



MINUTES

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

JUNE 8, 2009

The meeting of the El Cajon City Planning Commission was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE & MOMENT OF SILENCE

ROLL CALL:

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Anthony SOTTILE, Chairman
Star BALES
Paul CIRCO
Darrin J. MROZ

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Tony AMBROSE

OTHERS PRESENT: Barbara RAMIREZ, Principal Planner
Barbara LUCK, Assistant City Attorney
Michael GRIFFITHS, Deputy Director, Public Works /
Private Development
Ron Luis VALLES, Administrative Secretary

SOTTILE briefly explained the mission of the Planning Commission. SOTTILE welcomed comments under Public Comments. No one came forward.

CONSENT CALENDAR: Motion was made by MROZ, seconded by CIRCO to correct the minutes of the meeting of May 18, 2009, changing the appeal deadline for CUP No. 2103 and CUP No. 2104 from June 8, 2009 to June 1, 2009; carried 4-0 (AMBROSE – absent).

Motion was made by CIRCO, seconded by MROZ to adopt the minutes of the meeting of May 18, 2009, as corrected; carried 4-0 (AMBROSE – absent).

RAMIREZ recommended that the order of items in the agenda be changed, moving the Amendment of Specific Plan and Conditional Use Permit items before the applications pertaining to the Rocky Hill Pointe LLC development. The Planning Commission concurred. No motion was necessary.

AMENDMENT OF SPECIFIC PLAN NO. 106

(This is jointly noticed for the City Council meeting on July 14, 2009 at 7 p.m.)

This was a public hearing on a request to convert a portion of an existing retail/office space into five apartments and to utilize an existing caretaker's unit as an apartment at an existing fueling station. The subject property is located between Interstate 8 and East Madison Avenue on the west side of North Mollison Avenue, and is addressed 596 North Mollison Avenue.

APN: 483-380-41
General Plan: General Retail Commercial (GC)
Zoning: General Commercial (C-2)
Applicant: Eddie Hamana / 619.987.6362
Project Planner: Noah Alvey / 619.441.1773

RAMIREZ noted that the public hearing notice for this request erroneously stated that the applicant is proposing to convert a portion of the second floor into four dwellings; however, the proposed site plan proposes five dwellings, plus the existing dwelling [caretaker's unit]. She noted that staff is recommending that the Planning Commission continue the public hearing for the Amendment of Specific Plan No. 106 to June 22, 2009, so that a corrected public hearing notice can be distributed for the request.

SOTTILE opened the public hearing, and invited any speakers to the podium. No speakers approached the podium.

Motion was made by BALES, seconded by CIRCO to CONTINUE Amendment of Specific Plan No. 106 to the Planning Commission meeting of June 22, 2009 at 7 p.m. The pre-advertised City Council joint noticed date of July 14, 2009 at 7 p.m. will remain the same; carried 4-0 (AMBROSE – absent).

[Draft excerpts from minutes of the continued Planning Commission meeting will be transmitted to the City Clerk's office.]

CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. 2102 (Minor)

This was a public hearing on a request to legitimize an existing tobacco and smoke shop per El Cajon Municipal Code 17.88. The subject property is located on the south side of Broadway between Ballantyne and Cherrywood Way, and is addressed 453 Broadway.

APN: 493-241-03
General Plan: General Commercial (GC)
Zoning: Regional Commercial (C-2)
Applicant: Dickow's Visions, Inc. (Joe Dickow) / 619.203.4631
Project Planner: Danielle Goldman / 619.441.1656

RAMIREZ summarized the staff report and mentioned that the applicant filed the application in a timely manner to comply with the City's Ordinance No. 4842, which requires the granting of a conditional use permit for the ongoing operation of an existing legal, nonconforming smoke shop.

She informed that on January 21, 2009, the El Cajon Police Department, in conjunction with the District Attorney's office, served search warrants on seven smoke shops in the City of El Cajon, including the subject smoke shop, Dickow's Visions. Items alleged to be illegal drug paraphernalia were confiscated by law enforcement. A criminal complaint has been filed in the Superior Court by the District Attorney.

RAMIREZ advised that additional information is needed in order for the Planning Commission to make all the necessary findings, particularly those relating to compatibility with the surrounding properties and public health and welfare. Staff is recommending a continuance of about six months to the Planning Commission meeting of December 14, 2009. [An error in the staff report noted that the meeting is December 15, 2009.]

SOTTILE opened the public hearing, and invited any speakers to the podium. No one approached the podium.

Motion was made by CIRCO, seconded by BALES to CONTINUE Conditional Use Permit No. 2102 for approximately six months, to the Planning Commission meeting of December 14, 2009 at 7 p.m.; carried 4-0 (AMBROSE – absent). [A continued public hearing notice will be distributed and posted at least 10 days before the new hearing date.]

ZONE RECLASSIFICATION NO. 2293

(This is jointly noticed for the City Council meeting on July 14, 2009 at 7 p.m.)

This is a public hearing on a request to rezone property from the Residential One Family, 6,000 sq. ft (R-1-6) zone to the Planned Residential Development, Medium Density (PRD-Medium) zone and to pre-zone from the County of San Diego Single-Family Residential, 4.35 dwelling units per acres (RS4) zone to the City of El Cajon Planned Residential Development, Low Density (PRD-Low) zone. The subject property is located on the south side of East Washington Avenue between South Anza and South First Streets, and is addressed 1075 East Washington Avenue.

AND

PLANNED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT NO. 65R

(This is jointly noticed for the City Council meeting on July 14, 2009 at 7 p.m.)

This is a public hearing on a request to construct a 27-unit planned residential development and common interest development with four common area lots in the pending Planned Residential Development – Medium Density (PRD-Medium) zone and the Planned Residential Development – Low Density (PRD-Low) zone. The subject property is located on the south side of East Washington Avenue between South Anza and South First Streets, and is addressed 1075 East Washington Avenue.

AND

TENTATIVE SUBDIVISION MAP NO. 645R

(This is jointly noticed for the City Council meeting on July 14, 2009 at 7 p.m.)

This is a public hearing on a request to develop 31-lot subdivision in the proposed Planned Residential Development – Medium Density (PRD-Medium) zone and Planned Residential Development – Low Density (PRD-Low) zone. The subject property is located on the south side of East Washington Avenue between South Anza and South First Streets, and is addressed 1075 East Washington Avenue.

APNs:	493-111-09 & -14
General Plan:	Medium Density Residential (MR) & Low Density Residential (LR)
Zoning:	Proposed Planned Residential Development – Medium Density Residential (PRD-Medium) & Planned Residential Development, Low Density (PRD-Low)
Applicant:	Rocky Hill Pointe LCC / 619.920.9917
Project Planner:	Noah Alvey / 619.441.1773

RAMIREZ emphasized that the project's environmental document, a Negative Declaration, must be considered before making the decisions on the three-part project. She conveyed that the two biological and historical studies revealed that the project results in no significant impacts.

Additionally, she informed that an April 19, 2009 letter from Jack Phillips from the Valle De Oro Community Planning Group, was omitted from the Negative Declaration materials that were distributed to the Commission. She mentioned that the author was unable to attend the hearing, and indicated that his letter reflects several points of opposition. [A copy of the letter was presented to the Commission before the meeting and made as part of the public record.]

RAMIREZ continued to summarize the staff reports for the three-part project, and reviewed the items including the pre-zone requirement, the number of units, the style of row homes and twin villas (duplex units), garages, building elevations, density, parking, fire department access, setbacks, and trash containers.

SOTTILE sought clarification about the pre-zone process. RAMIREZ replied that the first step is for the City Council to pre-zone the property. The San Diego Local Agency Formation Commission will consider annexation after the City has approved a development plan.

SOTTILE opened the public hearings, and invited any speakers to the podium.

Mr. Joel WAYMIRE, Polaris Development, 124 West Main Street, Suite 241, El Cajon, CA 92020, is the project designer and engineer. He addressed the improvements that were made to the project's proposal, based on the Planning Commission's discussion at its January 26, 2009 meeting. He emphasized changes including the row home layout, access to the private road, the rock outcropping remaining, more of a distinction in the elevations of the twin villas, and notably, that the project density was reduced from 33 units down to the proposed 27 units.

SOTTILE said that he likes the design of the project. He asked if the access road will be maintained by the home owners association, and WAYMIRE replied affirmatively.

CIRCO sought clarification on the 20 units that were mentioned in the materials [provided to the Planning Commission]. WAYMIRE answered that a former project representative acted out of his authority, when he addressed the Valle de Oro Community Planning group and agreed to the 20 units.

BALES asked if the blue color of the windows in the buildings' elevations was representative of the actual window color. WAYMIRE replied that is only the color in the elevations.

Mr. Ron OWEN, 840 Overlook Lane, El Cajon, CA 92020, is a neighboring resident of the subject property. He stated that he agreed with the conceptual site plan [for 20 units], noting that it maintained a greenbelt between the project and his neighborhood [in the County]. He opposed this project as it adds more of an urban feel to an area that is primarily rural, or has a country ambiance. He noted that a traffic study is necessary as there are significant traffic delays on Washington Avenue.

Mr. Ken BRASS, 1055 Washington Heights Place, El Cajon, CA 92019, is a neighboring resident of the subject property. He thought this project was to be 20 units. He opposed the increased density to 27 units, and noted that it doesn't blend with the environment. He addressed a fire access problem, and does not want the trees, which are marked with a red "x," to be removed.

Mr. Ernie NOREIGA, 1069 Washington Heights Place, El Cajon, CA 92019, is a neighboring resident of the subject property. In his preliminary research, he noted that there were many multiple-family units existing in the area. He is opposed to adding more homes to a peaceful country setting, bringing more lighting and noise. He is pleased that the developer left the existing access easement in the revised proposal.

No other speakers approached the podium.

Motion was made by CIRCO, seconded by MROZ to close the public hearings; carried 4-0 (AMBROSE – absent).

SOTTILE noted that the proposal complies with the City's General Plan and zoning requirements. He believed it is a good project.

CIRCO said that the County requirements don't apply when this project is annexed. He believed that this project is a bit dense for the area as it does not provide a good urban/rural interface.

BALES added that the project will meet the demand for more homes. She added that there is adequate space between the project's units and County residences.

RAMIREZ addressed the issues that were brought up by the speakers. She noted that the person who agreed to the reduction to 20 units to the Valle de Oro Community Planning group is no longer representing the project for the developer.

On the topic of the removal of trees, she confirmed a condition #3.c. in Resolution No. 10563, requiring that replacement trees shall be indicated on the landscape and irrigation plans. Additionally, shade trees will be planted along the southern property line and shall be of a drought-tolerant variety.

On the request for a future traffic study, RAMIREZ noted that the Public Works Department provided a list of requirements in their comments for the project; the City Traffic Engineer did not object to the project. She mentioned that concerns of setbacks and road access are included as conditions in the proposed resolutions for to this project. Additionally, RAMIREZ emphasized there are no environmental concerns with the project as noted by the Negative Declaration.

To conclude, RAMIREZ summarized the findings which must be made by the Planning Commission in order to recommend City Council approval of the project.

Motion was made by MROZ, seconded by BALES to adopt Resolution No. 10562, recommending that the City Council adopt the Negative Declaration and approve Zone Reclassification No. 2293 with attached "Exhibit A"; carried 4-0 (AMBROSE – absent).

Motion was made by BALES, seconded by MROZ to adopt Resolution No. 10563, reaffirming the Planning Commission's action to recommend City Council adoption of the Negative Declaration; recommending approval of Planned Residential Development No. 65R, subject to conditions; carried 3-1 (AMBROSE – absent; CIRCO - no).

Motion was made by BALES, seconded by MROZ to adopt Resolution No. 10564, recommending City Council approval of Tentative Subdivision Map No. 645R, subject to conditions; carried 3-1 (AMBROSE – absent; CIRCO – no).

These items will be heard at the City Council meeting on July 14, 2009 at 7 p.m.

OTHER ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION:

RAMIREZ encouraged the Commissioners to start reviewing the CD that was previously presented to them of the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Forrester Creek project. The applications for the project are tentatively scheduled for the July 13, 2009 Planning Commission meeting; however, a study session might be planned before the meeting so that Commissioners' questions could be answered in an open public forum, in compliance with the Brown Act.

STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

There were none.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS/COMMENTS

There were none.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by CIRCO, seconded by MROZ to adjourn the meeting of the El Cajon City Planning Commission at 8:10 p.m. this 8th of June, 2009 until June 22, 2009 at 7:00 p.m.; carried 4-0 (AMBROSE – absent).

Anthony SOTTILE, Chairman

ATTEST:

Melissa AYRES, Secretary