

BUSINESS & REAL ESTATE

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SKINxFIVE Specializes in Skin Care

By LAUREL BUSBY
Staff Writer

Taking care of skin is a passion for sisters Christine Nell and KarriAnn Erdmann.

The two nurse practitioners, who are co-owners of the new business SKINxFIVE with Dr. Ava Shamban, began focusing on skin in their teens.

"I suffered from acne, and it really affected me and my self-esteem," said Nell, 41. As a nurse, "I was passionate about focusing on thorough and effective acne treatment."

Erdmann added, "At 35, I still suffer from acne. I have very sensitive skin. If someone looks at me too long, I feel like I bruise. Skin has always always been such a passion. Right now, I feel like my skin is looking top-notch. But it takes a lot of work. You have to really nurture your skin. You can't take it for granted."

Their business, SKINxFIVE (skin times five), which opened in June at 970 Monument (upstairs), has a particularly focused approach to skin care that is all cosmetic with five specific offerings, Nell said. The idea is to provide quick in-and-out services that offer instant results with no pain or downtime.

The five services are called refresher (exfoliating enzyme masks tailored to various skin types/issues), infuser (infusing microderm abrasion facials), lineless (botox injections), spotless (gentle laser treatments to rejuvenate skin) and firminator (radio

frequency treatments that "lift, tighten and iron out wrinkles").

The infuser, a combination treatment, has quickly become their top seller. "It's a fan favorite," Nell said. It works through "sloughing off dead skin cells and suctioning up clogged pores like blackheads, while also infusing vitamins, peptides, and hyaluronic, salicylic and glycolic acids to brighten, hydrate and clean all at once."

She and Erdmann said that many patients deal with skin issues from aging while also getting clogged pores more stereotypically associated with the teen years.

"A lot of patients are bummed out," Erdmann said. "They say, 'I thought I was supposed to stop breaking out when I get wrinkles,' but with hormones, it's a constant battle. Luckily with its ingredients, the infuser helps with both."

Neither Erdmann nor Nell work regularly in the Palisades, but they trained the nurse practitioners who do. The sisters come to SKINxFIVE about once a month to do filler injections, a sixth treatment that was added due to Palisadian requests. On most days, they work out of Dr. Shamban's Beverly Hills office, a full-service dermatology center that Nell has co-owned with the doctor for nine years. Dr. Shamban also has a full-service center in Santa Monica.

Dr. Shamban met Nell in 2000, two years after she moved to Los Angeles. Nell, who now lives in Beverly Hills with her husband and two daughters, had moved to L.A. after



Christine Nell (left) and KarriAnn Erdmann, co-owners with Dr. Ava Shamban of SKINxFIVE at 970 Monument.

Photo courtesy of SKINxFIVE

graduating from the University of Wisconsin in Oshkosh, her hometown, and passing her nursing board exam in 1998.

Moving to L.A. "was my grand plan," Nell said. "I just love the idea of Los Angeles. I

wanted somewhere where it was warm all year. I loved the idea of all sorts of cultures, all sorts of food. It was very exciting to go from the Midwest to Los Angeles."

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Skin Care Shell Store Plan Delayed—Again

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By SUE PASCOE
Editor

Nell enrolled in graduate school in nursing at Azusa Pacific University and then became an intern with Dr. Shamban. A year later in 2001, the internship became a job, and in 2002, she graduated from Azusa.

Her sister, now a newlywed in Redondo Beach, had a less direct path to dermatology. Erdmann initially earned a history degree at the University of Wisconsin in Madison and worked doing therapy with autistic children. She eventually earned a combined bachelor's/master's at Azusa Pacific in nursing in 2010. While at Azusa, she tried interning with her sister for Dr. Shamban.

"I loved it," Erdmann said. "I felt really natural with it." She had initially wanted to go to art school, and those artistic instincts are still there. "I look at the face a little differently—in an artistic way."

She and her sister have worked with Dr. Shamban ever since, and they have found both working and opening a business together rewarding.

"We are not only sisters, but we're best friends and great coworkers," Nell said. "We have a mutual respect for one another and for Dr. Shamban. The three of us work well together. We enjoy each other's company, and we are all similarly minded when it comes to business."

SKINxFIVE's website is skinxfive.com, and their phone number is (424) 322-8780.

The long-debated, often-revised plan for a proposed convenience store at the Shell station on Sunset at Via de la Paz may finally reach a resolution when the local Design Review Board meets in January.

Owner Saeed Kohanoff hopes to demolish the existing service bay (1,900 sq.ft.) on his property and build a 2,748-sq.-ft. mini-mart against the adjacent two-story building that features Il Ritrovo restaurant. But his plans have spent 18 months within the Pacific Palisades DRB process.

Initially, in June 2015, architect Richard Finkel of Bundy Finkel Architects (a firm that has designed 18 auto service stations in California and Nevada) proposed a Mediterranean-style convenience store. The seven-member DRB asked him to bring in a mid-century modern design. He complied, and presented new plans in July 2015.

At that meeting, it was suggested that Finkel had not captured the look and to "try again." He was also asked to bring a landscaper to the next meeting and to focus on low-water plants and trees.

The Shell station plans didn't return to the DRB agenda until November 9, 2016. By then, Kohanoff's former Mobil station (which he sold to Caruso Affiliated), had

been leveled to help make way for Caruso's Palisades Village.

At the November meeting, which was intended to be the final review of the Shell design, the board was still not happy with the rendering. DRB vice-chair David Hibbert told Finkel to look at some of Caruso's proposed architecture, noting that because of that project's size, its architectural style will become dominant in the Palisades business district, and any new buildings should reflect that new standard.

During that meeting, the audience was reminded by L.A. City Planner Kenton Trinh that this meeting was not the place to discuss for the sale of alcohol permits (which Kohanoff is seeking) permits, hours of operation and traffic. His associate, Griselda Gonzales, reminded residents the hearing was solely about design and signage.

Finkel gamely returned on December 7 with yet another rendering for the convenience store, which will replace the existing building on the property. About 20 people squeezed into the Chamber of Commerce office for another three-hour meeting that, despite an admonition by Trinh, went beyond design issues to rehash concerns of nearby residents about the size of the store, hours, traffic, safety and alcohol sales.

At the end of the meeting, the DRB asked for another architectural refinement and a fifth meeting was tentatively scheduled

for January.

The News asked City Planner Trinh by email on December 12 if there's a time limitation for projects under discussion by a DRB. He responded, "The Code states that if the applicant agrees to an extension of time, then a second meeting can be held within 30 days. It doesn't necessarily address any subsequent meetings after that, although we do want to make sure that a recommendation is made by the DRB in a timely manner. I recently took over as the Planner for the DRB, so I cannot speak on the first two meetings. At this past meeting, it was revealed the applicant had changed the overall scope of the project, so the DRB declined to make a recommendation and the applicant agreed to an extension of time. At the upcoming meeting (date uncertain), however, the DRB will be asked to make a final recommendation barring any unexpected changes."

Trinh was asked how the scope had changed.

He replied, "The applicant had changed the hours of operation and hours of alcohol sales. While that doesn't affect the design of the project, it was the first time the Planning department was made aware of this change."

In the application, Kohanoff had said he would not seek to keep his mini-mart open 24 hours. He also had reduced the hours he sought to sell alcohol. He said that had been

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