

CITY OF ESCONDIDO

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

November 10, 2020

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; Joe Garcia, Vice-Chair, Katharine Barba, Commissioner; Dao Doan, Commissioner; Rick Paul, Commissioner; Ingrid Rainey, 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; Adam Finestone, Principal Planner; Ann Dolmage, Associate Planner; and Joanne Tasher, Minutes Clerk.

MINUTES:

Moved by Commissioner Paul and seconded by Commissioner Barba to approve the Action Minutes of the October 27, 2020, Planning Commission meeting. Motion carried unanimously (7-0-0).

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS: Received.

FUTURE NEIGHBORHOOD MEETINGS: None.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Director Mike Strong noted that the November 24, 2020, Planning Commission meeting is cancelled due to the Thanksgiving holiday.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. TENTATIVE SUBDIVISION MAP AND CONDOMINIUM PERMIT – SUB 20-0002:

REQUEST: The project is a Tentative Subdivision Map and Condominium Permit for ten (10) for-sale townhome units and associated amenities. Townhomes will be configured as five (5) duplexes. Each unit will have two (2) stories, three (3) bedrooms and 2.5 bathrooms, and a private two (2)-car garage. The project includes a request for a density bonus per the provisions of the California Density Bonus Law (Government Code Section 65915), including waivers from development standards for open space and setbacks, and a parking reduction that would preclude guest parking. The project is eligible for this density bonus because all units will be sold to low-income households (i.e., households with income not exceeding 80% of the Area Median Income). The proposal also includes the adoption of the environmental determination prepared for the project.

PROPERTY SIZE AND LOCATION: The project site is 0.6 acres in size and is located at 245 East El Norte Parkway (APN # 229-040-14).

ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS:The project is categorically exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15332, "In-Fill Development Projects." This exemption is applicable when the proposed development is consistent with the applicable general plan designation, general plan policies, and zoning designation and regulations; occurs within city limits on a site of no more than five (5) acres substantially surrounded by urban uses; has no value as habitat for endangered, rare, or threatened species; would not result in significant effects to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality; and can be adequately served by required utilities and public services.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval to City Council

PUBLIC SPEAKERS (SUBMITTED WRITTEN COMMENTS):

Bryan Ward, submitted comments in favor of the project.

Patricia Borchmann, submitted comments in favor of the project.

COMMISSIONER DISCUSSION:

The Commissioners discussed various aspects of the Habitat for Humanity project.

COMMISSION ACTION:

Motion by Commissioner Paul seconded by Vice-Chair Garcia to recommend approval to City Council with the added condition that the applicant, Habitat for Humanity, increase the size of the garages to accommodate individual trash bins. Motion carried 4-3-0 (Doan, Rainey, and Serrato voted No).

2. MASTER AND PRECISE DEVELOPMENT PLAN MODIFICATION – PL 20-0601:

REQUEST: A Master and Precise Development Plan modification to install gates and fencing along an existing 126-unit multi-family apartment project. The project would include the installation of security gates across all three project driveways. The two driveways along W. Valley Parkway would change to one-way driveways, with the eastern driveway enter-only and the western driveway exit-only. The driveway on W. Grand Avenue would continue to provide two-way access (enter and exit). Fencing and man-gates connecting to existing structures and fences would be installed, as would a fence along the east side of an existing pedestrian pathway leading from W. Grand Avenue to W. Valley Parkway. All gates would be electric. Residents would be provided with remotes for site access, and callboxes would be installed for guest access. Up to 8 parking spaces would be removed in order to accommodate installation of the gates. The proposal also includes the adoption of the environmental determination prepared for the project.

PROPERTY SIZE AND LOCATION: The 2.6 acre project site is located between W. Valley Parkway and W. Grand Avenue, immediately east of the NCTD railroad right-of-way and directly across W. Valley Parkway from the Escondido Transit Center. The property is addressed as 700 – 730 W. Grand Avenue.

ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS: The project is exempt from environmental review pursuant to Section 15301 (Existing Facilities) of the State CEQA Guidelines.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Conditional Approval

PUBLIC SPEAKERS (SUBMITTED WRITTEN COMMENTS):

Helen Thelen, submitted comments regarding the project.

COMMISSIONER DISCUSSION:

The Commissioners discussed various aspects of the proposal for security gates and fencing for the Rowan Apartments.

COMMISSION ACTION:

Motion by Commissioner Rainey seconded by Commissioner Barba to conditionally approve the project. Approved 6-1-0.(Chair Weiler voted No).

3. ZONING CODE AMENDMENT – PL 20-0636:

REQUEST: A series of Escondido Municipal Code and Zoning Code Amendments to address changes in state laws, correct errors, and clarify or improve existing regulations. The proposal involves minor amendments to Article 1 of Chapter 32 of the Municipal Code; and Article 1 (General Provisions and Definitions), Article 6 (Residential Zones), Article 16 (Commercial Zones), Article 26 (Industrial Zones), Article 39 (Off-Street Parking), Article 40 (Historical Resources), Article 57 (Miscellaneous Use Restrictions), Article 70 (Accessory Dwelling Units) of the Escondido Zoning Code. The proposal also includes the adoption of the environmental determination prepared for the project.

PROPERTY SIZE AND LOCATION: CityWide

ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS: Exempt (CEQA section 21080.17 and CEQA Guidelines sections 15301, 15304, 15282(h), and 15061(b)(3))

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval to City Council

PUBLIC SPEAKERS:

None.

COMMISSIONER DISCUSSION:

The Commissioners discussed various aspects of the proposed zoning code updates.

COMMISSION ACTION:

Motion by Commissioner Paul seconded by Commissioner Barba to recommended approval to City Council. Motion carried unanimously (7-0-0).

ITEMS CONTINUED FROM OCTOBER 27, 2020:**1. CLIMATE ACTION PLAN UPDATE – PHG 18-0009:**

REQUEST: The Climate Action Plan Update (“CAP Update”) consists of a comprehensive update to the 2013 CAP. The CAP update serves as a roadmap for the City to reduce citywide greenhouse gas emissions (“GHG emissions”) and builds on the 2013 CAP by updating the GHG emissions inventory with a new baseline year and forecasting emissions, consistent with state legislation and executive orders that are aimed at reducing Statewide GHG emissions. This includes AB 32, which established a target of reducing Statewide GHG levels to 1990 levels by 2020; SB 32, which established a mid-term target of reducing Statewide GHG levels to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030; and Executive Order S-3-05, which recommends a longer-term statewide GHG reduction goal of reducing emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. By establishing consistency with state legislation, the CAP Update seeks to streamline future development approvals within the City. The City has also developed a Climate Action Plan Consistency Review Checklist, in conjunction with the CAP Update, to provide a streamlined review process for proposed new development projects that are subject to discretionary review and trigger environmental review pursuant to CEQA. The CAP Update also provides a range of adaptation strategies and measures as an additional component to climate action planning. The City recognizes the importance of building resilience in the community to future climate change—related impacts through climate adaptation. Through “adaptation planning” the City is undertaking a process of identifying climate risks and opportunities, assessing the options to manage these risks and opportunities, and implementing actions to sustain and even improve the community’s quality of life. The Planning Commission will be asked to review and consider the project and provide a recommendation to the City Council. The proposal also includes the adoption of the environmental determination prepared for the project.

PROPERTY SIZE AND LOCATION: CityWide

ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS: A Draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (“IS/MND”) was issued for a 30-day public review, beginning on July 1, 2020, and ending July 31, 2020, in conformance with the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”). The IS/MND incorporates mitigation measures that will avoid or mitigate impacts related to cultural/tribal cultural resources to a less than significant level.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval to City Council

COMMISSIONER DISCUSSION:

The Commissioners continued the discussion of the Climate Action Plan (CAP) and went through the numerous strategies of the CAP

COMMISSION ACTION:

Motion by Commissioner Rainey and seconded by Commissioner Doan to further postpone the item and continue the discussion at the next Planning Commission Meeting scheduled for December 8, 2020. Motion carried unanimously (7-0-0).

CURRENT BUSINESS: None.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS: None.

PLANNING COMMISSIONERS:

Commissioner Paul asked about the letter he received regarding the construction going on at the Henry Ranch project, TR 920.

ADJOURNMENT: Chair Weiler adjourned the meeting at 10:40 p.m. The November 24, 2020, meeting is canceled due to the Thanksgiving Holiday. The next regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting will be held at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, December 8, 2020, in the City Council Chambers via video conference, 201 North Broadway, Escondido, California.



Mike Strong, Secretary to the
Escondido Planning Commission



Joanne Tasher, Minutes Clerk