

CITY OF ESCONDIDO**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
ESCONDIDO PLANNING COMMISSION****September 8, 2015**

The meeting of the Escondido Planning Commission was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Weber in the City Council Chambers, 201 North Broadway, Escondido, California.

Commissioners present: Jeffery Weber, Chairman; Ed Hale, Commissioner; Gregory Johns, Commissioner; Don Romo, Commissioner and James Spann, Commissioner; (One position vacant).

Commissioners absent: Bob McQuead, Vice-chairman.

Staff present: Bill Martin, Deputy Planning Director; Owen Tunnell, Principal Engineer; Adam Phillips, Deputy City Attorney; and Ty Paulson, Minutes Clerk.

MINUTES:

Moved by Commissioner Romo, seconded by Commissioner Hale, to approve the minutes of the August 25, 2015, meeting. Motion carried unanimously. (5-0)

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS – Received.

FUTURE NEIGHBORHOOD MEETINGS – None.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:**1. VARIANCE – PHG 15-0020:**

REQUEST: A request for a Variance to reduce the wall setback requirement for portions of the slump block perimeter walls that will be constructed along Stanley Avenue and Lehner Avenue as part of the 70-lot Pradera project now under construction. The proposal would reduce the street side yard setback for the perimeter walls on eight lots along Stanley Avenue from 10 feet down to a minimum of 0 feet, and for one lot on Lehner Avenue from 10 feet down to five feet. The Variance is being requested to allow the walls to be located at the top of slopes and avoid having to construct the perimeter walls in mid-slope

locations. The proposal also includes the adoption of the environmental determination prepared for the project.

PROPERTY SIZE AND LOCATION: The 70-lot Pradera development is comprised of five separate subdivisions being constructed as a single project on 21.58 acres located on the eastern side of Ash Street, between Stanley Avenue and Lehner Avenue.

Bill Martin, Deputy Planning Director, referenced the staff report and noted staff recommended approval of the variance, feeling adequate landscaping could be provided with the revised setbacks. He also made reference to an email from Kelly Crews that was provided to the Commission.

Commissioner Hale questioned whether the project could have had an allowable zero-setback if the project had east/west streets, noting this would create a similar situation with the block wall. Mr. Martin replied in the affirmative, noting that this would be for rear yards.

Commissioner Johns expressed his concern with reducing the setback, noting his concern for root damage to the sidewalk. Mr. Martin noted that root barriers would be required for any trees installed next to sidewalks. He also noted that all of the street trees came from the City's Street Tree list.

George Hogan, Escondido, stated that he was opposed to the variance. He stated that he was concerned that the variance would create more of an encroached atmosphere on the roads due to the reduction in setbacks.

Miguel Gaoma, Escondido, was opposed to the proposed variance, noting that the new setback would create a condition where pedestrians were walking closer to Stanley Avenue. He was opposed to the block wall being installed right next to his property. He questioned whether the project would provide access routes for the Rincon Middle School students.

Chairman Weber asked if access would be provided at the end of each cul-de-sac. Mr. Martin replied in the affirmative and noted that the variance had no bearing on the location of the sidewalk on Stanley Avenue.

Brian White, Escondido, asked if Stanley Avenue was slated to be widened. Mr. Tunnell noted that Stanley Avenue would be widened on the development side.

Mr. White expressed his concern with the proposed setback creating visibility issues from his driveway onto Stanley Avenue, noting his concern for the high

speeds of vehicles on Stanley Avenue. Mr. Tunnell noted that the wall location would be approximately 24 feet further south from the current edge of pavement and would not pose a sight distance problem for any drivers.

Mr. White and Mr. Tunnell discussed the location for the proposed widening on Stanley Avenue. Mr. White asked that staff consider that in order to access Stanley Avenue he had to drive at an incline and then look down Stanley Avenue. Mr. Tunnell noted that the Pradera project would improve the view corridor along Stanley Avenue.

Chairman Weber noted that the wall would be approximately 24 feet south of the existing pavement, which would create a better view corridor.

Mr. White and staff discussed the undergrounding of the power poles.

Patricia Gaoma, Escondido, expressed her concern for the safety of the children walking along Stanley Avenue. She also felt pedestrian access should be provided through the development from Stanley to Lehner Avenue.

Frank Buckley, Escondido, asked if the sidewalk would be included in front of his residence just east of the project site on Stanley Avenue. Mr. Tunnell replied in the negative.

Commissioner Johns and staff discussed the difficulties associated with maintaining the original setbacks.

Commissioner Spann concurred with staff's recommendation.

Commissioner Hale noted that the variance was mainly for aesthetics, noting that visibility, safety, and pedestrian sidewalks would not be impacted. Chairman Weber concurred and felt the variance would create a better streetscape.

ACTION:

Moved by Commissioner Spann, seconded by Commissioner Hale, to approve staff's recommendation. Motion carried unanimously. (5-0)

CURRENT BUSINESS: None.

ORAL COMMUNATIONS:

Mr. White, Mr. Hogan, and Mr. Gaoma, noted that the dust from the Pradera development was excessive and asked staff to look into it.

PLANNING COMMISSIONERS: No comments.

ADJOURNMENT:

Chairman Weber adjourned the meeting at 7:26 p.m. The next meeting was scheduled for October 13, 2015, at 7:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, 201 North Broadway, Escondido, California.



Bill Martin, Secretary to the Escondido
Planning Commission



Ty Paulson, Minutes Clerk