

CITY OF ESCONDIDO

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

September 22, 2020

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

Commissioners present: Stan Weiler, Chair; Joe Garcia, Vice-Chair; Katharine Barba', Commissioner; Dao Doan, Commissioner; and Rick Paul, Commissioner; Ingrid Rainey, Commissioner (late). One Vacancy

Staff present: Mike Strong, Director of Community Development; Kurt Whitman, Senior Deputy City Attorney; Julie Procopio, Director of Engineering Services; Owen Tunnell, Assistant City Engineer; Adam Finestone, Principal Planner; Jay Paul, Senior Planner; and Kirsten Peraino, Minutes Clerk.

MINUTES:

Moved by Commissioner Paul and seconded by Vice-Chair Garcia to approve the Action Minutes of the September 8, 2020 Planning Commission meeting. Motion carried unanimously. (5-0-0; Commissioner Rainey was absent for vote; one vacancy).

Commissioner Rainey arrived at 7:07 p.m. and missed roll call and the Minutes vote.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS: Received.

FUTURE NEIGHBORHOOD MEETINGS: None.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS: None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:**1. TENTATIVE SUBDIVISION MAP, CONDOMINIUM PERMIT/PLOT PLAN, AND NON-EMERGENCY DEMOLITION PERMIT; MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION – SUB 19-0010, PHG 19-0050, AND ENV 19-0007:**

REQUEST: Tentative Subdivision Map along with a Condominium Permit/Plot Plan for the proposed development of 42 air-space, three-story condominium units. A Non-Emergency Demolition Permit is requested for the proposed demolition of a Spanish Colonial Revival-style adobe structure constructed in 1946 that is classified as a historic resource. The structure originally was constructed as a single-family residence and was converted into a restaurant in 1963 (most recently known as “Hacienda de Vega”), which was shuttered in 2017. Access to the site would be provided from South Escondido Boulevard via a 24-foot-wide private street. South Escondido Boulevard would be improved across the project frontage (eastern side) to include curb, gutter, and sidewalk. A southbound left-turn lane would be striped across the project frontage. Up to 95 parking spaces would be provided on-site (garages/open guest spaces). On-street spaces would be restricted. The proposal also includes the adoption of the environmental determination prepared for the project.

PROPERTY SIZE AND LOCATION: Approximately 1.75 acres of land generally located on the eastern side of S. Escondido Boulevard, south of Citracado Parkway, east of S. Centre City Parkway, addressed as 2608 S. Escondido Boulevard (Assessor Parcel Nos.: 238-152-06-00 and 238-152-07-00).

ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS: A Draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) was issued for a 20-day public review, beginning on March 16, 2020, and ending April 6, 2020, in conformance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Sixteen (16) written comments were received during the review period. The IS/MND incorporates mitigation measures that will avoid or mitigate impacts related to cultural/tribal cultural resources and noise to a less than significant level.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval to City Council

PUBLIC SPEAKERS (SUBMITTED WRITTEN COMMENTS):

Marne Bouillon, Kitchell Development Company, Applicant, gave a presentation on the project

Alexa Clausen, provided comments in opposition to the project.

Erik Zedelmayer, provided comments in opposition to the project.

Save Our Heritage Organization (SOHO), provided comments in opposition to the project.

Kristin Hill, provided comments in opposition to the project.

Dominic Calarco, provided comments in opposition to the project.

Maria Weir Werth, provided comments in opposition to the project.

Carol Rea, Chair of the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC), No Position; presented corrections to the Planning Commission Staff Report indicating the HPC vote count on July 16, 2020 was 2-2-0 with one Commissioner recusing herself; Commissioners Cowan and Breitenfeld voted no; and two Commissioners were absent.

Carol Rea, provided comments in opposition to the project.

Rose Dominguez, No position but concerned about increase in traffic.

COMMISSIONER DISCUSSION:

The Commissioners discussed various aspects of the project.

ACTION:

Motion by Commissioner Paul, seconded by Vice-Chair Garcia to recommend approval to City Council with the added modification Mitigation Measure CUL-3: The interpretive program be reviewed and approved by the Historic Preservation Commission. Motion carried 4-2-0 (Doan and Rainey voted No and one vacancy).

2. GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT, SPECIFIC PLAN AMENDMENT, DENSITY TRANSFER AGREEMENT, PLANNED DEVELOPMENT PERMIT (MASTER AND PRECISE DEVELOPMENT PLAN), SPECIFIC ALIGNMENT PLANS, GRADING EXEMPTIONS, TENTATIVE SUBDIVISION MAP; AND NON-EMERGENCY DEMOLITION PERMIT; ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT – SUB 18-0011, PHG 18-0049, and ENV 18-0009 (CONTINUED FROM AUGUST 25, 2020):

REQUEST: The project involves a General Plan Amendment (Mobility and Infrastructure Element), Specific Plan Amendment (Downtown Specific Plan), Density Transfer Agreement, Planned Development Permit (Master and Precise Development Plan), Specific Alignment Plans, Grading Exemptions, and Tentative Subdivision Map for the redevelopment of the former Palomar Hospital Downtown Campus and surrounding properties ("Project Site"). The project proposes to construct 510 residential dwelling units (258 for-rent apartments, 90 for-rent senior apartments, and 162 for-sale row-homes and villas) and up to 10,000 square feet of commercial/office space on property currently occupied by the hospital buildings and surrounding medical and general office buildings. All existing buildings on the Project Site would be demolished in order to accommodate the proposed project. The General Plan Amendment would downgrade the roadway classification for a portion of N. Fig Street from "Collector" to "Local Collector." The Specific Plan Amendment would eliminate the requirement for ground-floor commercial uses at the project site through a Planned Development Permit process. The Density Transfer Agreement would allow the transfer of 15 dwelling units from the City's downtown Density Credit Pool to the property west of Valley Boulevard (senior apartment building). The Planned Development Permit would allow ground-floor residential uses on the property, as well as a reduction in the number of required parking spaces and a minor setback encroachment along E. Grand Avenue. The Specific Alignment Plan for Valley Boulevard would accommodate a change to one-way (northbound-only) traffic, with on-street parking on both sides. The Specific Alignment Plan for N. Fig Street is necessary as a result of the reduction in the roadway classification. Grading exemptions are required for fill slopes along the eastern side of the property and at the main project entryway (at the corner of Valley Boulevard, E. Valley Parkway, and N. Hickory Street). The Tentative Subdivision Map would create eight lots (seven residential and one open space) and allow for the creation of 202 residential condominium units. The proposal also includes a request to certify the Final Environmental Impact Report for the project and adopt the related Findings and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.

PROPERTY SIZE AND LOCATION: The approximately Project Site 13.8-acre is located at the eastern end of the Downtown Specific Plan, on both sides of Valley Boulevard, and generally bounded by E. Valley Parkway to the north and E. Grand Avenue to the south, and is comprised of ten parcels (APNs 229-450-06-00, 229-450-05-00, 229-442-18-00, 229-442-04-00, 229-442-03-00, 229-442-01-00, 230-163-01-00, 230-163-02-00, 230-163-05-00, and 230-163-04-00). The reference address is 555 E. Valley Parkway.

ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS:An Environmental Impact Report (“EIR”) has been prepared for this project to assess potential environmental impacts. The EIR for the proposed Project is comprised of two parts, the Draft EIR and the Final EIR. A Draft EIR was prepared to identify and discuss potential impacts and mitigation measures for identified environmental subject areas. The Draft EIR was made available and circulated for a 45-day public review period, from March 20, 2020 to May 4, 2020. The public review period was subsequently extended an additional 15 days, to May 19, 2020, to allow additional time for the public to review and comment on the document in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Final EIR responds to the comments and includes text revisions to the Draft EIR in response to input received. It also establishes a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program to monitor the proposed mitigation measures. The Draft and Final EIR will be utilized by the Planning Commission and City Council during the decision-making process for the proposed Project. A decision to approve the Project would be accompanied by written findings.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval to City Council

PUBLIC SPEAKERS (SUBMITTED WRITTEN COMMENTS):

Haley Wonsley, provided comments in favor of the project.

Gina Ruggiero, provided comments in favor of the project.

Paul Sas, provided comments in favor of the project.

Robert Wilcox, provided comments in favor of the project.

Marianne Grisez, provided comments in favor of the project.

Frank Miller, provided comments in opposition to the project.

Carol A. Lord, provided comments in opposition to the project.

Laura Hunter, provided comments in opposition to the project.

Jesus Garcia, provided comments in opposition to the project.

Diane Hansen (CEO, Palomar Health), provided comments in favor of the project.

Javier Santizo, provided comments in opposition to the project.

Christopher Allen, provided comments in opposition to the project.
Jorge Viramontes, provided comments in opposition to the project.
Doug Hicks, provided comments in opposition to the project.
Brian Bonar, provided comments in favor of the project.
Alex McLachlan, Downtown Business Association, provided comments in favor of the project.
Rodger Grove, provided comments in favor of the project.
Kirk Effinger, provided comments in favor of the project.
Robroy Fawcett, provided comments in favor of the project.
Jerry Sanders, provided comments in favor of the project.
Brian Williams, provided comments in favor of the project.
Matthew Belshin, provided comments in favor of the project.
Alex Jize, provided comments in favor of the project.
Brandon Keith, provided comments in favor of the project.
Cheryl Engdahl, provided comments in favor of the project.
Taylor Thompson, provided comments in favor of the project.
Don Zech, provided comments in favor of the project.
Maria Bowman, provided comments in favor of the project.
Ninia Hammond, Integral Communities (Applicant), gave a presentation of the project.

COMMISSIONER DISCUSSION:

The Commissioners discussed various aspects of the project.

ACTION:

First Motion by Commissioner Rainey, seconded by Vice-Chair Garcia to recommend approval to City Council. Motion failed. (3-3-0; Barba', Doan and Paul voted No, one vacancy).

ACTION:

Second Motion by Chair Weiler, seconded by Commissioner Rainey to Recommend approval to City Council with the added condition that the applicant, Integral Communities, meet with City staff to discuss the viability of adding affordable housing units as a part of the project. Motion carried 4-2-0 (Barba' and Paul voted No; one vacancy).

CURRENT BUSINESS: None.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS: None.

PLANNING COMMISSIONERS: None.

ADJOURNMENT: Chair Weiler adjourned the meeting at 11:30 p.m. to the regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting to be held at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 13, 2020, in the City Council Chambers via video conference, 201 North Broadway Escondido, California.



Adam Finestone, Acting Secretary to the
Escondido Planning Commission



Kirsten Peraino, Minutes Clerk