

**CITY OF ESCONDIDO**

**ACTION MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
ESCONDIDO PLANNING COMMISSION  
VIDEO/VIRTUAL CONFERENCE**

**April 13, 2021**

The meeting of the Escondido Planning Commission was called to order at 7 p.m. by Chair Weiler, in the City Council Chambers, 201 North Broadway, Escondido, California.

**Commissioners present:** Stan Weiler, Chair; Ingrid Rainey, Vice-Chair; Katharine Barba, Commissioner; Dao Doan, Commissioner; Rick Paul, Commissioner; Herminia Ramirez, Commissioner; and Nathan Serrato, Commissioner.

**Commissioners absent:** None.

**Staff present:** Mike Strong, Director of Community Development; Kurt Whitman, Senior Deputy City Attorney; Owen Tunnell, Assistant City Engineer; Jay Paul, Senior Planner; and Joanne Tasher, Minutes Clerk.

**MINUTES:**

Moved by Vice-Chair Rainey, with the correction to item G.1 SUB 20-0006 to state that the motion for that item was not carried unanimously, and seconded by Commissioner Barba to approve the Action Minutes of the March 23, 2021, Planning Commission meeting. Motion carried unanimously (7-0). Ayes: Barba, Doan, Paul, Rainey, Ramirez, Serrato, and Weiler.

**WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS: Received.**

Communication from Laura Hunter, Chair, Sierra Club North County Group Conservation Committee, dated April 5, 2021, regarding public communications with the Planning Commission, was submitted into the record.

Communication from Laura Hunter, dated April 7, 2021, regarding the Escondido Community Advisory Group (ECAG) proposal for a Climate Engagement Commission, was submitted into the record.

Communication from Laura Hunter, dated April 9, 2021, regarding a Los Angeles Times news article about wildfire risk and the halting of a residential development project, was submitted into the record.

Letter from Laura Hunter, Chair, Sierra Club North County Group Conservation Committee, dated April 12, 2021, regarding a Community Coalition request for action in advance of the Harvest Hills project consideration, was submitted into the record.

Written Communication for Agenda Item No. G.1, revised Conditions of Approval related to Section E.4 "Design/Operation," General Engineering Condition No. 8, and CC&Rs were submitted into the record.

**FUTURE NEIGHBORHOOD MEETINGS:** None.

**ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:** Received.

Correspondence from Patricia Borchmann, regarding the Housing and Community Investment Study from the March 23, 2021, Planning Commission meeting, was read into the record.

Correspondence from Laura Hunter, regarding public communications with the Planning Commission, was read into the record.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

1. **TENTATIVE SUBDIVISION MAP, MASTER AND PRECISE DEVELOPMENT PLAN, AND SPECIFIC PLAN AMENDMENT– SUB 20-0001, PHG 20-0009, and ENV 20-0001:**

REQUEST: Tentative Subdivision Map, and Master and Precise Development Plan for the development of two, four-story buildings (up to approx. 65 feet in height) to accommodate up to 120 air-space condominium units with a density of approximately 51.5 dwelling units per acre. The design includes a mix of studio,

one-bedroom and two-bedroom units. 179 parking spaces are proposed that include a combination of enclosed garages with open tandem parking in front; on-site covered and uncovered spaces; angled parking along the S. Pine Street frontage; and perpendicular spaces along the W. 3rd Avenue frontage. Vacation of a portion of W. 3rd Avenue, S. Pine Street and public alley along the project frontages is requested. The proposed Planned Development includes a request for an approximately 14% (29 space) reduction in required parking from the required 208 spaces; allow a 49 percent reduction in the overall open space requirement and payment of in-lieu fees to off-set the reduction; minor encroachment into the 2nd Avenue setback to accommodate a screen wall; allow additional wall sign area up to 70 square feet; and reduction in covered parking spaces. An Amendment to the Downtown Specific Plan is requested to eliminate the ground-floor commercial requirement and permit ground floor residential units. All of the existing structures would be demolished. (The project is located on City-owned property and will require approval of a Purchase and Sale Agreement, as a concurrent discretionary action to be presented at the time the project is presented to the City Council.)

**PROPERTY SIZE AND LOCATION:** The approximately 2.33-acre site fronts onto 2nd Avenue, Pine Street, 3rd Avenue and Quince Street. Centre City Parkway is located to the east. The site is located within the Mercado District of the Downtown Specific Planning Area and is comprised of 11 parcels (APNs, 233-032-07-00, 233-032-08-00, 233-032-10-00, 233-032-11-00, 233-032-12-00, 233-032-13-00, 233-032-14-00, 233-032-17-00, 233-032-18-00, 233-032-19-00, and 233-032-21-00). The reference address is 235 S. Pine Street.

**ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS:** The Project is categorically exempt pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines section 15332 (In-Fill Development Projects).

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Approval to City Council

**COMMISSIONER DISCUSSION:**

The Commissioners discussed various elements of the project including parking for residents and guests, use of a "Transit Pass" to encourage residents to use public transportation, pedestrian access through the alley, and wanting affordable units offered.

PUBLIC COMMENTS (Submitted written comments, read aloud for the record):

**Alicia Ruvalcaba**, submitted comments in opposition to the project.

**David Mathias**, submitted comments in favor of the project.

**Maritza Ruvalcaba**, submitted comments in opposition to the project.

**Ed McCoy**, submitted comments in favor of the project.

**John Jorgenson**, submitted comments in opposition to the project.

**COMMISSION ACTION:**

Motion by Commissioner Paul and seconded by Commissioner Serrato to recommended approval to City Council with the modifications to the Conditions of Approval as provided by City staff and the condition to allow continued public access through the alleyway. Motion carried 4-3. Ayes: Paul, Rainey, Serrato, and Weiler. Noes: Barba, Doan, and Ramirez.

**CURRENT BUSINESS:**

**1. Housing and Community Investment Study**

Staff provided an informational report and status update to the Commission.

**COMMISSIONER DISCUSSION:**

The Commissioners thanked Director Strong for his presentation and discussed the issue of affordable housing.

**COMMISSION ACTION:**

No action was taken; information was presented and discussed.

**2. Placing Items on Future Planning Commission Agendas and Commission Annual Work Plan**

Staff provided information for the creation an Annual Work Plan.

**COMMISSION DISCUSSION:**

Discussion between City staff and the Commissioners on the process of putting items on future agendas and creating a new work plan.

**COMMISSION ACTION:**

Commission directed staff to initiate preparation of a Commission Work Plan to be presented on April 27, 2021.

**3. Discussion and direction regarding a “Green Infrastructure Plan” and related details such as staff support (Commissioner Barba)**

Commissioner Barba continued the discussion to the next Planning Commission meeting scheduled for April 27, 2021, to fold the discussion into the Commission Work Plan.

**COMMISSION ACTION:**

No action taken; the item was continued to next meeting on April 27, 2021.

**4. Communication logistics with the Planning Commissioners**

Discussion on how members of the public can contact or send comments to the Planning Commissioners and recommended approach from Planning and the City Attorney's Office to submitting public comments. (Commissioner Doan)

**COMMISSIONER DISCUSSION:**

Discussion between City staff and the Commissioners on the manner of how the public can communicate with the Commissioners. The City and Commission have to conform to the Brown Act. All public correspondence has to be retained in the administrative record.

**COMMISSION ACTION:**

No action was taken; information was presented and discussed.

**ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:** None.

**PLANNING COMMISSIONERS:** None.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Chair Weiler adjourned the meeting at 10:24 p.m.



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Mike Strong, Secretary to the  
Escondido Planning Commission



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Joanne Tasher, Minutes Clerk