  
Lemoore, California 93245  
(559) 924-7722  
(559) 924-7765 Fax  
Email jalby@leprinofoods.com
3. **Location:** 351 N. Belle Haven Drive  
Lemoore, Ca. 93245
3. **Property Description:** Assessor Parcel #023-470-007
4. **Site Area:** 60.81 Acres
5. **General Plan Designation:** Light Industrial
6. **Current Zone District:** ML (Light Industrial)
7. **Existing Use:** Cheese Processing Facility
8. **Proposal:** To eliminate landscaping and agree to construct a bike path with landscaping along Bush Street between Belle Haven Drive and College Drive.

**PLANNING COMMISSIONERS**

Chairperson – Lisa Elgin, Vice-Chair – Ronald E. Meade  
Sharon Kendall, Bob Clement, Marshall Norgaard, Jeffrey Garcia, Jim Marvin

## **Plan Location & Description:**

Lemoore Planning Commission, on August 27, 2007 approved Site Plan Review for Leprino Foods Company West Plant to expand their existing facility located at 351 N. Belle Haven Drive. The expansion also included related wastewater treatment improvements were made at the Leprino waste treatment site adjacent to the City's Wastewater facility on City property located east of 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue, west of Vine Street and south of Iona Avenue.

Planning Commission's approval for this project under Condition #2 required that a triple tree buffer shall be planted along the south side of Industry Way that has an average depth of 30', with an average spacing of 30' apart between tree centers in each row, with the ability to grow to at least 40' in height with adequate irrigation and staking, in lieu of sidewalks, curbs, and gutters, which are normally required along arterial streets, as generally shown on the redlined landscape drawing labeled Exhibit A.

Additional trees shall be planted on the easterly side of the parking area as shown in the redlined landscape drawing to block at least 20% of the cross-section view of the parking area

Along the railroad area and the easterly border of the site, plant 7' tall trees (50% of which are evergreen) at an average spacing of 20' between centers along the grove area and easterly border, that will grow to a height of over 40' to help buffer the 140' tall tower, and a portion of Leprino's southerly property line as generally shown in Exhibit A. In the area between Leprino's proposed tree grove and the high pressure gas line, Leprino should pay a \$15,000 in lieu fee to plant trees adjacent to the southside of the San Joaquin Valley Railroad mainline tracks when the right-of-way for the bike path project is given (as shown in mitigation measure 3.1.2). Proper irrigation shall be installed to all trees and plants.

On March 3, 2011 Leprino Foods Inc., West Plant submitted a revised site plan application to eliminate nine (9) existing trees along Belle Haven Drive, six (6) trees along the south entry to the facility, four (4) trees in the median, thirteen (13) existing trees around the landscape are north of the entrance to the facility, six existing trees, thirty-two trees (32) along the south side of Industry Way, all the proposed trees in and around the parking area including the area to the east, and sixteen (16) trees proposed at the western most boundary as shown in Exhibit B.

Leprino Foods is proposing, in lieu of the original landscaping requirements for the west plant to install a bike path with landscaping/irrigation along Bush Street between Belle Haven Drive and College Drive, as shown in Exhibit C.

Correspondence from Edith A. Wilkin, VP – Food Safety and Regulatory compliance stating that Leprino Foods manufacturing facilities are constructed and maintained in accordance with the Federal Food Drug and Cosmetic Act's provisions for current good Manufacturing Standards. The provisions set forth in the Code of Federal Regulations Part 1.10.20 specifically apply to plant facilities and grounds. Vegetation including trees is an attractant for vermin such as rodents insects, birds, their accompanying waste, feathers, filth and a potential for microbiological contamination, not the least of which is Salmonella. As such Leprino Foods policy requires minimal vegetation at facilities and these must be maintained significantly away from plant operations.

Staff requested the City Attorney to review General Plan Policy CD-1-6, CD-1-26, and CD-1-29 and advise us as to whether the landscape revision could be made without a General Plan Amendment. According to the City Attorney, the General Plan reiterates the need for flexibility in-light of changed conditions and also announces the high priority it places on economic development and preserving jobs. Therefore, the City Planning Commission could work with Leprino, without need for an amendment to the General Plan, to amend the street tree conditions

in the approval document to find altered methods of providing for street trees without jeopardizing the health and safety of the Leprino operations, including the jobs that Leprino provides that are so essential for the community. As a trade-off to eliminating the tree requirements adjacent to the Leprino facility other ideas would be consistent with the flexibility the General Plan and the priority given to job preservation.

**D. Recommendation:**

The Planning Commission should review the information provided, listen to the staff report, take any public testimony, discuss the proposal by Leprino for Leprino West Plant and adopt Resolution #2011-01 approving Site Plan Review #2011-01 which provides an alternative to the installation of the originally required street trees which provided an alternative to the installation of the originally required street trees.