



MINUTES

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

FEBRUARY 8, 2010

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
Anthony AMBROSE
Star BALES
Paul CIRCO
Darrin J. MROZ

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Barbara K. RAMIREZ, Principal Planner
Barbara LUCK, Assistant City Attorney
Dennis DAVIES, Deputy Director – Public Works
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 AMBROSE, seconded by BALES,
to adopt the Planning Commission minutes of
January 25, 2010; carried 4-0 (CIRCO – abstained due
to absence at meeting).

AMENDMENT OF CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. 1544

This was a public hearing on a request to establish a charter school at an existing religious facility. The subject property is located on the northeast corner of West Main Street and North Johnson Avenue, and is addressed 698 West Main Street.

APNs: 487-122-48 & -49

General Plan: Light Industrial (LI) / Special Development Area No. 10
(SDA #10)
Zoning: Heavy Commercial Light Industrial (C-M)
Applicant: City of El Cajon / 619.441.1700
Project Planner: Melissa Ayres / 619.441.1700

RAMIREZ summarized the staff report, including the proposed school's hours of operation, number of staff, parking requirements and related traffic study. She indicated that staff believes all the required findings can be made for the Planning Commission to recommend City Council approval of Amendment of Conditional Use Permit No. 1544.

SOTTILE announced the public hearing is open and invited any speakers to the podium.

Mr. Jerry KEOUGH, Literacy First Charter School, 10331 Don Pico Court, Spring Valley, CA 91978, is the applicant. He noted that last year the school held a lottery as they had over 700 students on a waiting list for 50 open slots at the school. He acknowledged that traffic is their biggest issue; however, he stated that their staff is very good at handling traffic concerns.

In response to a question from AMBROSE about recreational opportunities at the school, the speaker replied that they will have a large gymnasium with physical education programs that will provide great opportunities for the kids. Additionally, he mentioned that there is a nice grassy area to the east of the building.

In response to AMBROSE's concern over daytime security, KEOUGH emphasized that the school will have a good staff-to-student ratio, and noted that many of the staff would monitor unlocked doors. Additionally, they will require identification badges for parents and volunteers during school hours.

SOTTILE referenced the 700 applicants on the waiting list and asked what it is that the school doing right [Applause came from audience members]. KEOUGH stated they have a great program and added that their success is due to supportive parents.

Mr. Bill FISCHBECK, 5464 Grossmont Center Drive, La Mesa, CA 91941, is working with Dale DICKENSEN, the pastor of Calvary Chapel (property owner). He wanted to make sure that the Planning Commission resolution makes it clear that if the school does not fulfill their conditional use permit request, that the church does not need to comply with the Department of Public Works' requirement for driveway reconstruction.

RAMIREZ referred to condition # 8 in the proposed resolution that states that the conditional use permit will become null and void if the applicant does not fulfill the conditions. She added that the minutes from this meeting will reflect the speaker's comments, and will become part of the record. DAVIES concurred with RAMIREZ that if the school does not go forward with the application, there will be no need for Public Works' requirements for ADA-compliant driveways.

No other speakers approached the podium.

Motion was made by CIRCO, seconded by AMBROSE to close the public hearing; carried 5-0.

Motion was made by CIRCO, seconded by MROZ, to adopt the proposed Resolution No. 10602 recommending City Council approval of Amendment of Conditional Use Permit No. 1544; carried 5-0.

This item is tentatively scheduled for a City Council public hearing on March 9, 2010 at 7 p.m.

SOTTILE called for a brief recess at 7:27 p.m. [SOTTILE announced that the applicant of the next public hearing item is a client of his firm and recused himself from the meeting. He left the Council Chambers at 7:36 p.m. Chair Pro Tem AMBROSE announced the next agenda item.]

CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. 2115

This was a public hearing on a request for a meeting hall with banquet facilities, on-sale alcoholic beverage sales and a reduction in required parking. The subject property is located on the south side of East Main Street, between South Magnolia and Claydelle Avenues, and is addressed 143 East Main Street.

APN: 488-191-05
General Plan: General Commercial (GC) / Special Development Area No. 9 (SDA #9)
Zoning: General Commercial (C-2)
Applicant: David Malikyar (aka Daoud) / 619.249.1022
Project Planner: Noah Alvey / 619.441.1773

RAMIREZ presented the staff report.

AMBROSE opened the public hearing and invited any speakers to address the Commission.

Mr. David MALIKYAR, 1233 Pillsbury Lane, El Cajon, CA 92020, is the applicant. He noted that he has been operating Dave's Furniture for several years and has been losing money since 2006. He was working with the El Cajon Community Development Corporation and applied for a grant for building improvements. He tried to obtain retail businesses in the space, but due to economy was unsuccessful. MALIKYAR introduced the idea of possibly having a coffee / tea shop in the front portion of the building during the day, and the meeting hall could be utilized in the evenings. He noted that option would be better than having a vacant building. He stated that if this plan is rejected, he would be willing to modify the plan to create retail in the front. MALIKYAR suggested that a modular wall could separate the coffee shop and meeting hall. The banquet and meeting hall would be open on Saturday and Sunday.

AMBROSE noted that he is sympathetic to the applicant about the struggling economy; however, economic considerations are out of the purview of the Planning Commission.

AMBROSE noted that there is no retail component in the materials presented to the Commission for tonight's meeting, and recommended a continuance to give the applicant more time to think through his plan.

RAMIREZ said that the Commission could deny the request and the applicant could appeal the decision to the City Council, or the Planning Commission could continue this application to a future date so that the applicant and architect could meet with staff and submit additional materials. She also noted that she was perplexed as staff had previously recommended to the applicant that he incorporate a retail component into his project.

AMBROSE confirmed that the Commission could not approve this request and a possible continuance would be recommended. CIRCO concurred and noted that a tea shop in front of the building has more possibilities and would be worthwhile to explore.

MROZ sought clarification on the fee, RAMIREZ noted that if the continuance period is longer than 30 days, the applicant would need to pay a fee to re-notice the meeting.

RAMIREZ emphasized that a revised floor plan would also need to be submitted to staff within three weeks. She advised that a continuance must be to a date certain.

Mr. Jack E. CARTER, 3635 Oleander Drive, San Diego, CA 92106, is the architect. He agreed to the continuance and noted that three weeks would not be a problem to submit a revised floor plan.

RAMIREZ asked the owner if he had any objections to a different planner being assigned due to the upcoming vacation for ALVEY. The applicant replied that he had no objections.

No other speakers approached the podium.

Motion was made by AMBROSE, seconded by MROZ, to continue Conditional Use Permit No. 2115 to the Planning Commission meeting of March 22, 2010 at 7 p.m.; carried 4-0 (SOTTILE – abstained). [The new public hearing will be re-noticed.]

[SOTTILE returned to Council Chambers at 8:02 p.m.]

OTHER ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION:

There were none.

STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

RAMIREZ informed that at the Planning Commission meeting of February 22, 2010, an election of a Planning Commission Chair and Vice Chair for 2010 – 2011 will take place.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS/COMMENTS

There were none.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by AMBROSE, seconded by CIRCO, to adjourn the meeting of the El Cajon City Planning Commission at 8:03 p.m. this 8th day of February, 2010 until February 22, 2010 at 7:00 p.m.; carried 5-0.

Anthony SOTTILE, Chairman

ATTEST:

Melissa AYRES, Secretary