



MINUTES

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

SEPTEMBER 11, 2006

The meeting of the El Cajon City Planning Commission is called to order at 7:00 PM.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: AMBROSE, BLACK, SOTTILE, WELLS, WOODS

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: NONE

OTHERS PRESENT:
RAMIREZ , Principal Planner
DEL VALLE, Staff Attorney
DAVIES, Deputy Director – Public Works
– Engineering Division
VALLES, Administrative Secretary

MINUTES OF 8/21/06: Motion by SOTTILE, second by AMBROSE, to approve the Minutes of August 21, 2006 pro forma; carries 5-0.

BLACK explains the mission of the Planning Commission and the proper procedure for speaking before the Commission and asks for proper decorum during the meeting. He advises that the appeal period for the items on this Agenda will end on Monday, September 25, 2006 at 5:00 PM.

CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARING ON

AMENDMENT OF CUP 1973—Deena Recine for Cricket Communications for Cingular Wireless

(continued public hearing) Resolution No. 10343
PC mtg. 9-11-06

The subject property is located on the east side of East Main St. between Greenfield Dr. and Pepper Dr., and addressed as 1709 East Main Street; APN: 507-211-03; General Plan Designation: General Retail Commercial.

Request to collocate a wireless communications facility on an existing monopalm structure in the C-2 (General Commercial) zone. (***Continued from Planning Commission meeting of August 21, 2006***)

RAMIREZ summarizes the staff report and notes that this item was continued from the August 21, 2006 Planning Commission meeting to correct a noticing error. The applicant, Cricket Communications, proposes to add additional new antennas to the existing monopalm structure owned by Cingular Wireless on the property. The new antennas utilize a stealth design that mimics a real palm tree and blends into the surrounding environment and is visually unobtrusive. Staff notes that a previous condition of approval from the approved CUP 1973 site plan states that landscaping was to be maintained in good condition. This condition is not being satisfied and staff recommends the installation of new landscaping to include an automated irrigation system.

No phone calls were received in response to the public hearing notice. Staff suggests that the Planning Commission recommend approval of this item.

BLACK announces the public hearing is now open.

No one came forth.

Motion by AMBROSE, second by WELLS to close the public hearing; carries 5-0.

Motion by AMBROSE, second by WOODS to GRANT Amendment of Conditional Use Permit 1973, subject to conditions of approval, in accordance with the staff report; carries 5-0.

The appeal period for this item ends at 5:00 PM on Monday, September 25, 2006.

AMBROSE announces he must abstain from agenda items 2A & 2B due to a conflict of interest. He leaves the Council Chambers at 7:10 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARING ON

PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT 324 – Liberty Mutual Trust (Philip Chodur)

(joint-noticed CC mtg. 10-10-06)

(public hearing) Resolution No. 10362

PC mtg. 9-11-06

The subject property is located on the south side of Oakdale Avenue between 2nd and Grape Streets, and addressed as 1377 Oakdale Ave; APN: 489-123-14, General Plan Designation: Medium Density Residential.

Request to convert an existing 18-unit apartment complex into a common interest development in the R-3 (Multiple-Family) zone.

AND

PUBLIC HEARING ON

TENTATIVE SUBDIVISION MAP 638 – Liberty Mutual Trust (Philip Chodur)

(joint-noticed CC mtg. 10-10-06)

(public hearing) Resolution No. 10363

PC mtg. 9-11-06

The subject property is located on the south side of Oakdale Avenue between 2nd and Grape Streets, and addressed as 1377 Oakdale Ave; APN: 489-123-14, General Plan Designation: Medium Density Residential.

Request a one-lot subdivision map in the R-3 (Multi-Family) zone.

RAMIREZ summarizes the project, a request for the conversion of an apartment development, constructed in 1990, with a two-story building and a total of 18 units. There are open parking spaces and single car garages with a total of 43 parking spaces. Because the existing building elevations were well-designed, in staff's opinion, the applicant was allowed to submit color photos of the existing development in lieu of elevation drawings. Staff identifies one place near the southerly property line in the common recreation area that needs enhanced landscaping. Additionally, staff is recommending that the existing wood fencing be replaced with a six-foot high masonry wall that is consistent with recent City Council decisions.

RAMIREZ notes that condition number 5 was inadvertently omitted from page 3 of the staff report for TSM 638. Staff would like the following wording to be added as a condition: "Prior to recording of the final subdivision map, all conditions of approval for PUD 324 shall be met or guaranteed." Staff recommends that the Planning Commission approve both items.

BLACK announces the public hearings are now open.

Mr. Lawrence COLE, Landmark Engineering, 2605 Camino del Rio South, Suite 321, San Diego, CA 92108, is the civil engineer / land surveyor for the project and represents the applicant who could not attend the meeting. He states that they have no difficulty with the conditions of approval, or with the landscaping or perimeter wall requirements.

In response to a question from WELLS asking if the elevations would be available to the City Council, COLE replies if it is a Commission recommendation. He notes that the staff indicates the buildings are relatively new and have been well-maintained and there would be no significant structural changes; however, the elevations could be prepared if required, and he will inform the owner.

RAMIREZ informs that there are color swatches and a sample of the tile roof displayed on the board behind the staff.

Mr. Eric VISCONTI, 1377 Oakdale Avenue, #3, El Cajon, CA. a tenant in the apartment complex, informs the commission that his wife is not working due to a work injury and also that his daughter has a brain disorder and requires special schooling that they found in the area. He is pleased to have a wonderful apartment, but is concerned about the condominium conversion's effect on affordable housing for his family and families such as his.

BLACK explains that the condominium conversion process takes time, and also that the city offers resources and assistance to tenants.

No one else comes forward to be heard.

Motion by WELLS, second by SOTTILE to close the public hearings; carries 4-0 (AMBROSE-Abstain).

WELLS mentions that the Commission rarely forwards a project to the City Council without the elevations and asks staff if they foresee any problems. RAMIREZ explains that she does not foresee a problem as many Commissioners and Councilmembers see the project in the field and this project speaks for itself as the architecture is sound and the buildings and the grounds are well maintained.

Motion by WOODS, second by WELLS to RECOMMEND APPROVAL of Planned Unit Development 324; carries 4-0 (AMBROSE-Abstain).

Motion by WOODS, second by WELLS to RECOMMEND APPROVAL of Tentative Subdivision Map 638, and adding a Condition 5. to read "Prior to recording of the final subdivision map, all conditions of approval for PUD 324 shall be met or guaranteed."; carries 4-0 (AMBROSE-Abstain).

These items are jointly noticed for a City Council hearing on October 10, 2006.

The appeal period for these items end at 5:00 PM on Monday, September 25, 2006.

AMBROSE returns to the Council Chambers at 7:25 p.m.

**PUBLIC HEARING ON
AMENDMENT OF ZONING ORDINANCE REGARDING THE ADDITION OF AN HISTORIC
PRESERVATION ORDINANCE – Planning Commission**

(joint-noticed CC mtg. 10-10-06)

(public hearing) Resolution No. 10364

PC mtg. 9-11-06

To consider the amendment of the Zoning Ordinance regarding the addition of an Historic Preservation Ordinance.

RAMIREZ provides an historical overview of the ordinance, starting back in 2003, when the El Cajon Historical Society first asked the City Council to consider the adoption of an Historic Preservation Ordinance. The Planning Division staff attended a community meeting of the Historical Society and proceeded to complete a draft ordinance in June, 2004 which was distributed to the Historical Society for its review and comment.

A final draft of the ordinance is included as Exhibit A in the staff report. The proposed ordinance is voluntary, that is, a property owner must apply to receive an Historic Resource designation. The proposed ordinance creates an Historic Preservation Commission which is proposed to be the Planning Commission, a recommendation that was made because city staff cannot staff and support any additional commissions. Staff believes that having an occasional Historic Resource designation item can be reasonably handled through existing procedures, meeting dates and times. However, the El Cajon Historical Society disagrees and prefers to see a separate Historic Preservation Commission comprised entirely of Historical

Preservation professionals or specialists. While staff agrees that this would be an ideal format, there have not been a lot of Historic Preservation issues in the city. There are three primary responsibilities: 1) recommend that a building, property, resource be designated Historic; 2) determine that a Certificate of Modification can be issued to permit the demolition, alteration or removal of a designated Historic Resource; and 3) recommend that a Mills Act property tax reduction be authorized.

The Planning Commission, serving as the Historic Preservation Commission, will hold a public hearing to consider designating a property an Historic Resource. The draft ordinance contains criteria to be used by the Commission in making an Historic Resource designation determination including that it be at least 75 years old. Staff will create an application to obtain all of the pertinent information needed to determine the historical significance of a building or property. The Commission's decision is a recommendation to the City Council which must also hold a public hearing and make the final determination.

RAMIREZ adds if an ordinance is adopted, the staff will work with the Historic Society to update the Historic Preservation inventory that was prepared in 1985 by San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) under a contract with the City.

One of the financial incentives available to a property owner seeking an Historic Resource designation is the Mills Act Property Tax Reduction. In exchange for agreeing to designate a property an Historic Resource and maintaining the property, a property owner may receive a property tax reduction of between 20% and 70%. There were about 370 Mills Act properties in all of San Diego County in 2002; so there are not a lot of qualifying properties and it would appear that the financial implications to the City would not be great.

In summary, the staff believes the proposed ordinance will enable the City to satisfy the General Plan recommendation. The draft ordinance has been reviewed by the City Attorney's office, and the staff has received an email comment from Eldonna Lay supporting the adoption of an Historic Preservation Ordinance. Four additional items of correspondence supporting the ordinance were also received.

BLACK announces the public hearing is now open.

Mr. Richard HALL, 12617 Jackson Drive, El Cajon, CA 92021, an active volunteer with the El Cajon Historical Society Board of Directors for over 20 years, urges adoption of the ordinance and acknowledges that they would love to have an individual historic Commission, but they realize the city has financial problems and the staff is overburdened. Since several buildings have been lost already, and it is imperative to secure the remaining historic resource inventory through the establishment of this ordinance.

SOTTILE asks that since the ordinance is voluntary, would it be a problem with the Historical Society. HALL replies that he hopes that the property owner would like to have their property designated an historic resource. He doesn't foresee a problem that the initial ordinance be voluntary.

WELLS asks if the Historical Society would be willing to provide some education to the Planning Commissioners? HALL replies that they would be happy to provide any assistance. In their initial research, they have never found another city that has used the Planning Commission as the Historic Preservation Commission. He mentions that this would be a ground-breaking decision to have both commissions as one.

In response to a question from BLACK pertaining to any grant applications, HALL replies that there are federal grants that are available and they are fairly significant. Once the ordinance is in place, he recommends that the City apply for "Certified Government" then those federal funds would be available to use.

Ms. Claire CARPENTER, President and CEO of the El Cajon Community Development Corporation, 168 East Main Street, El Cajon, CA 92020, absolutely supports the staff's recommendation to move forward with this ordinance. In 2001, the CDC was able to get downtown El Cajon designated as a National Main Street Community. She feels the ordinance is a great economic development strategy that would bring many levels of government funding.

Ms. Eldonna LAY, 11377 Fuerte Drive, El Cajon, CA 92020, she is the interior curator of the Knox Museum, which has been classified in the SANDAG study as a Victorian farmhouse, but it was the first commercial building in the Valley. It was built in 1876 and the man who built it, Amaziah Knox has not been noted anywhere in town, except on that museum. If the City Council approves the ordinance, they would like to have the Knox House be the absolute first ones to be honored with the historical status.

Ms. Leslie DIAMOND, 131 Rea Street, El Cajon, CA 92020, representing the Wieghorst Museum, mentions that she was a city planner in Scottsdale, Arizona for 20 years and knows the importance of historic buildings. Scottsdale had a 1906 "Little Red Schoolhouse" that became a focal point of a proposed Civic Center expansion. She also cites the Padres Stadium with its historical Western Metals Building, as an example of how history and progress can co-exist. She urges the Commission to support the ordinance.

Mr. George RAMIREZ, 1590 Green Grove Avenue, El Cajon, CA 92021, is owner and resident of an historical landmark house in El Cajon -- the old Robinson Ranch that later became Rancho La Mirada. They found a treasure trove of photos and articles through the San Diego Historical Society of their home that was built in 1913, however, the property was originally established in 1897. He mentions that the City desperately needs to have an Historic Resource ordinance.

No one comes forward to be heard.

Motion by WELLS, second by AMBROSE to close the public hearing; carries 5-0.

AMBROSE wholeheartedly urges support of this ordinance that he considers to be long-overdue as several buildings have been lost.

WELLS agrees that the ordinance is a wonderful idea; however, he also agrees with staff that forming a separate commission is not feasible. He would personally like to have some education from the various groups to help determine the historic designation of a building.

SOTTILE concurs with WELLS.

Motion by AMBROSE, second by WOODS to RECOMMEND APPROVAL of Amendment of the Zoning Ordinance for the Addition of an Historic Preservation Commission in accordance with the staff report; carries 5-0.

This item is joint-noticed for a City Council hearing on October 10, 2006.

The appeal period for this item ends at 5:00 PM on Monday, September 25, 2006.

**PUBLIC HEARING ON
CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT 2024 – Home Depot USA, Inc. for San Diego Mart
Associates.**

(public hearing) Resolution #10365
PC mtg. 10-10-06

The subject property is located at north side of Fletcher Parkway between Magnolia Avenue and Pioneer Way; and addressed as 298 Fletcher Parkway, APN: 483-071-48-00: General Plan Designation: Regional Commercial.

Request a home improvement center with outdoor sales and display in the C-R (Regional Commercial) zone.

RAMIREZ provides a summary of the project, that is a request from Home Depot USA to replace the existing K-Mart building with a new retail commercial building with outdoor storage and display. The existing Home Depot, located on Arnele Avenue, proposes to move their operation to the subject K-Mart site. This site will be in addition to the store proposed on East Main Street near the easterly City limits.

The home improvement center (commercial retail sales) is allowed by right in the C-R zone, but the outdoor storage and display require a conditional use permit. In this case, the CUP will be used to review the entire proposal. The proposed outdoor storage and display is composed of: trailers, pallets, propane, sheds, seasonal garden sales, large equipment, and other outdoor sales.

Four two-way driveways are proposed to accommodate ingress and egress to this site; two from Fletcher Parkway, one from North Magnolia Avenue, and one from Coogan Way. The three southerly driveways (Fletcher Parkway and North Magnolia Avenue) are to be used by customers, the northerly driveway on Coogan Way is to be used for delivery trucks and contractors using the will call facility. Staff recommends that the North Magnolia entry driveway be given unrestricted left and right turning movements and that the east and west traffic in front of the store be required to stop, yielding to the incoming traffic. This will minimize any chances the incoming traffic will back up.

Staff has not received any responses to the public hearing notice, which was distributed for this item. Staff did receive a letter from the owner to the west on Coogan Way, where the property owner believes it is necessary that a 10-foot high wall separate his property from the existing K-Mart property (proposed Home Depot). The C-R zone, and all commercial zones only require a six-foot high separation wall when adjacent to residential. The ordinance does not apply in this case.

Staff is recommending that the Planning Commission grant the conditional use permit. Staff suggested that a condition #9 be added to read: "Prior to final inspection, the applicant shall provide proof of completing Helix Water District requirements dated April 7, 2006." That letter is included within the staff report.

BLACK announces the public hearing is now open.

Mr. John ZIEBARTH, Ziebarth Associates, 2900 Fourth Avenue, #204, San Diego, CA 92103, is the applicant's representative. He states that they have no difficulty with the conditions of approval. He notes that the project will be a significant improvement to the area. They have tried to address the outdoor display area by using canopies and pavement pattern to demark where they are and preserve a pedestrian pathway.

AMBROSE commends the project and notes that it is a great addition to the city.

BLACK mentions that there were several guys on bikes and was wondering if they were guards? ZIEBARTH replies that those two individuals were not; however, they try to monitor the area to make sure that there is not any adverse activity going on.

No one else comes forward to be heard.

Motion by WOODS, second by SOTTILE to close the public hearing; carries 5-0.

WOODS stated that the project is great and it would be a great addition to the city.

Motion by WELLS, second by WOODS to GRANT Conditional Use Permit 2024 in accordance with the staff report, and adding condition 9 to read: "Prior to final inspection, the applicant shall provide proof of completing Helix Water District requirements dated April 7, 2006.", carries 5-0.

PUBLIC HEARING ON

CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT 2033 – Cingular Wireless and Cricket Communications for Grossmont-Cuyamaca College District

(public hearing) Resolution No. 10366
PC mtg. 9-11-06

The subject property is located on the west side of Freeway 125 between Grossmont College Drive and Freeway 125, and addressed as 8800 Grossmont College Drive; APN: 386-071-02; General Plan Designation: Junior College / Open Space.

Request to install a co-location faux-pine wireless communication structure and related equipment in the R-1-6 (Residential One Family, 6,000 sq. ft.) zone.

RAMIREZ gives a summary of the project. The proposed wireless communications facility would be located behind the outfield fence of the baseball diamond at the north end of the campus. There are three other wireless communications facilities in the same location proposed in this application. The applicant is proposing a 35-foot monopine structure that is a co-location for two service providers – Cingular and Cricket – that incorporates an antenna assembly camouflaged by false branches with false pine needles that mimics a live pine tree. Associated with the antenna and proposed to be located near the base of the structure is a 276 square-foot equipment enclosure that would be approximately 10 feet high and mounted on a concrete slab. The 35-foot structure is consistent with the height limit in the R-1-6 zone. The staff reminds the Planning Commission that local agencies are precluded by federal law from regulating or denying a request for a wireless communications facility on the basis of health concerns from electromagnetic radiation. Staff is recommending approval of this request with conditions.

BLACK announces the public hearing is now open.

Ms. Shelly KILBOURN, 302 State Place, Escondido, CA 92029, is the applicant's representative. She does not have anything to add to the staff report, agrees with the conditions and asks that commissioners support the project.

No one else comes forward to be heard.

Motion by AMBROSE, second by WELLS to close the public hearing; carries 4-0.

Motion by SOTTILE, second by WELLS to GRANT Conditional Use Permit 2033 in accordance with the staff report; carries 4-0.

The appeal period for this item ends at 5:00 PM on Monday, September 25, 2006.

WOODS announces he must abstain from agenda item 6 due to a conflict of interest. He leaves the Council Chambers at 8:11 p.m.

MAJOR / MINOR CHANGE REQUEST TO CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT 1985 – Planning Commission

(discussion) Resolution No. 10366

The subject property is located on the west side of Greenfield Drive between East Madison Avenue and Shadowbrook Lane, and addressed as 2075 East Madison Avenue (west campus).

No one spoke in favor and no one spoke in opposition. In an email received on Friday, September 8, 2006, Jack Williams, on behalf of the applicant requested that this item be withdrawn from the agenda.

Motion by AMBROSE, second by WELLS to allow withdrawal of the request for a Major / Minor change request to Conditional Use Permit 1985; carries 4-0 (WOODS-Abstain).

WOODS returns to the Council Chambers at 8:13 p.m.

**DISCUSSION ON
RESOLUTION OF INTENTION NO. 10349**

(discussion) Resolution No. 10349
PC mtg. 9-11-06

RAMIREZ states that if this resolution is adopted, its effect will be to set a public hearing date of Monday, September 25, 2006 for the Planning Commission to initiate General Plan Amendment 2006-03 that would change the General Plan Designations of various properties.

Motion by WELLS, second by AMBROSE to ADOPT Resolution of Intention #10349 to set to public hearing General Plan Amendment 2006-03; carries 5-0.

**DISCUSSION ON
RESOLUTION OF INTENTION NO. 10354**

(discussion) Resolution No. 10354
PC mtg. 9-11-06

RAMIREZ states that if this resolution is adopted, its effect will be to set a public hearing date of Monday, September 25, 2006 for the Planning Commission to initiate Zone Reclassification 2283 that would rezone various properties.

Motion by AMBROSE, second by WELLS to ADOPT Resolution of Intention #10353 to set to public hearing Zone Reclassification 2282; carries 5-0.

**DISCUSSION ON
RESOLUTION OF INTENTION NO. 10353**

(discussion) Resolution No. 10353
PC mtg. 9-11-06

RAMIREZ states that if this resolution is adopted, its effect will be to set a public hearing date of Monday, September 25, 2006 for the Planning Commission to initiate Zone Reclassification 2282 that would rezone various properties.

Motion by SOTTILE, second by WELLS to ADOPT Resolution of Intention #10353 to set to public hearing Zone Reclassification 2282; carries 5-0.

PREDRAFTED RESOLUTIONS

To reflect the actions of the Planning Commission on tonight's agenda items.

Motion by SOTTILE, second by AMBROSE to ADOPT Resolution Nos. 10343, 10349, 10353, 10354, 10362 through 10366, pro forma; carries 5-0.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

RAMIREZ informs the Commission that appeals have been filed on Amendment of Conditional Use Permit 1805 (Hamana) and Conditional Use Permit 2032 (PetSmart) and will be heard at Council meetings of September 12 and 26, 2006, respectively.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was none.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by AMBROSE, second by SOTTILE to adjourn the meeting of the El Cajon City Planning Commission at 8:23 p.m. this 11th day of September 2006; carries 5-0.

Thomas BLACK, Chair

ATTEST:

James S. GRIFFIN, Secretary