

Adam Finestone

From: Mike Strong
Sent: Thursday, January 24, 2019 3:51 PM
To: Adam Finestone
Subject: FW: Palomar Height Project

Please save correspondences like this. At the end of the process we can batch all comments and have a viewing file or attachment.

We will also need to separately save CEQA comments submitted during circulation period.

From: Julie Procopio <jprocopio@escondido.org>
Sent: Thursday, January 24, 2019 3:41 PM
To: 'Rick Paul' <rickpaul01@yahoo.com>
Cc: Mike Strong <mstrong@escondido.org>
Subject: Palomar Height Project

Rick,
Thank you for your email regarding the proposed Palomar Heights project. It is my understanding that the developer's traffic consultant will be evaluating bicycle and pedestrian connectivity to the site and making recommendations for any needed improvements. We certainly see this as an opportunity to enhance walkability.
Thank you for reaching out.

Julie Procopio, P.E.
Engineering Services Director/City Engineer
City of Escondido
(760) 839-4001



From: Rick Paul <rickpaul01@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 24, 2019 3:32 PM
To: Julie Procopio <jprocopio@escondido.org>
Subject: Sidewalks

Hi Julie,
There are some locations in the city where sidewalks just abruptly end.
There is at least one of these near the old hospital.
I would like to ask that this be addressed during the review/approval of the new housing development on that site.
Thanks
Rick Paul
760-505-9840

Adam Finestone

From: Laura Hunter <earthlover@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Thursday, May 9, 2019 2:08 PM
To: Bill Martin
Cc: Kristin Blackson; Adam Finestone
Subject: Re: Max units at Palomar Heights

Ack! ha ha, so sorry. Looking again at my message, I obviously put the comma in the wrong spot. I meant 1,380. Sorry to give you a heart attack. ☹️

i've got it right now.

Laura

Sent from my iPhone

On May 9, 2019, at 12:56 PM, Bill Martin <bmartin@escondido.org> wrote:

Hi Laura-

Can you tell me where you're seeing that number? It's not part of our NOP.

The maximum allowable number of units for the site would be approximately 1,350.

Thanks!

Bill Martin, AICP
Director of Community Development
City of Escondido
(760) 839-4557
bmartin@escondido.org
<image001.png>

From: Laura Hunter <earthlover@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Thursday, May 09, 2019 12:07 PM
To: Kristin Blackson <kblackson@escondido.org>
Cc: Bill Martin <bmartin@escondido.org>
Subject: Max units at Palomar Heights

Hi Kristin,

I hope you are well. I'm working on understanding the Palomar Heights proposal. Am I reading it correcting that the maximum units that are currently allowable for that site would be 13,800? I understand that Integral is only proposing 510, but want to be accurate on the maximum allowed. Thanks for any info you can offer.

Thanks

Laura Hunter

NCG Sierra Club Conservation Committee

Short comments on strategies learned from the Chula Vista Bayfront Master Plan development and potential application to Palomar Heights

The successful effort to entitle and implement the Chula Vista Bayfront Master Plan (CVBMP) has many commonalities for efforts to increase the density at the Palomar Heights (PH) development in Escondido.

For example, we had a massive and expensive blight to deal with. We had a mix of public and private interests. We had very differing views on what should be done by the gov, community, enviros, and the developers. We had frustration on the part of the city in how long they had spent trying to develop their bayfront.

In the case of the CVBMP, our campaign resulted in a 550 acre development plan, 1600 hotel rooms in high rises, and 1500 DU in high rises in the coastal zone being approved with a **unanimous Coastal Commission vote, a positive staff recommendation, and not a single person in opposition at the hearing.**

I was the lead negotiator for the seven environmental organizations and I think aspects of this model can be used to get the density we need at Palomar Heights (PH).

Authority

I have heard it said that the city doesn't have much it can do because it doesn't own the land. I don't agree with this. The city just needs to be clear about tis expectation and the **discretionary** approval authority vested in them is the key. I urge the city to be clear early with the Palomar Hospital Board and maybe the option holder and offer to negotiate either a new agreement or amend the current, in effect, MOA.

Need for assurances

Everyone wanted 'assurances' about what would happen so we developed legally binding vehicles to address this.

We had Stipulated Settlement Agreements among public groups and government and public groups and the developer. These were:

- Bayfront Settlement Agreement- between 7 enviro groups, City of CV, Port of SD, and CV Redevelopment (when it existed) for conditions on the public land development— Attached.
- Seven Enviro groups had a settlement agreement with Pacifica for the private development.



- PLAs for construction and operations were signed between Pacifica and Unite HERE and building trades.
- MOA between Port, City, and Crossroads a community group.
- A JPA was created between the Port, City, and RDA for oversight and cost and revenue sharing

Dealing with an expensive blight

We had some similarities with the PH situation. There was a big, expensive blight that needed to be removed (19th C looking Industrial Power Plant), The South Bay Power Plant was a 'must-run' facility when we started, meaning we could not get rid of it. No one wanted to develop on the Bayfront with that blight.

As a result of the agreements, we all worked together, using our resources, political relationships, and focus to get the RMR removed, permits granted for demo, and the plant down and removed. The need to remove the old hospital seems like this. It is possible there could be 'brownfield' redevelopment money available at the state that we should investigate for the revitalization of downtown, creation of needed low and mid-range housing, housing in transit corridors, etc... This is an important and timely issue/story we have to tell and some powerful state electeds who we should engage on our behalf.

Issue	CVBMP	Palomar Heights Potential
The Vehicle:	Settlement Agreements JPA	The Esco/Palomar MOU? Or an engagement in a development or other binding agreement JPA?
Non-governmental partners:	Environmental, community groups, labor unions, downtown business group	
Governments and quasi govt	Port of San Diego, City of Chula Vista	Escondido, Palomar Hospital
Developer	Pacifica and Gaylord (until they left, but then they came back)	Integral or some developer who is willing to build high-rise, high density
Discretionary approval requirements	Coastal Commission approval	Esco Council approval
Land ownership	A mix of Public and private land.	Hospital Board ?

	We developed and secured a 'land swap' where we wanted to trade public and private parcels.	
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We developed a strong, effective **bi-partisan, multi-stakeholder** movement to make this project happen. We can do it here as well.

If you want to verify any of this, please contact Gary Halbert, City Manager of Chula Vista or Randa Coniglio, Port President. You could also talk to Steve Padilla who is a Coastal Commissioner and on the CV City Council. Also, Tom Lemmon is also knowledgeable about it. I can be called any time next week or later.

Adam Finestone

From: Adam Finestone
Sent: Monday, July 22, 2019 3:51 PM
To: 'Leon Ramsey, Jr.'
Cc: Mitchell Tsai; Kristin Blackson
Subject: RE: [EXT] Fwd: Palomar Heights Project [SCH No: 2019059013]

Good afternoon Mr. Ramsey,

Below is a link to the Palomar Heights project webpage. Updated information will be provided on this page as it becomes available.

<https://www.escondido.org/palomarheights.aspx>

At this time, the project is still under review. An EIR will be prepared and circulated for public review prior to the project being brought forward for consideration by the City Council.

I will add your name to our notification list for mailings related to the project. You should expect to see something when the EIR has been released for public review, prior to the Planning Commission's public hearing on the project, and again before the City Council public hearing.

Please let me know if you have any questions. Thank you.

Adam Finestone, AICP
Principal Planner
City of Escondido

From: Leon Ramsey, Jr. <leon@mitchtsailaw.com>
Sent: Monday, July 22, 2019 3:29 PM
To: Adam Finestone <afinestone@escondido.org>
Cc: Mitchell Tsai <mitch@mitchtsailaw.com>
Subject: [EXT] Fwd: Palomar Heights Project [SCH No: 2019059013]

CAUTION : This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender email address AND know the content is safe.

Good afternoon, Mr. Finestone:

Please see the below email regarding the above-referenced project. Our office would like to know more information. Could you please advise?

Thank you,

Leon Ramsey Jr.
Paralegal / Office Manager
Mitchell M. Tsai, Attorney At Law
155 South El Molino Avenue
Suite 104

Pasadena, CA 91101
Office: (626) 381-9248
Phone: (626) 389-8320
Fax: (626) 389-5414
Email: leon@mitchtsailaw.com
Website: <http://www.mitchtsailaw.com>

*** Our Office Has Recently Moved. Please Note New Mailing Address ****

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Leon Ramsey, Jr.** <leon@mitchtsailaw.com>
Date: Thu, Jul 18, 2019 at 3:24 PM
Subject: Palomar Heights Project [SCH No: 2019059013]
To: <kblackson@escondido.org>

Good Afternoon Ms. Blackson,

Our office is interested in the above-referenced project and would like to know if you could provide us with any updates? Also, can you confirm whether any appeals have been filed in relation to this project to City Council? Lastly, is there a mailing list I may be included on for future updates? Your attention to this matter is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Leon Ramsey Jr.

Paralegal / Office Manager
Mitchell M. Tsai, Attorney At Law
155 South El Molino Avenue
Suite 104
Pasadena, CA 91101
Office: (626) 381-9248
Phone: (626) 389-8320
Fax: (626) 389-5414
Email: leon@mitchtsailaw.com
Website: <http://www.mitchtsailaw.com>

*** Our Office Has Recently Moved. Please Note New Mailing Address ****

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recipient, or a person responsible for delivering it to the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any disclosure, copying, distribution or use of any of the information contained in or attached to this message is STRICTLY PROHIBITED and may violate applicable laws including the Electronic Communications Privacy Act. If you have received this transmission in error, please immediately notify us by reply e-mail at mitch@mitchtsailaw.com or by telephone at (626) 381-9248 and destroy the original transmission and its attachments without reading them or saving them to disk. Thank you.

Adam Finestone

From: Ken Erickson <kenericksonarchitect@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, July 29, 2019 12:01 PM
To: Adam Finestone
Subject: [EXT] Re: Palomar Heights July Exhibits

CAUTION : This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender email address AND know the content is safe.

I forgot to add that the applicant needs to provide elevations from the street. These are absolutely critical for all those reviewing the project to understand the visual impact of this project.

Thanks,

Ken Erickson, Architect
122 1/2 S. Kalmia St
Escondido, CA 92025
760-518-8403

On Jul 29, 2019, at 11:52 AM, Ken Erickson <kenericksonarchitect@gmail.com> wrote:

Adam,

From my review of the Palomar Heights July '19 submittals, I'm forwarding the following observations and comments.

Overall, many of the comments in my June 3rd letter still apply.

1) As with the first submittal, the site and grading design disregards the existing site topography and surrounding context resulting in significant grade change along street edges and public sidewalks. This has the negative effect of isolating the project physically and visually from the surrounding neighborhoods and does not provide the pedestrian environment which is a central goal of the Downtown Specific Plan and the downtown experience.

2) The "Villas" and "Rowhomes", just as with the first submittal, are a suburban product. And, being vehicular oriented, the surface parking, drive aisles and driveways result in these homes (the "Villas" in particular) being surrounded by significant areas of asphalt.

3) Building 1: In total is approximately 315' long. Though the length is mitigated somewhat by the building plan being angled, from most street perspectives, it will still appear to be 300' plus in length—five stories tall. Looking closely at the floor plans, the lower floor offsets, from unit to unit, range from 0' to 6" to 1'. The second level has recessed balconies, but the third and fourth floors, similar to the first floor, have little offset. This will appear as a very long flat five-story building. The elevations show a fifth level, which, I presume is the mezzanine? If so, they should to provide a mezzanine building plan and sections to clarify.

4) Building 18: Approximately 175' in length, the comments from Building 1 apply. The minimal offsets in the design offer little architectural interest, character.

5) Building 23: Including the portion of the commercial piece that is closest to Valley Boulevard, the approximate building length along Valley Boulevard will be over 350' +/- . Similar to Buildings 1 & 18, the offsets from unit to unit appear to be 0", 6" and occasionally 18". The minimal offsets offer little relief from its height and length and, with the 2'-10' high retaining walls along the property line, this building, as designed, will be overwhelming in mass and scale.

6) Building 23 Commercial:

– The building is sited some distance back from this important corner. The distances vary from approximately 5.8' -11.9' at the building's corners with a much greater distance to the sidewalk at the corner. What is planned for this space? With this distance and the approximately 2'-7' high retaining walls at the property lines, how can the commercial uses and pedestrians interact? This solution does not meet the DTSP's guideline of locating buildings where they engage pedestrians and the street edge.

– The architectural intent is unclear. The open steel structure with glass cube tower element will likely be seen as decoration. The floor plans provided do not show storefronts or entry points, which are critical to how this building relates to the public realm.

7) Building 24:

– Approximately 350' in length, at the ground level, there is only one offset in the building which results in a very long flat building plane.

– On the front elevation provided, shadows are shown suggesting offsets from the second to first floor, but the building plans do not appear to show these offsets. This needs to be clarified for accurate review.

– With the exception of the commercial unit and one residential unit, the first floor is parking. On the front elevation, for the length of the parking, openings for ventilation are shown. It seems likely that without mechanical ventilation, these openings will in fact become larger. In either case and with the lower floor below the sidewalk by 2'-4', there will be views into the parking area and, with minimal storefront and no unit entries activating the building, this does not meet the DTSP's goal of an pedestrian active downtown.

– The elevations and project summary show this building as being a four-story building. The building plans have first and second floor building plans. Are the third and fourth floors exactly the same as the second floor?

– The commercial end piece appears below the sidewalk by 2'-4', which, along with its angled orientation does little to engage the pedestrian and downtown life.

– What will be the use of the leftover triangular piece of land to the west of the commercial area?

8) As with the first submittals, for Staff and the public to accurately review and assess the mass and scale, architecture, the relationship to the existing fabric and character of the Downtown, and the goals and visions of the DTSP, the following exhibits must be provided:

– Site sections: At a minimum, four accurate and detailed site sections should be provided.

Sections need to show building profiles with heights, retaining walls, slope banks and streets. As a minimum, two in the north-south direction, two in the east-west direction. The sections provided show the existing topography only. Partial sections where grade change is most severe including building profiles should be provided as well.

–The exterior elevations and perspectives provided do not include important context, such as drive aisles, retaining walls, etc. The flat park-like context shown does not depict the proposed grading solutions. Exhibits with accurate context must be provided for a truthful depiction of what is proposed.

– Overall building and offset dimensions need to be shown on the building plans.

– Ground level finish floor elevations, for Buildings 1, 18, 23 & 24, need to be noted.

9) Specific to the DTSP Visions and Goals

- The ground floors of Buildings 1,12-18 and 23 adjacent to E. Valley Parkway, Valley Boulevard and Grand Ave. are either above or below the street/sidewalk level. These elevation differences appear to range from between a few feet and 14' +/-.
- Most buildings adjacent to Grand Ave. and Fig Street are oriented with their building fronts away from adjacent streets.

These are in conflict with the goals of building entry points being visible, majority of building walls along the street being in close proximity to the street edge to provide street-level and human-scale, activate the street and sidewalks that prioritize the pedestrian experience.

10) Conclusions:

- This or any project built at this site, will be there, unchanged, for a generation.
- Every building matters, each one (good or bad) is part of the visual fabric that expresses Escondido's character and values. We should not accept, just for the sake of adding more housing, especially at this once-in-a-generation-site, to settle for compromised site planning, grading design and architecture.
- We live in an age of indistinguishable architecture that erodes the differences and distinctiveness of city's and neighborhoods. This site, our historic downtown and Escondido residents deserve a project designed for this specific site, in a unique neighborhood and city.
- The project as proposed, does not add to the character, scale and established walkable rhythm of downtown, in fact, to be direct, it's the antithesis of what was and envisioned by the Downtown Specific Plan.

I'm sure there is more, but given the days and time I had, these are my thoughts. Thanks for your consideration of the public's input.

Ken Erickson, Architect
122 1/2 S. Kalmia St
Escondido, CA 92025
760-518-8403

Adam Finestone

From: Greg Danskin <danskin.greg@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, July 29, 2019 11:50 AM
To: Adam Finestone
Subject: [EXT] Palomar Heights Project - Impressions of Current Proposal

CAUTION : This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender email address AND know the content is safe.

Hello Adam,

I understand the Planning Department will be reviewing the current submitted drawings for this project today, and am submitting my impressions of those exhibits as an interested member of the public.

As you know, I am an architect with my business located in Escondido since 1994, and have sat on various boards and commissions, such as the Design Review Board, the Downtown Business Association Design Advisory Committee, the Historic Preservation Commission, and the Downtown Specific Plan Committee.

This particular site has a rich history, and also a unique position in the city due to its location and topography, making it an important component of Escondido. It is with that perspective in mind that I offer my views on what is being presented.

THE SUBMITTED EXHIBITS

The drawings and information submitted lack completeness in both scope and content to adequately review the proposal.

Preliminary Grading Plans

Only 2 Site Sections have been submitted (and those only in the north-south direction), describing the existing grades and not the proposed. There is no way to understand the impact of the proposed grading, not only on the Project Site, but also (and as importantly) on the neighboring properties and streetscape. Additionally, the proposed street and driveway sections, while describing possible civil engineering solutions, in no way describe the impact on the adjacent properties, be they either the development site or neighboring properties.

Tentative Map

In general, this contains much information that is necessary but premature for the level of review at present.

Architectural Plans

The exhibits show isolated building solutions without placing them in context. There is no way to understand the impact on the Project Site, on neighboring properties as well as on the adjacent streetscape.

With this in mind, the following comments are based on what I was able to glean from the documents provided:

COMMENTS ON THE DESIGN

Site Organization

The Conceptual Master Plan reveals a solution that is more suburban than urban. A tremendous amount of the surface is then required to be devoted to vehicular traffic and parking, the net result being an environment that is not in keeping with the vision set forth in the DTSP.

The apex of the site, being devoted to this suburban product, misses the opportunity the topography provides in

Streetscape

The project proposes significant retaining walls adjacent to the sidewalk

Internal Site Design

The 'Villas' and 'Rowhomes'

Streetscape - Valley Blvd

Buildings over 300 feet long and 5/6 stories tall along both edges create an environment along the street that is not a pedestrian-friendly and walkable experience. No relief of building massing, no retail cadence, and street-level views of parking, parking garage, and drive lanes, presents an uninviting space, and not in keeping with the vision of the DTSP. This will not be a pleasant 'Boulevard'. In addition, the acoustics of this street will not be pleasant.

Grand Avenue

The corner commercial block appears to have a street entry presence, but no indication of how pedestrians will interact with this space is presented. Vehicular access and delivery with appears to be via the basement parking garage, which may pose problems of access for non-pedestrian and delivery vehicles.

The westerly ingress/egress on Grand, while being a primary entrance/exit, is designed more like a secondary access point. Traffic flow, stacking, public transit provisions, and signaling must be understood, which as presented appears awkward and forced. At commute times this may become overly congested.

The Grand Avenue street edge and transition between Building 18 and Building 17 must be studied as it will be in reality. They transition between the two has potential to be awkward, creating an uninviting space for the rowhomes and a disorganized street scene dropping abruptly from an urban six-story apartment building to a four-story suburban rowhome within roughly 20 feet.

Because the rowhomes require an alleyway for access, the grades along Grand will in turn required retaining walls as much as 10 feet tall, creating such a 'well' as on Building 15 so as to be a particularly uninviting space.

Valley Parkway

The comments on Valley Blvd apply to a large extent here, in that the bustling length, no massing relief, and retaining wall heights required, mask this portion of the street edge an uninviting space for the pedestrian.

The 'Villas'

3/5's of the Villas will have no useable space at grade, a result of needing to devote most of the site to vehicular paving.

SUMMARY

The exhibits presented have the appearance that this proposal is seen by the applicant to be a primarily civil engineering problem. However, while the civil engineering issues must of course be solved, the proposal lacks any description/depiction of the environment created by the proposal. I would strongly recommend full rendered views of the streetscapes, and a physical mass model, in order to understand the environment created on the edges and in the interior.

At over 4,000 feet of edge along streets and neighboring properties, this project will have large and varied impacts along those edges. Overall site sections and perspective views at street level must be presented in order to understand the project impacts on the character of the adjacent streets and the environment it will create, whether the result is a pleasing, walkable, pedestrian-oriented solution in keeping with the vision set forth in the Downtown Specific Plan.

The current proposal, in my view, falls so far short of the vision of the DTSP, and the potential of this important site, as to be unacceptable. It does not appear to me that the problems created by this solution can be in any way resolved within the present design approach. The mass, scale, and impact that this project will have on Escondido requires a well-thought out solution that enhances not only the immediate site, but by its nature, influence in a positive way the surrounding area, in keeping with that vision. It will infect influence the character of the surrounding are for many decades.

Sincerely,

Greg Danskin
Architect

--

GREG DANSKIN ARCHITECT
760.532.2361 (M)
WWW.DANSKINARCHITECTURE.COM

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10-2-19

Adam Finestone

City of Escondido Planning Department

Palomar Heights Comments

(These comments follow my comments of 7-31-19 in response to the previous submittal.)

The former Palomar Hospital site is a critical component to the fabric of Escondido, and has the opportunity to connect that site to the downtown retail core as well as create a pedestrian-friendly connection to the east. The current proposal is lacking in a few critical areas, outlined below.

1. DENSITY

The proposal is offering 37 du/ac. It appears that the main reason for this is the building type that is being proposed, which is a suburban vehicle-oriented product. On what is arguably one of the premier urban sites in Escondido, the solution should be overtly urban in nature. Escondido has a large inventory of suburban housing projects, a type that does not allow for the urban experience called for on this site.

2. OPEN SPACE

The hard surface parking and driveway needs of this configuration significantly limit the useable outdoor space for residents, giving just 2,520 sf for 'recreation' (primarily devoted to a pool, which may tend to be underutilized by the majority of residents). The grading required to accommodate this product type requires many retaining walls, many unusable outdoor spaces, and a significant amount hardscape to navigate the topography. This solution will result in a living experience defined by paving, devoting almost all of the outdoor space to the automobile. An urban solution would accommodate those grade changes within the structure, seek ways to minimize the impact of the automobile, and encourage an urban walkable community, with a variety of uses represented (The DTSP discusses this as its vision statement and throughout).

3. PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE

The street edge is by necessity of the topography and the building type proposed populated by retaining walls, resulting in a non-pedestrian-friendly experience. The opportunity for graffiti is obvious and promises to be a constant maintenance problem. The current solution does not create an environment conducive to a walkable community.

SUMMARY

The result of choosing to employ a suburban building type is to create a project that appears more like a suburban HOA-governed insular project, as opposed to an urban public/private pedestrian-oriented focal point at the east end of the Downtown Retail Core. This site has the unique once-in-a-generation opportunity to set the tone for future development in Escondido, and as such should be approached with the goals outlined in the DTSP, both the numerical (density, height, multi-use) goals as well as the equally important goals of a pedestrian-friendly, aesthetically appropriate solution fitting Escondido and adding to the fabric while looking to the future.

Respectfully Submitted,

Greg Danskin, Architect

7-31-19

Adam Finestone

City of Escondido Planning Department

Palomar Heights – Review 7-29-19 (*italics added where the original required completion*)

Hello Adam,

I understand the Planning Department will be reviewing the current submitted drawings for this project today, and am submitting my impressions of those exhibits as an interested member of the public.

As you know, I am an architect with my business located in Escondido since 1994, and have sat on various boards and commissions, such as the Design Review Board, the Downtown Business Association Design Advisory Committee, the Historic Preservation Commission, and the Downtown Specific Plan Committee.

This particular site has a rich history, and also a unique position in the city due to its location and topography, making it an important component of Escondido. It is with that perspective in mind that I offer my views on what is being presented.

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The drawings and information submitted lack completeness in both scope and content to adequately review the proposal.

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Site Organization

The Conceptual Master Plan reveals a solution that is more suburban than urban. A tremendous amount of the surface is then required to be devoted to vehicular traffic and parking, the net result being an environment that is not in keeping with the vision set forth in the DTSP.

The apex of the site, being devoted to this suburban product, misses the opportunity the topography provides in *its natural topography*.

Streetscape

The project proposes significant retaining walls adjacent to the sidewalk, *creating an uninviting and decidedly pedestrian unfriendly experience, in effect becoming fortress-like, and harsh.*

Internal Site Design

The 'Villas' and "Rowhomes", *as a product type, are forced on this site, requiring such retaining so as to render much of the open space unusable.*

Streetscape - Valley Blvd

Buildings over 300 feet long and 5/6 stories tall along both edges create an environment along the street that is not a pedestrian-friendly and walkable experience. No relief of building massing, no retail cadence, and street-level views of parking, parking garage, and drive lanes, presents an uninviting space, and not in keeping with the vision of the DTSP. This will not be a pleasant 'Boulevard'. In addition, the acoustics of this street will not be pleasant.

Grand Avenue

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3/5's of the Villas will have no useable space at grade, a result of needing to devote most of the site to vehicular paving.

SUMMARY

The exhibits presented have the appearance that this proposal is seen by the applicant to be a primarily civil engineering problem. However, while the civil engineering issues must of course be solved, the proposal lacks any description/depiction of the environment created by the proposal. I would strongly recommend full rendered views of the streetscapes at pedestrian level, and a physical mass model, in order to understand the environment created on the edges and in the interior.

At over 4,000 feet of edge along streets and neighboring properties, this project will have large and varied impacts along those edges. Overall site sections and perspective views at street level must be presented in order to understand the project impacts on the character of the adjacent streets and the environment it will create, whether the result is a pleasing, walkable, pedestrian-oriented solution in keeping with the vision set forth in the Downtown Specific Plan.

The current proposal, in my view, falls so far short of the vision of the DTSP, and the potential of this important site, as to be unacceptable. It does not appear to me that the problems created by this solution can be in any way resolved within the present design approach. The mass, scale, and impact that this project will have on Escondido requires a well-thought out solution that enhances not only the immediate site, but by its nature, influence in a positive way the surrounding area in keeping with that vision. It will in fact influence the character of the surrounding area for many decades.

Sincerely,

Greg Danskin
Architect

Adam Finestone
Principal Planner
City of Escondido Planning Division
201 N. Broadway
Escondido, CA 92025

October 2, 2019

Re: Palomar Heights Project

I am concerned about several issues with the Palomar Heights project as submitted:

1. The Palomar Heights project conflicts with the Downtown Specific Plan and Zoning Code in that it is almost entirely residential, a neighborhood about to be inserted into the middle of a commercial zone. The Downtown Specific Plan is a carefully crafted document that should set the standard, without recurrent compromise.
2. The commercial potential for downtown should be expanded rather than restricted, extending the downtown as a larger and more vibrant area to attract potential customers for the entire downtown area. This area could be a feature for downtown, creating an exciting destination that would extend eastward from the proposed arch at Centre City Parkway up Grand to a dynamic development with additional dining and entertainment options on the hill. Residential units could be built on upper floors for a pleasant mix. If the target of more than 5,000 residential units is ever reached in the Downtown Specific Plan, additional shops, restaurants, pharmacies, and grocery stores will be needed to service the additional residents who will otherwise have to leave the area, most likely in their cars, to avoid overcrowded restaurants already seen during Cruisin' Grand and other events. Additional commercial will also bring potential customers to existing downtown businesses and provide interest for pedestrians walking alongside the building.
3. The Palomar Heights project lacks adequate open space for landscaping materials to enjoy from within the dwelling units and for children to play. No playgrounds or play areas are indicated in the plans, only a relatively small "rec area" and very small pockets adjacent to the street.
4. The building design is not compatible with the historic and classically designed buildings downtown. Instead, as shown, they are reminiscent of the 90s and not something that will continue to be appreciated over the decades to come.
5. The Palomar Heights project will exacerbate the parking challenges in the downtown area because there is inadequate parking for those living there in addition to the commercial space customers and employees.
6. Adding thousands of residential units to this area will create a demand on water, electricity, and sewer, as well as other services. The existing population is already asked to/required to reduce electrical and water use.

Sincerely,



Carol Rea
Escondido Resident

Palomar Heights

Palomar Health Downtown Campus

October 2, 2019

Mr. Adam Finestone
Principal Planner
City of Escondido

Dear Adam,

Please forward these observations and comments to the Planning Commissioners.

The approved Downtown Specific Plan (DTSP) was developed over an eight-year period, adopted on August 7, 2013. During this time, residents, downtown business owners, Downtown Business Association, Chamber of Commerce, City staff, Planning Commission and City Council members gave input, discussed and debated with the goal of updating the vision for Downtown.

This effort recognized and respected the historic character of downtown but also considered the future, envisioning an attractive, pedestrian friendly, economically vital city center providing social, cultural and residential focus.

The purpose of DTSP is to direct Downtown development, based on its principles and guidelines to the desired outcome. All proposed projects in the Downtown are reviewed and assessed based on this thoughtful document to ensure that in the future the Downtown will have fulfilled the vision of those that contributed.

Palomar Heights exhibits reviewed are dated September 10 and 11, 2019 and the following comments and observations are based on the approved DTSP.

General Observations:

The proposed suburban project, necessarily employs site and grading designs that ignore existing site topography and the surrounding context resulting in significant grade change along street edges and public sidewalks. This approach, along with the fact that Buildings 1, 18, 23 & 24 propose parking garages on the ground floor level, isolates the project both physically and visually from the surrounding neighborhoods and does not provide the pedestrian environment which is a central goal of the DTSP.

See DTSP: Page II-12, III-1 (2nd paragraph), Page III-6 2 a)

Building 1 Apartments:

- Building One is 325' +/- in length and five stories in height. Along East Valley Parkway, there are retaining walls (2'-14' in height) and slope banks that result in the ground-floor being an average of 11' above the sidewalk
- Distances from building to street and sidewalk range between 20' and 35' +/- and at one point 10'
- Apartment units are not located on the street level or ground floor, in fact, with the exception of stairs to some second-floor units, the ground floor is a parking garage. Some second-floor units facing East Valley Parkway do have doors to their stairs but will appear secondary rather than the unit's entry door.
- Considering the length, elevation above street level and distances from building to the sidewalk and units located above the ground level, the proposed design does not provide the pedestrian environment which is a central goal of the Downtown Specific Plan.
See DTSP: Pages I-2 9., III-1 (2nd paragraph), III-7 b

The "Villas" and "Rowhomes"

- The Villas and Rowhomes are automobile-orientated suburban solutions. With surface parking, drive aisles and driveways, these buildings (the "Villas" in particular) will be surrounded by large areas of asphalt.
- The majority of Villas have unit entries located on drive aisles where cars access garages. The landscaping in this area amounts to small pockets every 20'. This space, with 3-story buildings on either side, is essentially an alley, which does not provide pedestrian oriented entries.
- Along Fig Street, per site section C-C, with terraced retaining walls of 15' in height and slope banks, the building ground-floor is approx. 20' above the adjacent sidewalk. Adjacent to Grand Avenue, some buildings are approx. 7' away from retaining walls and as much as 8' below street level.
- Based on these observations the proposed design does not provide the physical connection to the surrounding neighborhood nor create the pedestrian environment which is a central of the Downtown Specific Plan
See DTSP: Pages I-2 9., III-1 (2nd paragraph), III-6 2) Guidelines a) & III-7 b

Building 18 Apartments

- Similar to Building 1, apartment units are not located on the ground floor, in fact, with the exception of stairs to some second-floor units, the ground floor is a parking garage. Some second-floor units facing Grand Ave. do have doors to stairs but will appear secondary rather than the unit's primary entrance, doing little to activate the street edge and public realm.
- Based on these observations the proposed design does not provide the physical connection to the surrounding neighborhood nor create the pedestrian environment which is a central of the Downtown Specific Plan
DTSP Page III -7 2) Guidelines: d

Building 23 Apartments

- Building 23 is 430' +/- in length, five stories in height and elevated between 5' -10' above Valley Boulevard.
 - Similar to Buildings 1 and 18, apartment units are not located on the street level or ground floor and, with the exception of stairs to some second-floor units, the ground floor is the parking garage. Some second-floor units that face Valley Boulevard have doors to their stairs which will have the appearance as a secondary rather than the primary entry point.
- Based on these observations the proposed design does not provide the physical connection to the surrounding neighborhood nor create the pedestrian environment which is a central of the Downtown Specific Plan
DTSP Page III -7 2) Guidelines: d
- The intersection of Grand Ave. & Valley Blvd. is one of the most important in Downtown. What is built here will be seen on Grand Avenue from blocks away and will contribute to the larger visual experience.
- The proposed tower would serve the project and Downtown better if located so as to have a strong connection to the ground plane rather than a roof top. And a more solid, slender design, would read as timeless, have a strong sense of permanence and better seen from further away.

Building 24: Senior Apartments

- Similar to Buildings 1, 18 and 23, apartment units are not located on the street level or ground floor. With the exception of stairs to some second-floor units and the small commercial space, once again, the ground floor is a parking garage. Some second-floor units facing Valley Boulevard have doors to their stairs, but with the proximity of the elevator, it seems likely that the doors and stairs will be little used. The small lobby appears to have solid walls with only a door on street side.
 - On the front elevation, several openings for garage ventilation are shown. With the garage floor below the sidewalk level, there will be views into the parking area, which is strongly discouraged in the DTSP
- Based on these observations the proposed design does not provide the physical connection to the surrounding neighborhood nor create the pedestrian environment which is a central of the Downtown Specific Plan
DTSP Page III -7 2) Guidelines: d

Conclusions:

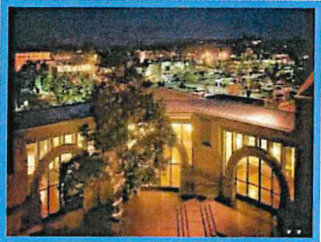
- This site is a once - a- generation opportunity, any project built here, will be there for a generation.
- The project as proposed, is a forced fit, it's a suburban solution that can be found on any flat site, anywhere. It does not add to the character, scale and established walkable rhythm of downtown, in fact, it's the antithesis of what was and envisioned by the Downtown Specific Plan.
- Every building matters, each one (good or bad) is part of the visual fabric that expresses Escondido's character and values. We should not accept, just for the sake of adding more housing, compromised site planning, grading design and architecture.
- We live in an age of indistinguishable architecture that erodes the differences and distinctiveness of cities and neighborhoods. This site, our historic downtown and Escondido residents deserve a project designed specifically for this site, in a unique neighborhood and city.
- We have a thoughtful Downtown Specific Plan that, by employing time tested planning principles, honors the scale and rhythm of the historic character of downtown, yet embraces this current place in time and the future. Again, all proposed projects in the Downtown must be reviewed and assessed based on this document to ensure that in the future Downtown will have fulfilled the vision of the DTSP. If plan is not the measure of whether a project should be approved or denied, what is?

Respectfully,
Ken Erickson, Architect





ESCONDIDO
Downtown Specific Plan



Adopted on August 7, 2013
Resolution 2013-85



File No.: PHG 13-0018

Downtown Specific Plan

VISION STATEMENT & GOALS

B. THIS DOCUMENT'S PURPOSE

The Downtown Specific Plan document provides a comprehensive plan for land use, development regulations, development incentives, design guidelines, pedestrian and mobility improvements, and other related actions aimed at implementing the strategic goals for Downtown Escondido as set forth in the General Plan Goals and Policies. As downtown transitions to a more urban environment involving taller structures, and buildings constructed along the street edge, focused efforts are required to ensure that the unique character is maintained and strengthened. The Vision, Goals, Principles and Guidelines promote a balance of uses, sensitive design techniques, and enhanced pedestrian opportunities.

C. DOWNTOWN SPECIFIC PLAN STRATEGIC GOALS

1. An economically viable Downtown with an appropriate mix of retail, office, residential, entertainment and cultural uses.
2. A local and regional destination for specialty shopping, dining, nightlife, employment, culture, and the arts.
3. A vibrant and exciting environment with land uses that foster an "18-hour" atmosphere, in addition to areas that provide mixed use, office employment and high-density residential opportunities.
4. Development and signage that strengthen the character of Downtown and are architecturally compatible with the existing urban fabric.
5. Street-level and human-scale design elements in new and remodeled developments that improve pedestrian orientation.
6. Preserved historically significant sites and structures that enhance the character of Downtown.
7. Pedestrian-oriented, ground-floor, specialty retail and restaurant uses on Grand Avenue that reinforce and expand its unique character.
8. Higher residential densities in key locations that support Downtown non-residential uses.
9. A pedestrian environment that provides connections, convenient access and opportunities for alternative modes of transportation.



Downtown Specific Plan

LAND USES

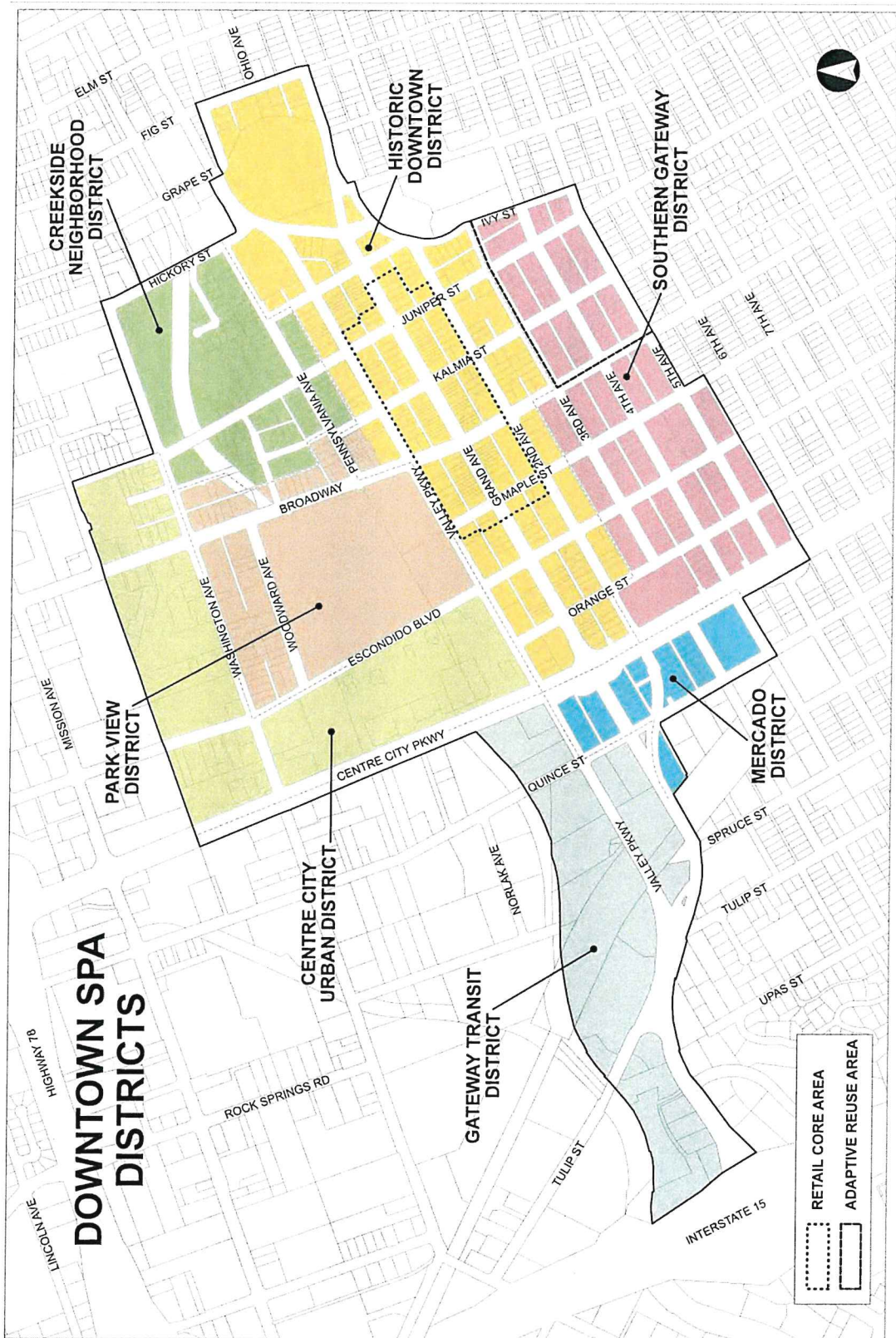


FIGURE II-1

Downtown Specific Plan

DESIGN POLICIES, STANDARDS & GUIDELINES

III. DESIGN POLICIES, STANDARDS, AND GUIDELINES

A. PURPOSE

There exist certain elements of good urban design in the creation of public and private spaces that make up the fabric of a downtown. This document seeks to identify those policies, standards and supportive guidelines, to explain them in a way that is clear, and to give direction on their use. Proposed projects should preserve, respect and promote the existing character, scale, and the patterns of downtown Escondido. In its transition to a more urban environment, efforts should be made to capitalize on the City's unique history, geography and climate.



Downtown's urban atmosphere is envisioned to address the increased intensity of pedestrian and vehicular activity. Emphasis is focused on facilitating an enjoyable 'walkable' experience. Streets accommodate wider sidewalks, transit vehicles making multiple stops, pedestrian crossings, buildings closer to the right of way, and other features that affect vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

Downtown design policies, standards and guidelines embrace strategies representing a shift in focus from 'how to develop vacant land' to 'how to reinvest in existing neighborhoods.' Escondido's General Plan accommodates and guides urban residential growth downtown in order to preserve densities in established single family areas. This strategy helps ensure housing options for all residents and capitalizes on the city's infrastructure investments.

The Downtown SPA also incorporate policies ensuring that transportation planners and engineers consistently design and operate the entire roadway with safety and accessibility of all users – bicyclists, transit vehicles and riders, automobiles, and pedestrians of all ages and abilities, as well as goods and services. These policies shift Escondido's orientation away from building streets primarily for automobiles and facilitate the broader vision of directing Downtown's and the City's circulation system toward a truly 'multimodal' transportation network.

Downtown Specific Plan

DESIGN POLICIES, STANDARDS & GUIDELINES

The goal of this chapter is to encourage appropriate urban design solutions, increase the level of quality projects and to provide the community with a future environment that is as rich as its past. There might be points of discussion on any project for which there is no one clear solution. Preserving the character of Downtown Escondido, along with the area's overall vision, should be the fundamental goal of the design process.

1. SMART GROWTH POLICIES, STANDARDS, AND GUIDELINES

a. "Sense of Place" Policy:

Promote a "sense of place" and enhance the community's historical context.

Project architects and planners should strive to understand the history and character that make Downtown a unique place and how their project design for a specific site would contribute to Escondido being "Somewhere vs. Anyplace."

1) Standards:

- a) The street level shall be enhanced as an inviting place for pedestrians by providing features that are visually interesting and human in scale including seating, public art, outdoor displays, historical plaques and landscaping.
- b) Historically significant facades and architectural features visible from the public right-of-way shall be preserved. Replacement elements on historic buildings shall replicate the original elements as closely as possible in terms of materials, profile, and detail which add to the building's character and the down-town overall. Replication should be based on historic evidence.
- c) Structures proposed for adaptive re-use shall retain the appearance of their original use, particularly if the structure is deemed historically significant. Landscaping, lighting, signage, parking, and other exterior structural additions/modifications, shall be designed to not impact surrounding residential uses.



2) Guidelines:

- a) Proposed projects should preserve, respect and promote the existing character, scale, architecture and the patterns of the historically significant downtown.

Downtown Specific Plan

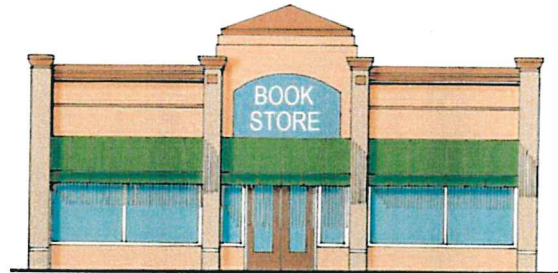
DESIGN POLICIES, STANDARDS & GUIDELINES

- b) Larger projects should be designed to emulate the existing rhythm and scale of the downtown to minimize expansive inactive storefronts.

b. Building Materials Policy:

Utilize appropriate urban-style building materials, textures, colors, signage, lighting, massing and balance.

Well-designed building architecture and signage shall respect and relate to its surroundings in scale, mass, color, use of texture, character, materials, and asymmetrical or symmetrical balance,



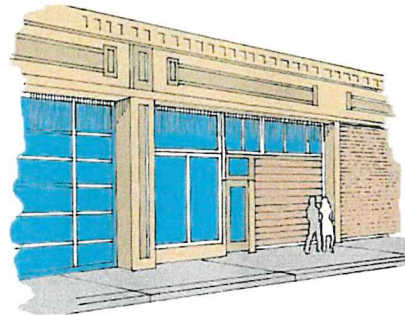
EMPHASIS THROUGH MASSING

1) Standards:

- a) Exterior building materials typically associated with urban environments that are durable and timeless (concrete, brick, stone, metal, glass, etc) shall be primarily used.

THE DIFFERENT FINISHES OF A MATERIAL CREATE TEXTURE

- b) Colors for building wall surfaces, trim areas, and awnings shall be coordinated and non-garish. Consultation with a color specialist to ensure a harmonious palette is encouraged.



TEXTURES PROMOTE INTIMATE SCALE

- c) The architectural design of detached buildings shall complement the main structure through the use of compatible details, materials and colors.
- d) Well-designed and appropriate exterior lighting shall be incorporated to provide security, visual comfort for pedestrians, and enhancement of façade details.
- e) Indirect lighting shall be incorporated where appropriate to minimize glare into pedestrians' eyes. Building lighting that blinks, changes, or is otherwise distracting shall be avoided.
- f) Buildings shall have architectural features and patterns that reflect and reinforce the scale; mass, proportion, rhythm, and attention to detail established by existing well-designed structures, as well as provide visual pedestrian-scale interest, reduce massive visual effects (such as avoiding large blank walls, step-back building facades for upper floors, etc.).

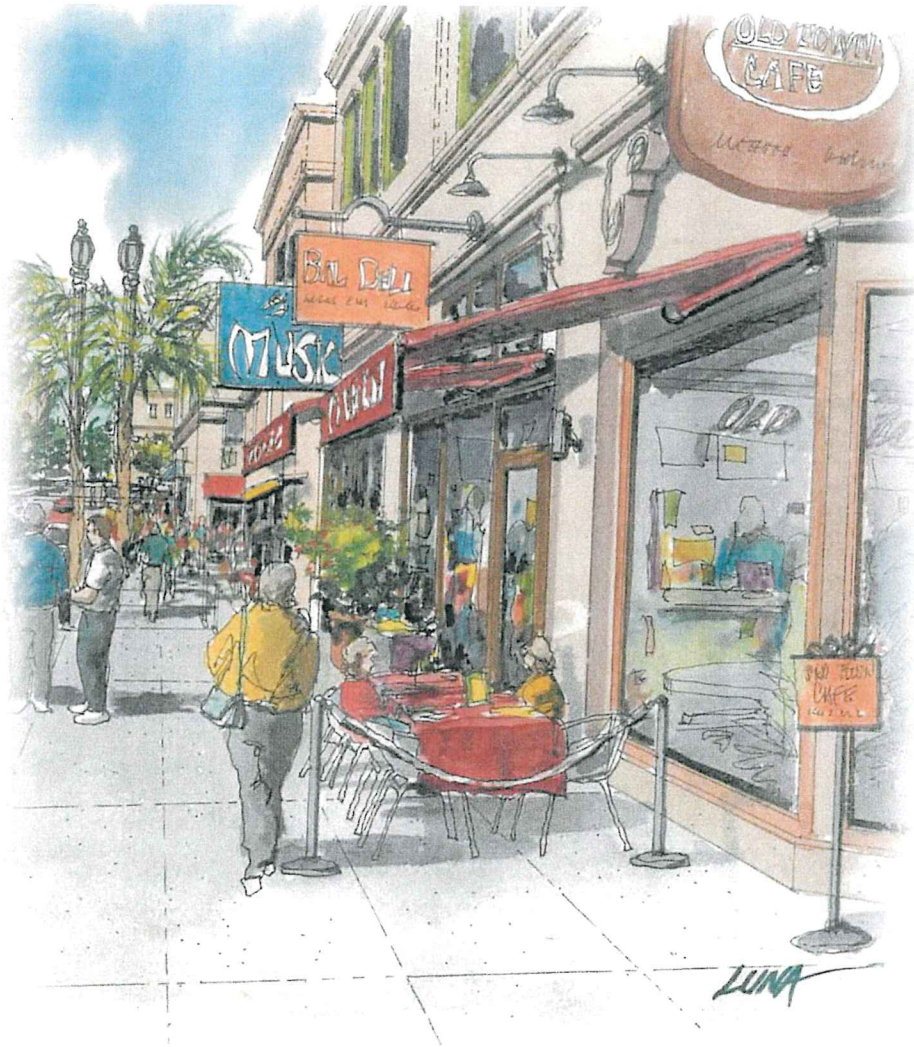
Downtown Specific Plan

DESIGN POLICIES, STANDARDS & GUIDELINES

c. **Building Orientation Policy:**

Orient buildings toward the street to establish a strong connection with the ground plane and immediate surroundings, and to appropriately reflect the building's purpose and use.

A continuous 'street edge' frames and defines the public space, transforming the street into an enjoyable outdoor public space. Buildings with transparent store fronts at the sidewalk engage the pedestrian's interest, attention and curiosity. Conversely, buildings set far back from the street erode the "street edge," disconnect the pedestrian from the building's use and activity, as well as prevent the pedestrian from enjoying attractive building details.



Downtown Specific Plan

DESIGN POLICIES, STANDARDS & GUIDELINES

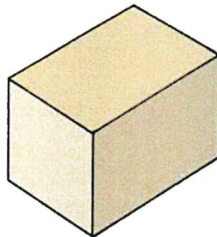
1) Standards:

- a) Building entry points shall be clearly visible. As required by the Specific Plan District, approximately 70% of the building wall along the street shall contact, or be in close proximity to, the street edge to provide an urban look and help activate the street by avoiding the use of columns with cantilevered over-hangs and/or porches along the street edge.

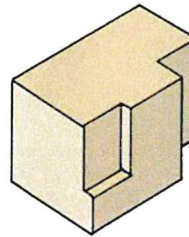


- b) Elements that vary façade planes and create a visual play of light and shadow shall be incorporated along the street edge. Long, uninterrupted, horizontal surfaces and “box-like” appearances shall be avoided. Display windows, store entrances, upper windows and other architectural features are encouraged in these locations.

(BOX-LIKE APPEARANCE)
DISCOURAGED

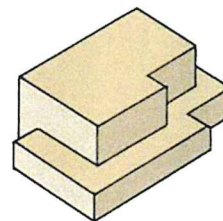


(VERTICAL ARTICULATION)
ENCOURAGED



- c) Building setbacks that transition from the public right of way shall incorporate hardscape materials (pavers, colored / stamped concrete, raised planters, etc.) that are compatible with public right of way improvements to promote comfortable pedestrian activity and accommodate seating and shade as well as protection from the elements.

(VERTICAL ARTICULATION)
ENCOURAGED



2) Guidelines:

- a) A building's main front façade should not be set back far from the street. The majority of a building footprint should, especially at the street edge, contact the ground plane with a design that reflects the retail, office, or residential use.

Downtown Specific Plan

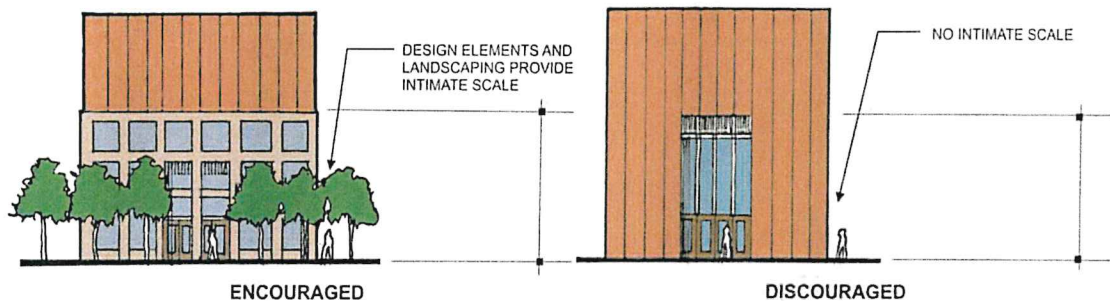
DESIGN POLICIES, STANDARDS & GUIDELINES

- b) Pedestrian-oriented storefront windows should be located on the street edge as well as pedestrian-scale signage, canopies, and awnings. Doors can be offset slightly away from the street to increase window area.
- c) Changes in paving, hedges and walls also should be used to define the street edge in addition to building façades.
- d) Buildings that are elevated to accommodate 'tuck-under' parking are strongly discouraged because they 'disconnect' the building's users from the ground, street and neighborhood.

d. Pedestrian-Oriented Environment Smart Growth Policy:

Incorporate higher building profiles and pedestrian-scaled features that strengthen a compact, pedestrian-oriented environment.

A compact, walkable community is established by incorporating narrow storefronts and lots with increased frequency of entry points in both commercial and residential buildings that limit long expanses of inactivity along the street.



1) Standards:

- a) Projects shall incorporate high-profile and vertical design features sufficient to portray a desirable urban quality and comfortable public realm with adjacent buildings.
- b) The ground-floor portion of buildings shall be architecturally distinguished from the upper façade to form a visual base for the building and to create an intimate scale for the pedestrian environment.
- c) Side and rear facades shall be articulated in a comprehensive design that is compatible with the design of the front façade.
- d) Arcades built over the sidewalk or in front of store windows shall be high enough and open enough not to obscure display windows.

Downtown Specific Plan

DESIGN POLICIES, STANDARDS & GUIDELINES

- b) Landscaping shall not be placed so as to screen the doors and windows of units from the street or from walk-ways leading from the street to the dwelling-unit entries.
- c) On-site parking shall not diminish the defined street edge or detract from the pedestrian experience.
- d) Development shall address residential, guest, and commercial parking needs on-site as well as the appropriateness of gated and/or reserved parking.
- e) Exterior lighting fixtures in parking areas and driveways shall utilize cutoff shields, or other appropriate measures, to conceal the light source from adjacent uses and rights-of-way.
- f) Parking lots shall be landscaped to soften their area and provide a visual buffer. A combination of trees and shrubs in a landscaped strip or planter creates an effective separation where a parking lot abuts a public sidewalk.
- g) Structured parking shall create a visually attractive and active street edge to enhance the pedestrian experience in the following manner:
 - i. Parking structures shall generally be limited to extend no more than one-half story above grade adjacent to the sidewalk, or shall be developed below street level.
 - ii. Parking garage facades shall complement the area's existing architecture.
 - iii. A majority of the parking structure's street frontage shall include sufficient retail or commercial space in non-residential areas to accommodate a variety of pedestrian-oriented uses, or construct the parking structure at the rear of the building.
 - iv. Vehicular entry points into garages should be minimized and located to minimize pedestrian exposure.



2) Guidelines:

- a) Public, semi-private, and private ground-level spaces should be defined by utilizing low walls, landscaping, stoops, porches, and decorative paving.

Downtown Specific Plan

DESIGN POLICIES, STANDARDS & GUIDELINES

- b) Features that can protect pedestrians from inclement weather (umbrellas, awnings, canopies, recessed entries, etc.) are encouraged and should be designed as a building's integral features.
- c) On-site parking should be located at the rear of buildings and be oriented in a manner that facilitates surveillance.
- d) Tandem spaces may be appropriate in residential developments.

f. Housing Smart Growth Policy:

Include a variety of housing types and densities to strengthen residents' vested interest in the success of downtown.

Mixed-use and residential development involving a variety of densities creates vibrancy, provides more housing choices, and reduces the need for automobile dependency. Such variety provides residents opportunities for transitioning to different housing types within the same community and balances economic health.

1) Standards:

- a) The residential density for mixed-use developments shall consider the planned urban vision as well as the existing development pattern as a means to establish compatibility.
- b) Residential development shall be a minimum of two stories and shall maintain a strong edge similar to commercial buildings.
- c) Residential projects, with portions of its underground parking extending above the sidewalk line, shall be designed so that the street edge is still attractive and inviting to pedestrians.
- d) Mixed Use commercial uses wrapping around street corners and architectural details that are differentiated on upper elevations shall be incorporated to establish a strong retail edge.
- e) Shopkeeper development shall be designed for owners to operate their businesses while living in the attached unit, which also provides separate exterior access to the residential portion of the unit.



Downtown Specific Plan

DESIGN POLICIES, STANDARDS & GUIDELINES

- f) The non-residential space of shopkeeper units shall be attached and provide access to the main dwelling unit, which shall be located above and/or behind the non-residential space. Areas devoted for residential use shall not be used as space for conducting business with customers or clients.
- g) Artisan loft and/or shopkeeper units shall not be designed to accommodate leasing or purchasing either the residential or commercial space by separate tenants.
- h) Mixed use retail space shall be developed with sufficient interior areas and ceiling heights to accommodate a wide variety of uses. Storefront widths of 25-30 feet with 42-45+ foot depths (inclusive of handicap accessible restroom areas), and 12- to 13-foot-high ceilings are considered to be sufficient.
- i) Shopkeeper commercial spaces shall be developed with sufficient interior areas and ceiling heights to accommodate a variety of businesses. Shopkeeper widths of 20-25 feet with 30-35 foot depths (inclusive of handicap accessible restroom areas), and 10-11 foot-high ceilings create a sufficient minimum area for shopkeeper uses to operate.
- j) Artisan loft space shall be developed with sufficient interior areas and ceiling heights to accommodate a variety of businesses,. Artisan loft widths of 15-20 feet with 18-25 depths (inclusive of handicap accessible rest-room areas), and 9-10 foot-high ceilings create a sufficient minimum area for artisan uses to operate, although higher ceilings may be appropriate in certain circumstances.



2) Guidelines:

- a) Higher density, pedestrian-oriented and mixed-use projects are encouraged that add to the economic viability of the downtown area.
- b) Porches, stoops, balconies and recessed entries in residential projects are encouraged. Design of these elements should retain a sense of privacy, but still allow interaction with the sidewalk while providing 'eyes on the street.'

Downtown Specific Plan

LAND USE DISTRICTS *Historic Downtown*

2. LOCATION

The Historic Downtown District encompasses approximately 170 acres generally located between Second and Third Avenues on the south, Valley Parkway on the north, Centre City Parkway on the west and Palomar Hospital on the east. The District includes over six blocks on both sides of Grand Avenue, which has been historically classified as Escondido's 'Retail Core Area'. Valley Parkway and Second Avenue provide convenient vehicular access to the Downtown Retail Core and to off-street parking lots, while Grand Avenue brings users to the center of activity and offers convenient on-street parking. A pedestrian trail connects the District to the Escondido Transit Center and citywide trail system, while pedestrian walkways and arcade pass-throughs and 'paseos' provide convenient pedestrian connections within Downtown.

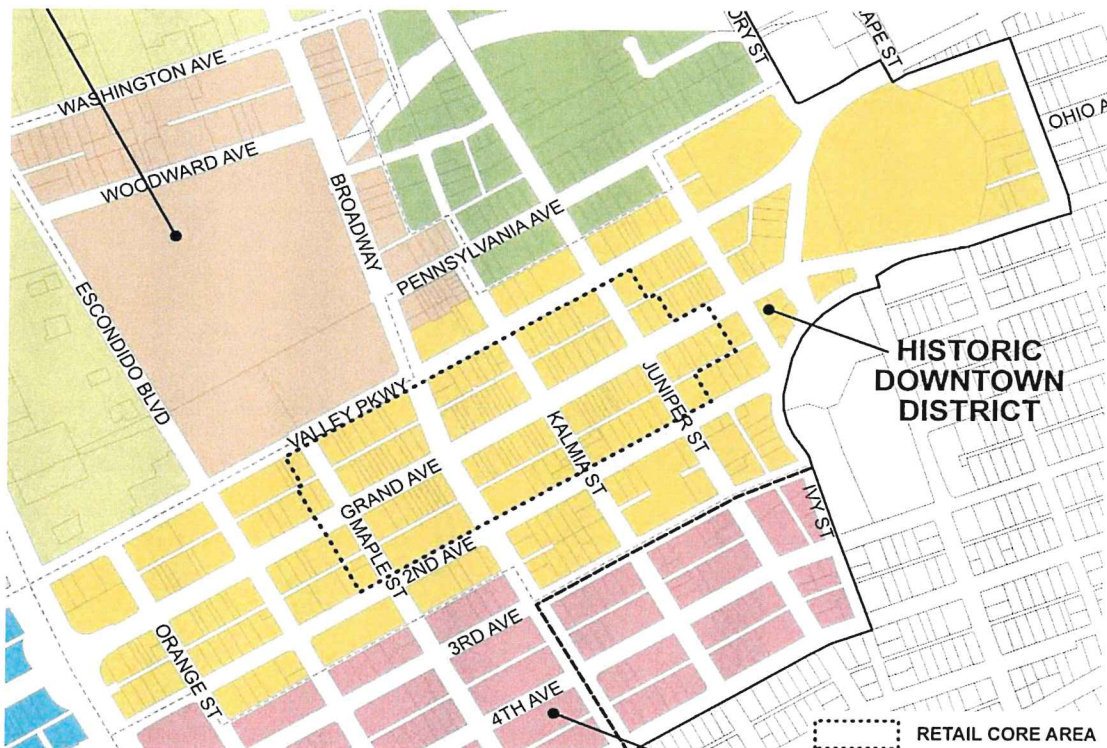


FIGURE V-2

Areas east and west of the Downtown Retail Core provide for expansion and development of offices and services. Businesses in these areas include a full range of professional and medical office uses, but might involve retail establishments based on market demand. Non-residential ground-floor uses are required throughout the Historic Downtown District. Mixed-use developments, with residential uses on upper floors, are encouraged for areas east of Maple Street. A larger concentration of financial and office development is located generally west of Maple Street. This area is intended for more intense non-residential commercial and office development to support a larger downtown workforce.

Downtown Specific Plan

LAND USE DISTRICTS *Historic Downtown*

b. Outside the Retail Core Area

Mixed-use projects are permitted and encouraged for areas east of Ivy Street. Such mixed-uses include: retail and service commercial uses, restaurants, medical, administrative and professional office uses combined with residential uses on upper floors that include opportunities for higher densities.



4. HISTORIC DOWNTOWN DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

a. Maximum Building Heights, Frontage, Setbacks, Lot Size, Coverage

Refer to Figure III-5 (*Development Standards*).

b. Landscaping

Landscaping shall conform to Article 62 of the Escondido Zoning Code or as determined appropriate through the Planned Development process.

c. Open Space: Mixed-Use Projects

Unless separately established through the Planned Development application process, the minimum usable open space for the residential portion of a mixed-use project shall be 300 square feet per unit. Refer to Chapter III to determine what area(s) may qualify for calculating open space.

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E: mitch@mitchtsailaw.com



155 South El Molino Avenue
Suite 104
Pasadena, California 91101

VIA U.S. MAIL & E-MAIL

October 8, 2019

Adam Finestone – Principal Planner	City of Escondido Planning Commission
City of Escondido Planning Division	City Council Chambers
201 North Broadway	City Hall
Escondido, California 92025	201 North Broadway
Em: afinestone@escondido.org	Escondido, CA 92025

RE: Palomar Heights Project - City Case Numbers: ENV 18-0009, SUB 18-0011, and PHG 18-0049 (City of Escondido)

Dear Sirs/Madams,

On behalf of the Southwest Regional Council of Carpenters (“**Commenter**” or “**Carpenters**”), my Office is submitting these comments on the City of Escondido Planning Commission’s (“**Escondido**” or “**Lead Agency**”) Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (“**NOP**”) for the Palomar Heights Project (“**Project**”).

The Southwest Carpenters is a labor union representing 50,000 union carpenters in six states, including in southern California, and has a strong interest in well-ordered land use planning and addressing the environmental impacts of development projects.

Individual members of the Southwest live, work and recreate in the City and surrounding communities and would be directly affected by the Project’s environmental impacts.

Commenter expressly reserves the right to supplement these comments at or prior to hearings on the Project, and at any later hearings and proceedings related to this Project. Cal. Gov. Code § 65009(b); Cal. Pub. Res. Code § 21177(a); *Bakersfield Citizens for Local Control v. Bakersfield* (2004) 124 Cal. App. 4th 1184, 1199-1203; see *Galante Vineyards v. Monterey Water Dist.* (1997) 60 Cal. App. 4th 1109, 1121.


Commenter incorporates by reference all comments raising issues regarding the environmental impact report (“**EIR**”) submitted prior to certification of the EIR for

the Project. *Citizens for Clean Energy v City of Woodland* (2014) 225 CA4th 173, 191 (finding that any party who has objected to the Project’s environmental documentation may assert any issue timely raised by other parties).

Moreover, Commenter requests that the Lead Agency provide notice for any and all notices referring or related to the Project issued under the California Environmental Quality Act (“**CEQA**”), Cal Public Resources Code (“**PRC**”) § 21000 *et seq*, and the California Planning and Zoning Law (“**Planning and Zoning Law**”), Cal. Gov’t Code §§ 65000–65010. California Public Resources Code Sections 21092.2, and 21167(f) and Government Code Section 65092 require agencies to mail such notices to any person who has filed a written request for them with the clerk of the agency’s governing body.

If the City has any questions or concerns, feel free to contact my Office.

Sincerely,



Mitchell M. Tsai

Attorneys for Southwest Regional
Council of Carpenters



Value on Display. Every Day.

November 18, 2019

Mayor Paul McNamara and City Council members
City of Escondido
201 N. Broadway
Escondido, CA 92025



RE: Request for transit-oriented land use development decisions in Escondido

Dear Mayor and City Council,

The undersigned organizations are members of the Quality of Life Coalition committed to building a vibrant, inclusive economy that delivers economic and environmental justice, lifts up communities, creates healthier communities, addresses the climate crisis, and ensures resource conservation.

As leaders of the city, you will make critical decisions about the future of the region in the next few months. From a planning perspective, the city of Escondido is uniquely poised, in time and in place, to be a model for how local government can realize economic and environmental sustainability through land-use decisions.

The city's location on multiple transportation corridors, the urgent need for housing stock that is affordable, the opportunities presented to increase density in the urban core, the need to create good, middle-class jobs for local workers in the region through collective bargaining, including project labor agreements, especially in vulnerable neighborhoods, and the ability to stop the haphazard development in remote and inappropriate areas make your decisions even more critical.

Consider these important facts and issues:

- Escondido has significantly underbuilt housing in the low, moderate, and very low income categories. Of special concern is that Escondido has only built 2.2% of needed housing for moderate-income earners and met only 11% of the low-income need. More density in the urban core would provide more opportunity to address these important needs.
- Increased housing density is needed to support the greater use of transit needed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The California Air Resources Board's 2018 report on SB 375 implementation identified a need to provide more affordable housing choices near jobs and transit to help reverse the trend in rising Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT). Escondido is lucky to have a Sprinter station and well-defined transportation corridors in place. Escondido has vacant and developable areas near and on these corridors where housing density, in accordance with the general and specific plans, should be maximized. Unfortunately, so far, in the places where density is desirable from a planning perspective, the actual projects being built are falling far short.
- The region has cutting-edge, state-approved apprenticeship facilities and a highly skilled, trained and qualified construction workforce. As we have seen many times, linking strong job quality and workforce standards with development projects that provide training and work opportunities for County residents through a Project Labor Agreement with key provisions including participation in state-approved joint labor-management apprenticeship; local hire with enforceable standards targeting vulnerable communities and populations, like veterans; and labor peace result in successful projects that deliver community and local economic benefits.
- Protecting the natural environment, air quality, and creation of open spaces are paramount to creating a livable city. Reducing pressure on significant habitat areas and creating more open space options for residents will result in a city that is more attractive to residents and businesses.

In this light, the undersigned organizations urge the city's elected officials and staff to take actions in the next year to move the city in the direction of sensible land use, creation of housing that is needed, promotion of urban infill, and to move away from inappropriately located development.

Specifically, we request the city take the following actions.

1. Hold-off on decisions related to the proposed redevelopment of Palomar Hospital until a project that includes at least 1,000 units is proposed. The current proposal is less than one third of what is allowable on the site. The location, directly on a transportation corridor and adjacent to downtown, should not be squandered on a low-density, luxury townhome development. This site would be perfect for a public private partnership and should add housing in the ranges needed in the city. The city could also require that some portion of the units be affordable to lower and moderate income families and individuals to help address the goals in the housing element of its General Plan and maximize the opportunity to connect low- and moderate-income households to transit.
2. Initiate a review of development opportunities on parking lots and other areas in transportation corridors to address the need for more affordable units and increase density in the area. These sites, including the hospital site, are prime examples where the Request For Proposals process should be utilized to solicit the kind of partners and development the city and Escondido residents need.

3. Create a stakeholder working group to develop an urban infill/transit oriented development strategy that also addresses the housing needs of lower and moderate income households for downtown and other corridor areas already in the urban footprint prior to making further development decisions. This strategy should then be incorporated into the city's Climate Action Plan Update, to make Escondido the region's leader in implementing the kind of smart growth tools needed at the local level to meaningfully address the climate crisis. We believe the city would have many coalition partners ready to support and help develop the projects needed to activate and enrich Escondido. We would welcome the opportunity to work with you on such an effort.
4. As more development projects come before you, to focus and maximize resources now and to realize a successful transit-oriented future, projects adopted by the city should meet clear objectives. Projects that the city supports should reduce (not increase) VMT; avoid high-risk fire areas; ensure safe evacuation routes for all residents; add to affordable housing stock; qualify as infill developments; contribute to the support of transit; preserve and protect core habitat and open space areas; are on or near transportation corridors; require the job quality and workforce standards referenced above; address climate impacts in the near and long-term; and, implement land use patterns consistent with tenets of good planning. Projects that do not meet these objectives, should not be pursued.

The decisions the city will make soon will set the course for the livability and success of Escondido in the changing world of the future. Whether those decisions will take the city in a positive or negative direction will depend on your actions. Please use these opportunities to bring your development decisions in alignment with transit-supportive land use plans that provide the housing we need for residents of all income levels and in the locations we need them.

We hope you will call on any of our organizations to assist and support the city in these critical decisions.

Sincerely,

Sophie Wolfram, Climate Action Campaign, Chair, QOL Transportation Committee

Rick Bates, UNITE HERE Local 30

Diane Takvorian, Environmental Health Coalition

Bee Mittermiller, Chair Transportation Team, San Diego 350

Tom Lemmon, Business Manager, San Diego County Building & Construction Trades Council

Jennifer Hunt, Advocacy Coordinator, San Diego County Bicycle Coalition

Jeremy Abrams, Business Manager, IBEW 569

George Courser, San Diego Sierra Club

Jim Miller, American Federation of Teachers, Local 1931

Laura Hunter, Escondido Neighbors United

Pamela Heatherington, Environmental Center of San Diego

Cc

Jeff Epp, City Manager

Jay Petrek, Assistant City Manager

Bill Martin, Community Development

Adam Finestone, Planning

Adam Finestone

From: Maria Bowman Real Estate Services <mariabowmanres@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 13, 2019 4:37 PM
To: Adam Finestone
Subject: Comments on Case No. Sub 18-0011: PHG 18-0049;ENV 18-0009

The Escondido Mercado Association supports this project for the former Palomar Hospital. What we are encouraging is that a traffic plan consider encouraging the traffic that needs to connect to the freeways use East Valley Parkway to go West and 2nd Ave. to enter east. The traffic through the Grand Avenue to be for slower shopping type of traffic with the least speed allowed.

Keeping Grand Avenue as a slow speed. This would be a win/win for residents and business. As a pedestrian friendly Avenue the benefit of an open space / relaxing, walking, eating/shopping.

Currently there does not seem to be signs encouraging through traffic to use the One Way Streets of East Valley Parkway and 2nd Ave. So better management of traffic and no fast traffic through the Grand Avenue, all the way through Quince Street .

Mr. Finestone, please let me know if you have any questions, and thank you in advance for your consideration.

Adam Finestone

From: Leon Ramsey, Jr. <leon@mitchtsailaw.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 22, 2020 2:49 PM
To: Adam Finestone; Kristin Blackson
Cc: Mitchell Tsai
Subject: [EXT] City of Escondido - Palomar Heights Project [SCH No. 2019059013]

CAUTION : This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender email address AND know the content is safe.

Good afternoon,

Our office is an interested party who submitted initial comments on the above-referenced project. We would like to know the current status of the project. Has the DEIR been released yet? Are there any hearings coming up?

Also, as indicated in our initial letter, this office would like to be included on the notification list for this project. Can you please confirm that the following email addresses are included: **mitch@mitchtsailaw.com** and **leon@mitchtsailaw.com**?

Your attention to this matter is greatly appreciated.

Thank you,

Leon Ramsey Jr.

Paralegal / Office Manager

Mitchell M. Tsai, Attorney At Law

155 South El Molino Avenue

Suite 104

Pasadena, CA 91101

Office: (626) 381-9248

Phone: (626) 389-8320

Fax: (626) 389-5414

Email: leon@mitchtsailaw.com

Website: <http://www.mitchtsailaw.com>

*** Our Office Has Recently Moved. Please Note New Mailing Address ****

CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE: This e-mail transmission, and any documents, files or previous e-mail messages accompanying it, may contain confidential information that is legally privileged. If you are not the intended recipient, or a person responsible for delivering it to the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any disclosure, copying, distribution or use of any of the information contained in or attached to this message is STRICTLY PROHIBITED and may violate applicable laws including the Electronic Communications Privacy Act. If you have received this transmission in error, please immediately notify us by reply e-mail at mitch@mitchtsailaw.com or by telephone at (626) 381-9248 and destroy the original transmission and its attachments without reading them or saving them to disk. Thank you.



Palomar Heights

Palomar Health Downtown Campus

January 30, 2020

Mr. Adam Finestone
Principal Planner
City of Escondido

Adam,

I've reviewed the applicant's 4th submittal. It appears little of significance has changed, so my past conclusions remain the same. The proposed suburban approach simply does not meet the standards and goals fundamental to the DTSP.

My October 2, 2019 letter, with references to applicable DTSP sections, is still relevant.

It is my opinion, until fundamental planning and design changes are made to bring the project into conformance with the DTSP, it should not be scheduled for Planning Commission hearing.

Respectfully,
Ken Erickson, Architect

Adam Finestone

From: Greg Danskin <danskin.greg@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2020 4:54 PM
To: Adam Finestone
Subject: [EXT] Palomar Heights Latest review

CAUTION : This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender email address AND know the content is safe.

Hello Adam,

I have reviewed the latest plans for Palomar Heights on the City website.

The fundamental issues remain unresolved, leaving a proposed project that still does not adequately satisfy the vision of the Escondido Downtown Specific Plan. My previous comments are still valid. I don't see how this project can go forward until the basic nature of the project is brought in line with that vision.

Respectfully,

Greg Danskin

--

GREG DANSKIN ARCHITECT
760.532.2361 (M)
WWW.DANSKINARCHITECTURE.COM

This message and any files attached herewith are confidential and may contain privileged material for the sole use of the intended recipient. Any unauthorized review, distribution, disclosure, copying, use or dissemination, either whole or in part, is strictly prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient of the message, please notify the sender immediately by return email or telephone. Delete the original message including the attachments and destroy all hard copies. If you are the intended recipient, please be aware that since emails can be altered electronically, the integrity of this communication cannot be guaranteed.

Adam Finestone

From: Mark Kalpakgian <mark.kalpakgian@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 2, 2020 5:19 PM
To: Palomar Heights Project
Cc: Paul McNamara; Olga Diaz; Michael Morasco; Consuelo Martinez
Subject: [EXT] Palomar Heights Community Feedback

CAUTION : This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender email address AND know the content is safe.

Dear Adam, Mayor Paul, and Members of the City Council:

I was recently interviewed by Ninia Hammond with Integral Communities. She wanted to know my perspective on the Palomar Heights project since I work downtown at The Classical Academies and am a Board Member for the North County Economic Development Council. I thought it might be helpful to share some of my high level comments with you too:

1. A few years ago I took the family to visit DC and spend some time with my brother-in-law's family. He works for the FBI and was living in the "Mosaic District." One of the days we stayed outside the city and spent the afternoon leisurely touring the Mosaic.

<https://mosaicdistrict.com/>

It was truly incredible and awe-inspiring, and I think it could be a model for the Palomar Heights vision. The mosaic integrates the following concepts: live, fun, film, shop, dine, work, services, stay (hotel). The project is pedestrian-oriented and is an exciting place to work, live or play. Very dynamic!

2. The site of the former Palomar Hospital is truly unique because it acts as a gateway to downtown. Additionally, it has the opportunity to stimulate and shape the character of downtown for years to come. For these reasons, I am in favor of a very pedestrian-oriented ground level that invites the community in and engages it on a variety of levels. Again, look at the Mosaic District for an idea of how this is done.

3. The site should encourage residents to live and work downtown.

4. A monolithic apartment building complex with little architectural character isn't ideal for this location. Significant grading and flattening that isolates the complex from the street and community is not ideal either.

5. Having the site composed of mixed-use between business and residential is a great thing for downtown and for our city's future.

6. I am very much in favor of incorporating unique or boutique businesses into the space such as a microbrewery, grocery, restaurant, bakery, downtown hotel etc.

To summarize, I know many local residents that want to see this project successful but also want to see if complement Escondido's unique character and ethos. Having a "walk and enter" feel that invites the community in is of quintessential importance. Incorporating mixed-use residential and commercial is desirable and finally, having a unique architecture that interacts naturally with the environment and respects the downtown specific plan is ideal.

Respectfully,

Mark Kalpakgian
760-535-5189

PALOMAR HEALTH

Passion. People. Purpose.™

May 20, 2020

Honorable Mayor Paul McNamara
Deputy Mayor Consuelo Martinez
Council Member Olga Diaz
Council Member Michael Morasco
City of Escondido
City Hall, Second Floor
201 North Broadway
Escondido, CA 92025

Re: Palomar Heights Project

Palomar Health is fortunate to be a part of the Escondido Business Community and we would like to thank you for your leadership in our great City.

As an Escondido Employer, a property Owner, and a health care partner, we are writing to you to indicate our support of the Palomar Heights Project as currently presented by Integral Communities.

The Palomar Medical Center Downtown Campus and ancillary offices have been part of Palomar Health for decades. The challenges of this property are not lost on us as we endeavored to rehabilitate this campus prior to commencing construction on our "new hospital". Once the new hospital was identified, we worked with stakeholders, policy makers and neighbors on the Downtown Specific Plan, which calls for this to be revitalized into a mixed-use community of housing and retail.

Based on the current proposal of 510 residential units, 10,000 square feet of commercial and the associated improvements including the marquee corner feature, the reconfiguration of Valley Boulevard, the associated improvements and recreation, our Board is supportive. We have worked with Integral Communities through many plan iterations and community suggestions. The current plan reflects changes in response to community, staff and Planning Commission comments.

Our Board formally extends its support of the project as proposed by Integral Communities.

We are experts in the profession of health care and we are excited about the partnership with Integral Communities and the City of Escondido as experts in their fields of housing and development. Palomar Heights will be a home and landmark community for many Escondido families in the future who will endeavor to support the many Escondido businesses in the Grand revitalization corridor. Palomar Health is very proud of the legacy of the campus and looks forward to seeing it move toward the future!

Sincerely,



Diane L. Hansen, CPA
Palomar Health
President and Chief Executive Officer

Administration

456 East Grand Avenue, Escondido, CA 92025 | T 760.740.6393 | PalomarHealth.org

A California Public Healthcare District



**North San Diego County
Association of REALTORS®**

05/22/2020

To:

Honorable Mayor Paul McNamara
Deputy Mayor Consuelo Martinez
Council Member Olga Diaz
Council Member Michael Morasco
City of Escondido
City Hall, Second Floor
201 North Broadway
Escondido, CA 92025

RE: Critical Housing Shortage and Support of Additional Housing

The shortage of housing opportunities in North San Diego County has reached crisis levels. Without adequate housing to meet our regional needs, we will continue to feel increasingly worse economic impacts. Already we are seeing employers expressing concern that their employees can't find places to live that they can afford. This means residents and workers alike will continue to have to share housing and live with relatives. As a result of this, we can see further impacts on traffic, schools, emergency services, and infrastructure without the impact fees that could help resolve these issues.

We have become aware of the housing project on Valley Blvd. at the old hospital called Palomar Heights, which will provide much needed attainable middle-income housing stock as well as valuable senior-focused units. While NSDCAR does not support individual developers, we have looked at this project and believe that it should be approved for construction as it provides much-needed housing for middle income and vulnerable communities in Escondido.

Sincerely,

Taylor Thompson
Government Affairs Director
North San Diego County Association of REALTORS®

Adam Finestone

From: Mike Strong
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2020 4:56 PM
To: Adam Finestone
Subject: FW: [EXT] Sierra Club Comment letter opposing any extension of escrow for Old Palomar Hospital site
Attachments: 8June2020_SierraCLubNCG_comment letter on Escrow extension.pdf; NCG_DEIR_commentletter_PalHeights.pdf; NCG_PalHts_NOP_commentLetter_20MAY_2019.pdf

For file.

From: earthlover@sbcglobal.net <earthlover@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Monday, June 08, 2020 3:09 PM
To: nancy.wood@palomarhealth.org
Cc: Paul McNamara <pmcnamara@escondido.org>; Consuelo Martinez <cmartinez@escondido.org>; Olga Diaz <Odiaz@escondido.org>; Michael Morasco <Mmorasco@escondido.org>; Mike Strong <mstrong@escondido.org>
Subject: [EXT] Sierra Club Comment letter opposing any extension of escrow for Old Palomar Hospital site

CAUTION : This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender email address AND know the content is safe.

Dear Ms. Wood,

Please find attached our comment letter regarding any requests to extend the escrow for the Old Palomar Heights purchase.

Please distribute to the Board members and Executive Director Hansen

I would appreciate if you let me know that you received this communication. I am out of town and cannot attend the Board meeting.

Thank you

Laura Hunter, Chair

NCG Conservation Committee



North County Group
Sierra Club San Diego
P.O. Box 2141
Escondido, CA 92033



June 8, 2020

Dear Chair and Board members
Palomar Hospital Board
Via Email nancy.wood@palomarhealth.org

RE: Request to DENY any further extensions of escrow with Integral and re-issue a Request for Proposals for the Old Palomar Hospital site.

Dear Chair and Board members,

Sierra Club North County Group (NCG) represents 2,600 members in inland North San Diego County and our Chapter has 20,000 members in the County. NCG has a long-standing interest in this issue and we have been very involved in efforts to secure the kind of high-density, transit-oriented infill project the city needs at this location.

We oppose the Palomar Heights proposal for the many reasons outlined in our attached letters. We understand that the Palomar Hospital Board may be considering an extension for escrow for sale of the hospital site at some point. Integral has had almost two years to bring a project to the city that meets its needs and has failed to complete the process in a reasonable time. As a community we need to move on to find a developer who can propose a project that meets the community needs.

For this reason, we believe that any additional extensions of escrow are not in the Palomar Hospital Board's or the public interest.

Sierra Club NCG is a strong supporter of an appropriate, higher-density urban infill project in this signature location in the heart of Escondido. We know we must densify our urban and transportation corridors if we are to effectively address the climate crisis. Further, we must provide housing product for range of income levels.

We join many others in wanting progress on this site and believe the best and the most expedient way to achieve sale of the property and secure a quality project is re-open the option to compete for this site to other development interests.

As a result, **we strongly urge Palomar Hospital Board to end the escrow per current agreement and to re-issue an RFP as soon as possible.** Such an action is best suited to meeting the needs of the Hospital Board, the city, and the residents.

In so many ways, Escondido and the world have changed since the RFP was initially awarded. The region and the city need a partner that reflects those needs and changes. We have seen the

'highest-and-best' proposal from Integral of what their vision for the site is, and it is not the vision of our members or our community.

As a community, we want a developer who sees and is committed to the potential of our city. We should be looking for a developer to celebrate Escondido and that understands the vision and uniqueness of this location, a partner that is a proven producer of transit-oriented development, understands public-private partnerships, labor contracts, environmental issues, and, maybe most importantly, has a proven track record of experience and commitment to high-density, mixed-income infill projects.

There are new realities our city and world face now and there is new interest in our city.

We strongly recommend the escrow be ended as soon as possible and a new RFP be issued so that we can move forward with development of the project on this site that meets the needs of the city.

Sincerely,



Laura Hunter, Chair
Sierra Club NCG Conservation Committee

cc.

Executive Officer Diane Hansen

Nancy Wood nancy.wood@palomarhealth.org

Adam Finestone

From: Heather Thelen <heather@hawthornecountrystore.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 23, 2020 10:14 AM
To: Palomar Heights Project
Subject: [EXT] support for Palomar heights

CAUTION : This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender email address AND know the content is safe.

Honorable Mayor Paul McNamara

Deputy Mayor Consuelo Martinez

Council Member Olga Diaz

Council Member Michael Morasco

City of Escondido

City Hall, Second Floor
201 North Broadway
Escondido, CA 92025

RE: Support for Palomar Heights

Dear Honorable Mayor and Council members:

The City of Escondido has a tremendous opportunity to further its mission of planning for more vitality and vibrancy in the downtown area by approving the Palomar Heights project. Today, I would like to pledge my support for Palomar Heights.

The current design features 510 residential units, 10,000 square feet of commercial space and numerous community and resident benefits. Palomar Heights has been carefully crafted to complement businesses like mine and generate the much-needed foot traffic to our downtown corridor, helping our businesses to thrive. In this unpredictable phase all of us are uncertain of what the future holds. The time is now to be united in our support for operators like Palomar Heights who are willing to invest in our city so we can flourish for years to come.

Furthermore, as a business owner of Escondido, I know first-hand the challenges we face with housing shortages, particularly with for-sale units. This project would significantly contribute to our city's housing

supply. From age-targeted senior housing, to for-sale townhomes and apartments for rent Palomar Heights will invite a diverse population into our community to enliven downtown throughout the day and into the night.

I have not always been in favor of all projects in my home town I was born and raised in and now have our business, children and grandchildren here. This project is good for our downtown.

This project would be a welcomed addition to our downtown and I encourage you to join me in support.

Sincerely,

--
Heather Thelen
Hawthorne Country Store
675 W Grand Ave.
Escondido, CA 92025
760-746-7816

Adam Finestone

From: Nick Pryor <nick@clueavenue.com>
Sent: Friday, June 19, 2020 5:46 PM
To: Palomar Heights Project
Cc: Lori Pike
Subject: [EXT] Palomar Heights Project

CAUTION : This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender email address AND know the content is safe.

Dear Honorable Mayor and Council members:

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Furthermore, as a business owner of Escondido, I know first-hand the challenges we face with housing shortages, particularly with for-sale units. This project would significantly contribute to our city's housing supply. From age-targeted senior housing, to for-sale townhomes and apartments for rent Palomar Heights will invite a diverse population into our community to enliven downtown throughout the day and into the night.

This project would be a welcomed addition to our downtown and I encourage you to join me in support.

Kind regards,

Nick Pryor

General Manager • ClueAvenue.com

[760-349-6609](tel:760-349-6609) • nick@clueavenue.com

201 E Grand Ave, Suite 2G, Escondido, CA



Adam Finestone

From: molly@frommollywithlove.com
Sent: Wednesday, June 10, 2020 6:34 PM
To: Palomar Heights Project
Subject: [EXT] I Support Palomar Hieghts

CAUTION : This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender email address AND know the content is safe.

Dear Mayor McNamara and City Council, I have taken the time today to send you this letter of support for Palomar Heights. Palomar Heights is vital to the revitalization of downtown Escondido. We have seen so many exciting changes in the last few years and we need to continue the progress, the time is now! Please consider my support in your approval of the Palomar Heights project as it will offer new residents a home in the downtown area, provide new retail and restaurant opportunities and will significantly increase foot traffic to help surrounding businesses thrive. Please join me in support of Palomar Heights.

Adam Finestone

From: mktucker@gmail.com
Sent: Wednesday, June 17, 2020 5:15 PM
To: Palomar Heights Project
Subject: [EXT] I Support Palomar Hieghts

CAUTION : This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender email address AND know the content is safe.

Dear Mayor McNamara and City Council, I have taken the time today to send you this letter of support for Palomar Heights. Palomar Heights is vital to the revitalization of downtown Escondido. We have seen so many exciting changes in the last few years and we need to continue the progress, the time is now! Please consider my support in your approval of the Palomar Heights project as it will offer new residents a home in the downtown area, provide new retail and restaurant opportunities and will significantly increase foot traffic to help surrounding businesses thrive. Please join me in support of Palomar Heights.

Adam Finestone

From: Jill Reilly <jill@cutecakes.com>
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2020 8:55 PM
To: Palomar Heights Project
Cc: Lori Pike
Subject: [EXT] Escondido Needs This Project

CAUTION : This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender email address AND know the content is safe.

Honorable Mayor Paul McNamara
Deputy Mayor Consuelo Martinez
Council Member Olga Diaz
Council Member Michael Morasco

City of Escondido
City Hall, Second Floor
201 North Broadway
Escondido, CA 92025

RE: Support for Palomar Heights

Dear Honorable Mayor and Council members:

The City of Escondido has a tremendous opportunity to further its mission of planning for more vitality and vibrancy in the downtown area by approving the Palomar Heights project. Today, I would like to pledge my support for Palomar Heights.

The current design features 510 residential units, 10,000 square feet of commercial space and numerous community and resident benefits. Palomar Heights has been carefully crafted to complement businesses like mine and generate the much-needed foot traffic to our downtown corridor, helping our businesses to thrive. In this unpredictable phase all of us are uncertain of what the future holds. The time is now to be united in our support for operators like Palomar Heights who are willing to invest in our city so we can flourish for years to come.

Furthermore, as a business and property owner in Escondido, I am aware of the challenges we face with housing shortages, particularly with for-sale units. This project would significantly contribute to our city's housing supply. From age-targeted senior housing, to for-sale townhomes and apartments for rent Palomar Heights will invite a diverse population into our community to enliven downtown throughout the day and into the night.

Our historic Grand Avenue has so much potential to be a thriving retail shopping and dining area, but we need to have more feet on the street in order to keep our current businesses alive, and entice new ones to come in and fill the empty spaces. A well thought-out design like Palomar Heights is just what we need to get those people into our city and into our stores and restaurants. This project would be a welcomed addition to our downtown and I encourage you to join me in support.

Sincerely,

Jill Reilly, CEO & Cake Artist

Cute Cakes

BAKERY & CAFE

p: 760.745.5278 c. 858-518-6315
a: 345 West Grand Ave, Escondido, CA 92025
w: www.cutecakes.com e: Jill@cutecakes.com



June 19, 2020

Honorable Mayor Paul McNamara
Deputy Mayor Consuelo Martinez
Council Member Olga Diaz
Council Member Michael Morasco
City of Escondido
City Hall, Second Floor
201 North Broadway
Escondido, CA 92025

RE: Support for Palomar Heights

Dear Honorable Mayor and Councilmembers:

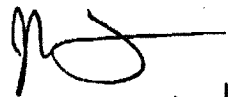
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Furthermore, as a business owner of Escondido, I know first-hand the challenges we face with housing shortages, particularly with for-sale units. This project would significantly contribute to our city's housing supply. From age-targeted senior housing, to for-sale townhomes and apartments for rent Palomar Heights will invite a diverse population into our community to enliven downtown throughout the day and into the night.

This project would be a welcomed addition to our downtown and I encourage you to join me in support.

Sincerely,



John Maloney CEO
Maloney & Assoc.
435 W. Grand Ave
Escondido 92025

June 19, 2020

Honorable Mayor Paul McNamara
Deputy Mayor Consuelo Martinez
Council Member Olga Diaz
Council Member Michael Morasco
City of Escondido
City Hall, Second Floor
201 North Broadway
Escondido, CA 92025

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This project would be a welcomed addition to our downtown and I encourage you to join me in support.

Sincerely,

Helen Maloney, President
Maloney + Associates

435 West Grand Avenue

Escondido CA 92025

760 738-2610 Cell 760 212-2870

June 22, 2020

City of Escondido

Honorable Mayor Paul McNamara
Deputy Mayor Consuelo Martinez
Council Member Olga Diaz
Council Member Michael Morasco
City Hall, Second Floor
201 North Broadway
Escondido, CA 92025

Re: Support for Palomar Heights

I am an investor in multiple downtown Escondido projects including 355 E. Grand Ave which was completely gutted and rebuilt after sitting vacant for approximately 2 years and leased to Classical Academy.

In addition, I was involved in the acquisition and leasing of the 5th Ave. Corporate Center (235 W. 5th Ave) which was completely renovated in 2017 with the entire 2nd floor rebuilt and leased to Finance of America, a subsidiary of the Blackstone Group NYSE: BX) along with the retail center at 426W. 2nd Ave that includes the Phone Repair Store, Best Foot Forward Dance studio and Tortilleria. Most recently, I completed \$2M renovation of another project which sat vacant for over a year (704 E. Grand Ave) and is directly across the street from the east border of Palomar Heights.

The only way I would consider another speculative investment in downtown Escondido, and I know for a fact this sentiment is shared by others, is if the positive momentum of retail renovation is able to regain traction from the COVID meltdown and mature into the stabilized submarket that it is destined to be where one can Live/Work/Eat/Play. The only way that is going to happen is for more jobs and homes to increase foot traffic to this treasure of a community. I can't stress enough how important it is to see the Palomar Heights project approved ASAP. That news alone will be a powerful source of hope for those who have paved the way and for the many who have recently invested their hearts and souls, if not their life savings, to stay the course and not give up on opening or keeping open a most vital part of Downtown Escondido.

Please join me in support of the Palomar Heights project.



Matthew D. Belshin
Managing Member
704 E. Grand Ave., LLC
Del Mar, Ca 92014

Adam Finestone

Sent: Tuesday, June 23, 2020 6:22 AM
To: Palomar Heights Project
Subject: [EXT] I Support Palomar Hieghts

CAUTION : This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender email address AND know the content is safe.

Dear Mayor McNamara and City Council, I have taken the time today to send you this letter of support for Palomar Heights. Palomar Heights is vital to the revitalization of downtown Escondido. We have seen so many exciting changes in the last few years and we need to continue the progress, the time is now! Please consider my support in your approval of the Palomar Heights project as it will offer new residents a home in the downtown area, provide new retail and restaurant opportunities and will significantly increase foot traffic to help surrounding businesses thrive. Please join me in support of Palomar Heights.

Adam Finestone

From: fjrdiver@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, June 23, 2020 7:35 PM
To: Palomar Heights Project
Cc: Lori Pike
Subject: [EXT] Palomar heights

CAUTION : This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender email address AND know the content is safe.

Honorable Mayor Paul McNamara
Deputy Mayor Consuelo Martinez
Council Member Olga Diaz
Council Member Michael Morasco
City of Escondido
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This project would be a welcomed addition to our downtown and I encourage you to join me in support.

Sincerely,

Francis Ronalds

The Sculpture Salon

401 E. Grand Ave.

Escondido,ca 92025

June 19, 2020

Honorable Mayor Paul McNamara
Deputy Mayor Consuelo Martinez
Council Member Olga Diaz
Council Member Michael Morasco
City of Escondido
City Hall, Second Floor
201 North Broadway
Escondido, CA 92025

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This project would be a welcomed addition to our downtown and I encourage you to join me in support.

Sincerely,



Stephen Lingenfelder
MIYO Business Manager/Owner
949-981-5057

June 19, 2020

Honorable Mayor Paul McNamara
Deputy Mayor Consuelo Martinez
Council Member Olga Diaz
Council Member Michael Morasco
City of Escondido
City Hall, Second Floor
201 North Broadway
Escondido, CA 92025

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Sincerely,



Stephen Lingenfelder
MIYO Business Manager/Owner
949-981-5057

Adam Finestone

From: Louisa Magoon <LouisaM@THEGRANDTEAROOM.COM>
Sent: Wednesday, June 24, 2020 11:58 AM
To: Palomar Heights Project
Cc: Lori Pike
Subject: [EXT] FW: FW: Support Needed For Palomar Heights Project - Please Read
Attachments: Palomar Heights Support Letter.pdf

CAUTION : This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender email address AND know the content is safe.

Hello,

Below is an email from a business in downtown Escondido called MIYO. Attached is her letter in support of the Palomar Heights project. This project is extremely important to our downtown and we support it wholeheartedly!

Sincerely,

Louisa Magoon
760-233-9500



www.thegrandtearoom.com

Please Like Us on Facebook and comment on Yelp

From: MIYO - Make It Your Own <miyowithgio@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 24, 2020 11:46 AM
To: Louisa Magoon <LouisaM@THEGRANDTEAROOM.COM>
Subject: Re: FW: Support Needed For Palomar Heights Project - Please Read

Hi Louisa,

Hope you are well.
Please see attached our signed letter in support.
Let me know if you need anything else.

Cheers,

Stephne Lingenfelder

On Mon, 22 Jun 2020 at 18:28, Louisa Magoon <LouisaM@thegrandtearoom.com> wrote:

Hi everyone,

As you know, plans for the old hospital property downtown have been in the works for some time. The developer is Integral Properties. The project manager, Ninia Hammond did a presentation for our Merchant Mixer in January. It is a beautiful project that includes some commercial businesses and 510 condos of various sizes and types. This would be a huge plus for our downtown. We need the business this would bring to downtown and still keep our unique historic ambiance.

When the project was first introduced to the DBA over a year ago, we suggested some changes that would make the project even more beautiful and accessible to downtown. They made the changes and it looks great. Apparently, there are those who do not support the project so those of us who do need to make our voices heard. Below is an email from one of our businesses in support of the project and attached is a Palomar Heights Support Letter and flyer with a picture of the front of the project and a description of what it would include. I heard that one opponent is insisting on more commercial in the project. The amount of commercial it includes now is enough because it would not take away from our businesses downtown. We need all those folks to come and eat and shop in our businesses.

Below is an email from one of our downtown businesses in support of the project with more instructions on how to make our voices heard.

Please take the time to read her email, the letter provided and the flyer and send your letter of support to our City Council members.

Sincerely,

Louisa Magoon

760-233-9500

From: Melissa Walker <melissa@distinctionart.com>
Sent: Friday, June 19, 2020 9:26 AM
To: Melissa Inez Walker <melissa@distinctionart.com>
Subject: Support Needed For Palomar Heights Project - Please Read

Hello All,

I was recently contacted by the project manager for the Palomar Heights Project in regards to a letter of support I sent to the city in support of the project.

Apparently due to everything that has been going on they have not garnered nearly the support that they hoped for from the community and have had some pushback.

I LOVE this project. It would bring 510 condos to downtown plus a bar, restaurant, secret garden, and more.

I know everyone is swamped right now, but if you can take a few moments to read the flier and then sign your name and business name to the attached letter it would be greatly appreciated. This project would bring a huge amount of people to our downtown businesses.

I am sending this letter to those who I believe will actually follow up and send the letter. Please share it with others that you feel will do the same. The meeting is happening soon so ideally these will get out asap.

Please send the letter to palomarheights@escondido.org and copy lpike@escondido.org

Thank you so much.

Sincerely,

Melissa

I also pasted the letter below for anyone not able to open the pages doc

May 20, 2020

Honorable Mayor Paul McNamara

Deputy Mayor Consuelo Martinez

Council Member Olga Diaz

Council Member Michael Morasco

City of Escondido

City Hall, Second Floor
201 North Broadway
Escondido, CA 92025

RE: Support for Palomar Heights

Dear Honorable Mayor and Council members:

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Furthermore, as a business owner of Escondido, I know first-hand the challenges we face with housing shortages, particularly with for-sale units. This project would significantly contribute to our city's housing supply. From age-targeted senior housing, to for-sale townhomes and apartments for rent Palomar Heights will invite a diverse population into our community to enliven downtown throughout the day and into the night.

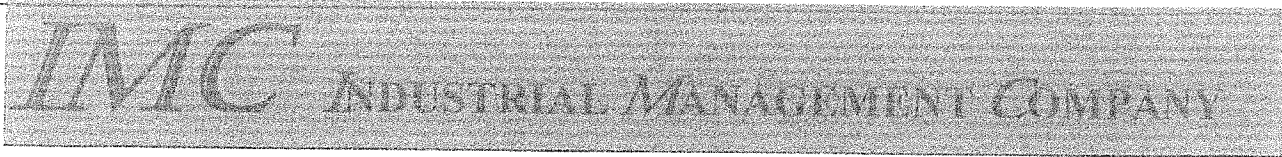
This project would be a welcomed addition to our downtown and I encourage you to join me in support.

Sincerely,

NAME

ADDRESS/BUSINESS

Melissa Inez Walker
Distinction Gallery
317 E Grand Ave
Escondido, CA 92025
(760) 707-2770
distinctionart.com



BRE License#01290136

June 22, 2020

Honorable Mayor Paul McNamara
Deputy Mayor Consuelo Martinez
Council Member Olga Diaz
Council Member Michael Morasco
City of Escondido
City Hall, Second Floor
201 North Broadway
Escondido, CA 92025

Re: Palomar Heights Project

I would like to express my support for the Palomar Heights project and ask the City Council to approve this project.

As a commercial broker having experience in Escondido, I have a particular interest in the redevelopment of the old hospital and the revitalization of downtown. Palomar Heights will bring economic vitality to downtown and more particularly this part of Grand Avenue and to the east. As a nearby property owner, I also believe strongly that the 510 residential unit plan with a mix of apartments, and for sale housing will greatly benefit the city, downtown merchants, and surrounding property owners.

Further, this project would help meet the increasing housing demand that the city faces, and provide hundreds of new residents with vested interest in success of downtown Escondido.

Sincerely,

Industrial Management Company

Brandon Keith
President

June 22, 2020

City of Escondido

Honorable Mayor Paul McNamara
Deputy Mayor Consuelo Martinez
Council Member Olga Diaz
Council Member Michael Morasco
City Hall, Second Floor
201 North Broadway
Escondido, CA 92025

Re: Support for Palomar Heights

We are writing to express our support of the Palomar Heights project based on our review of both the residential and commercial mixed use aspects. This is a project that we think is commercially viable, and that we would be interested in being an operator in and to fully support it any way possible.

This will bring viable uses to downtown Escondido adding to our wonderful Grand commercial atmosphere and the added population of 1400 residents is needed to keep our shops, restaurants and bars in business.

We currently own a 40,000 sq ft office complex, two restaurants of approximately 16,000 sq ft and 107 acres of land with a boutique hotel in San Pasquel Valley. We currently employ approximately 200 people within Escondido with another 200 in the Vista area.

We have advised the developer that are happy to commit contractually to the restaurant sites, sandwich shop and boutique grocery store in this development which we anticipate would create another 100 plus jobs. It is our hope that the restaurants and grocery store would sell local homegrown products from the Escondido and close surroundings.

This is an exciting project! Let's get together and make this happen so we can enjoy a glass of wine at the Sky Lounge as soon as possible.

Brian Bonar
Trucept
Chairman of the Board

Adam Finestone

From: Louisa Magoon <LouisaM@THEGRANDTEAROOM.COM>
Sent: Wednesday, June 24, 2020 7:33 PM
To: Palomar Heights Project
Cc: Lori Pike
Subject: [EXT] Support for Palomar Heights

CAUTION : This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender email address AND know the content is safe.

Honorable Mayor Paul McNamara
Deputy Mayor Consuelo Martinez
Council Member Olga Diaz
Council Member Michael Morasco
City of Escondido
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This project would be a welcomed addition to our downtown and I encourage you to join me in support.

Sincerely,

Louisa Magoon
760-233-9500



www.thegrandtearoom.com

Please Like Us on Facebook and comment on Yelp

Adam Finestone

From: Cooper, Dolly <dmeas@firstrepublic.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 25, 2020 10:55 AM
To: Palomar Heights Project; Lori Pike
Subject: [EXT] Support for Palomar Heights

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Honorable Mayor Paul McNamara
Deputy Mayor Consuelo Martinez
Council Member Olga Diaz
Council Member Michael Morasco
City of Escondido
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Sincerely,

Dolly Meas Cooper

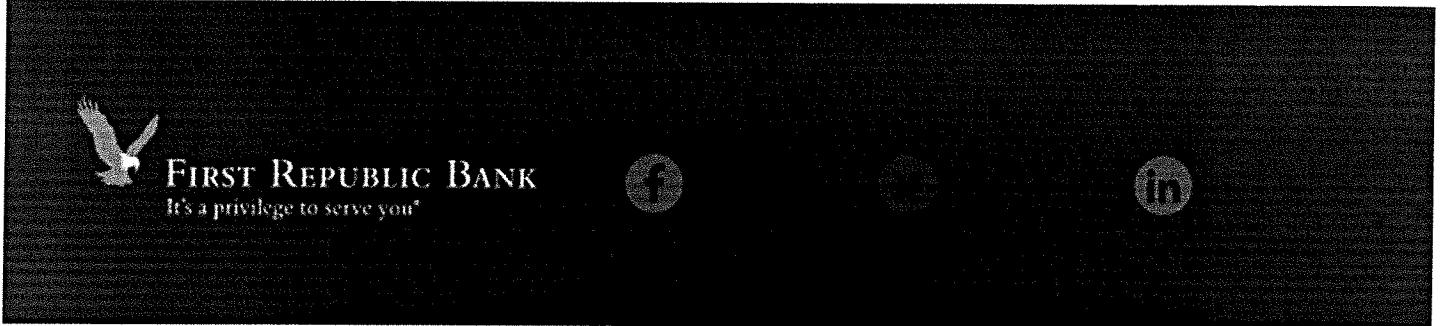
Branch Manager NMLS ID 867292
Preferred Banking Office | FIRST REPUBLIC BANK
116 E Grand Avenue | Escondido, CA 92025
Direct: (760) 839-8941 | Office: (858) 755-5600
dmeas@firstrepublic.com | escondido@firstrepublic.com | www.FirstRepublic.com

- **Go Digital:** Learn what you can do at home with [digital banking at First Republic](#).
- **Special Office Hours:** For our clients aged 60 and over, visit us Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

- **Uninterrupted Service and Support:** Preferred Banking Office hours are Monday through Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

The highest compliment my clients can give me is the referral of friends, family and business associates.

Please cc Escondido@firstrepublic.com for all wire and transfer request.



The information transmitted is intended only for the person or entity to which it is addressed and may contain confidential and/or privileged material. Any review, retransmission, dissemination or other use of, or taking of any action in reliance upon, this information by persons or entities other than the intended recipient is prohibited. If you received this in error, please contact the sender and delete the material from any computer. This message cannot be guaranteed to be secure or error-free.

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We reserve the right to monitor and review the content of all email communications sent or received. Emails sent to or from this address may be stored in accordance with regulatory requirements.

Adam Finestone

From: Mark Kalpakgian <mark.kalpakgian@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 25, 2020 1:30 PM
To: Palomar Heights Project; Lori Pike
Subject: [EXT] Good, But Not Good Enough - Palomar Heights Opposition

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender email address AND know the content is safe.

Dear Mayor and City Council Members,

I wanted to take a moment to summarize some basic concerns over the current Palomar Heights project:

1. With the strategic location, it's important to have a mixed-use project that engages and interacts with the community / public. Having 98% of the development dedicated to apartment style residential units, I'm wondering if this is in Escondido's best interest when looking at longterm planning or community engagement.
2. With only 2% commercial included (half of which will be used for their internal staff purposes), this is a huge missed opportunity to engage the community and bring more vitality to downtown.
3. I understand that this unique site is more or less being graded flat with huge portions of slope banks and retaining walls. This doesn't seem to conform to the walkable streets of downtown which I understand to be a fundamental goal of the Specific Plan. Walkable, interactive = better.

What is being proposed seems appropriate for a flat site in a suburban setting, not this valuable parcel strategically located on the eastern edge of downtown. As such, I think the current development proposal is good, but not good enough. I advocate for further changes and modifications before a final approval is given.

Sincerely,

Mark Kalpakgian

Adam Finestone

From: chickeyrose@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, June 25, 2020 9:02 PM
To: Palomar Heights Project; Lori Pike
Subject: [EXT] Support for Palomar Heights

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Honorable Mayor Paul McNamara

Deputy Mayor Consuelo Martinez

Council Member Olga Diaz

Council Member Michael Morasco

City of Escondido

City Hall, Second Floor
201 North Broadway
Escondido, CA 92025

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This project would be a welcomed addition to our downtown and I encourage you to join me in support.

Sincerely,

Rosemarie Woldin

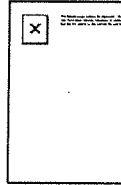
Resident of Escondido. 1471 Vaquero Glen, Escondido, And

Publicity Chair, Escondido Art Association, 121 W. Grand Avenue, Escondido

Adam Finestone

From: Chris McBrearty <chris@equityiq.net>
Sent: Friday, June 26, 2020 5:55 AM
To: Palomar Heights Project; Lori Pike
Subject: [EXT] Fwd: Support for Palomar Heights

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender email address AND know the content is safe.



Honorable Mayor Paul McNamara

Deputy Mayor Consuelo Martinez

Council Member Olga Diaz

Council Member Michael Morasco

City of Escondido

City Hall, Second Floor
201 North Broadway
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This project would be a welcomed addition to our downtown and I encourage you to join me in support.

Sincerely,

Adam Finestone

Sent: Wednesday, July 8, 2020 12:34 AM
To: Palomar Heights Project
Subject: [EXT] I Support Palomar Hieghts

CAUTION : This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender email address AND know the content is safe.

Dear Mayor McNamara and City Council, I have taken the time today to send you this letter of support for Palomar Heights. Palomar Heights is vital to the revitalization of downtown Escondido. We have seen so many exciting changes in the last few years and we need to continue the progress, the time is now! Please consider my support in your approval of the Palomar Heights project as it will offer new residents a home in the downtown area, provide new retail and restaurant opportunities and will significantly increase foot traffic to help surrounding businesses thrive. Please join me in support of Palomar Heights.

July 1, 2020

Honorable Mayor Paul McNamara
Deputy Mayor Consuelo Martinez
Council Member Olga Diaz
Council Member Michael Morasco

City of Escondido
City Hall, Second Floor
201 North Broadway
Escondido, CA 92025

RE: Please support Palomar Heights

Dear Mayor McNamara and City Councilmembers:

I am writing to you today to encourage you to join me in support of the Palomar Heights project that will be transformative for the downtown area and also provide an essential opportunity for more housing. I spend a tremendous amount of time in Escondido for work and entertainment, but housing options have always been a challenge for me and my family.

The current design features 510 residential units, 10,000 square feet of commercial space and numerous community and resident benefits. Plus, it offers an opportunity for home ownership in a price range that is attainable for a lot of people like me who face a housing market that is consistently low on inventory and is therefore, very competitive.

As a young working professional, I know first-hand the challenges we face with housing shortages, particularly with for-sale units and walkable urban rentals. Furthermore, the for-sale villas at Palomar Heights offer a rate that would make a mortgage payment comparable to what I currently pay in rent. This project would significantly contribute to our city's housing supply and help pave the way for our future generations.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit my support and I encourage you to join me.

Sincerely,

Mayra Salazar

Effinger

34225 Faircrest Street
Murrieta, CA 92563
619-200-3387

July 13, 2020

Honorable Mayor Paul McNamara
Deputy Mayor Consuelo Martinez
Council Member Olga Diaz
Council Member Michael Morasco

City of Escondido
City Hall, Second Floor
201 North Broadway
Escondido, CA 92025

RE: Support for Palomar Heights

Dear Mayor McNamara and City Councilmembers,

I am writing today in support of the Palomar Heights project which will revitalize the former Palomar Health hospital campus and grow our community in a positive way. As we collectively look toward the future and continue to envision an even better Escondido, Palomar Heights helps to get us closer to that goal. This project is designed to fit in to the downtown specific plan, balance the retail core and provide opportunities for future generations.

I am a member of the Palomar Health Foundation Board. I was formerly a homeowner in downtown Escondido. My daughter and her husband are now Escondido homeowners, and my son and his fiancé are renting in the Old Escondido area, hoping to fulfill their dreams of home ownership in this wonderful town. Palomar Heights could offer to them that home ownership dream in a walkable, urban setting, which something that is tough to find in Escondido. Palomar Heights opens the door to for-sale units that do not exist, especially downtown, and mixes it with a diverse mix of apartments, age targeted senior housing and public amenities, like the innovative Sky Lounge in the icon tower. This is all in addition to the positive impacts to the surrounding businesses who would greatly benefit from an increase in foot traffic.

I am an active member of the Escondido community, involved in various aspects from real estate to the Escondido USD, to volunteering with the Foundation for Senior Wellbeing. Palomar Heights thoughtfully connects downtown and acts as a gateway to the Eastern Valley, a bridge that Escondido should not only welcome but embrace as a means to have more cohesion and inclusion. Please join me in support of Palomar Heights.

Thank you,


Kirk Effinger



Save Our Heritage Organisation
Protecting San Diego's architectural and cultural heritage since 1969

Tuesday, July 14, 2020

City of Escondido
Historic Preservation Commission
201 North Broadway
Escondido, CA 92025-2798

Re: July 16th agenda – Items H.1) 2608 S. Escondido Blvd. and H.2) 121-141 North Fig St.

Historic Preservation Commissioners,

Item H.1) 2608 S. Escondido Boulevard - After reviewing the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) and the Historic Structure Assessment for the Paxton Adobe at 2608 South Escondido Boulevard, as well as the HPC staff report, Save Our Heritage Organisation (SOHO) continues to find the Paxton Adobe a unique and significant resource, which is intact and eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) under Criteria 1, 2 and 3 as well as the City of Escondido under all seven criteria.

A MND does not meet the City's legal requirements under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) with regard to this important resource and SOHO finds an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) must be prepared to strategize ways of preserve the adobe building, as well as to devise mitigation that is appropriate for such a significant resource. Potentially subject to a legal challenge, the Paxton Adobe warrants more than HABS documentation and salvaging of materials.

Further, SOHO asserts Findings 1 and 2 under Article 40 have not been made because the City's historical inventory would be diminished through loss of the Paxton Adobe and not all feasible alternatives have been evaluated. First, Finding 1 has not been made due to the Paxton Adobe being a KEY link in the continuity of adobe house construction for the southwestern United States, as well as a model home and office for the Longview Acres Estates subdivision. The staff report notes that "similar adobe resources" of the same time period and style are still existent, however the report does not appear to understand the contextual significance of this specific resource with regard to its various periods of significance, evolutions of use, and association with significant people to Escondido's history. Other adobe resources cannot tell the story of the Paxton adobe because it is unique within the larger historical context and significant beyond its period of construction and style. The staff report should adequately respond to the five other aspects of criteria.

The second Finding also fails because there are options other than demolition. Such a large project already has a budget for mitigation and since the report states \$1,000 would be needed to meet code requirements, it appears inaccurate to assert this is not plausible when HABS documentation to document a demolished building costs more than \$1,000. Further, stating the Paxton adobe cannot be seismically retrofitted is misguided because stabilized adobe resources with short thick walls are inherently stable as well as simple and cost effective to retrofit. SOHO has provided contact information for and encouraged an opinion from respected expert, Tony Court.

SOHO finds the Paxton adobe at 2608 South Escondido Blvd. to be a unique and significant resource that is eligible for the CRHR under Criteria 1, 2, and 3 at the local and state levels. This cultural link represents the continuity of building adobe houses throughout the decades within the entire southwestern region and a MND does NOT meet the City's legal requirement under CEQA. Further, Finding 1 and 2 have not been met. Challengeable under CEQA, SOHO asserts an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) must be prepared for the Paxton adobe, which must include alternatives to preserve the full adobe building.

Item H.2 - 121-141 North Fig St. - After reviewing the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR), Historic Report, and staff report, Save Our Heritage Organisation (SOHO) encourages the project to make every effort to relocate and/or adaptively reuse this Master Architect Russell Forester resource, which is a modest sized building. Mid Century Modernism is part of Escondido's sense of place, especially for the downtown area; this project should seek to complement its neighborhood, by finding an appropriate new location and helping with relocation costs as part of the mitigation.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment,



Bruce Coons
Executive Director
Save Our Heritage Organisation



P: (626) 381-9248
F: (626) 389-5414
E: mitch@mitchtsailaw.com

Mitchell M. Tsai
Attorney At Law

155 South El Molino Avenue
Suite 104
Pasadena, California 91101

VIA U.S. MAIL & E-MAIL

July 16, 2020

Escondido Historic Preservation Commission
City Hall
201 North Broadway
Escondido, CA 92025

Attn: Adam Finestone
City of Escondido Planning Division
201 North Broadway
Escondido, California 92025
Em: palomarheights@escondido.org

RE: Comments on Agenda Item No.: H.2: Palomar Heights—NON-EMERGENCY DEMOLITION PERMIT- SUB 18-0011; PHG 18-0049 and ENV 18-0009

Dear Members of the Escondido Historic Preservation Commission and Mr. Finestone:

On behalf of Southwest Regional Council of Carpenters (“**Commenter**” or “**Southwest Carpenters**”), my Office is submitting these comments on the City of Escondido’s (“**City**” or “**Lead Agency**”) request for a non-emergency demolition permit to demolish an International-style medical office building identified by the City as a historic resource for the Palomar Heights Project (“**Project**”).

The Southwest Carpenters is a labor union representing 50,000 union carpenters in six states, including in southern California, and has a strong interest in well-ordered land use planning and addressing the environmental impacts of development projects.

Commenters expressly reserve the right to supplement these comments at or prior to hearings on the Project, and at any later hearings and proceedings related to this Project. (Gov. Code § 65009(b); Pub. Resources Code § 21177(a); *Bakersfield Citizens for Local Control v. Bakersfield* (2004) 124 Cal. App. 4th 1184, 1199-1203; see *Galante Vineyards v. Monterey Water Dist.* (1997) 60 Cal. App. 4th 1109, 1121.)

Commenters incorporate by reference all comments raising issues regarding the DEIR or the final Environmental Impact Report (“**EIR**”) submitted prior to certification of the EIR for the Project. (*Citizens for Clean Energy v City of Woodland* (2014) 225 Cal. App. 4th 173, 191 [finding that any party who has objected to the Project’s environmental documentation may assert any issue timely raised by other parties].)

I. **THE CITY SHOULD CONTINUE THIS ITEM UNTIL THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION CAN HEAR LIVE PUBLIC COMMENT**

We ask the City to continue consideration of the Project until the City is able to adopt teleconferencing procedures that allow the public to participate and speak on items directly to the Historic Preservation Commission during meetings.

The Brown Act already contains provisions for conducting public meetings by teleconferencing and video conferencing. Under the Brown Act, “[T]he **legislative body of a local agency may use teleconferencing** for the benefit of the public and the legislative body of a local agency in connection with any meeting or proceeding authorized by law.”(Gov. Code § 54953(b)(1).) The Brown Act defines “teleconference” as “a meeting of a legislative body, the members of which are in different locations, connected by **electronic means, through either audio or video, or both.**” (Gov. Code § 54953(b)(4).)

When a local agency uses teleconferencing, the Brown Act requires that the teleconference information be available on the meeting agenda and that the teleconference be accessible to the public. (Gov. Code § 54953(b)(3).) Importantly, the Brown Act further requires that the agenda “**provide an opportunity for members of the public to address the legislative body directly pursuant to Section 54954.3 at each teleconference location.**” (Gov. Code § 54953(b)(3).) The above requirement of section 54953(b)(3) of the Brown Act allows for the use of teleconferencing to satisfy the requirements of section 54954.3 that members of the public have the opportunity to comment on an agenda item either before or during a meeting. (Gov. Code § 54954.3(a) [“Every agenda for regular meetings shall provide an opportunity for members of the public to directly address the legislative body on any item of interest to the public, before or during the legislative body’s consideration of the item.”].) As such, any public meeting conducted by teleconference but does not allow for public comment during the meeting violates the Brown Act.

The Brown Act does contain emergency provisions—however, none of these provisions provide for prohibiting public comment during a meeting.

First, the Brown Act allows public meetings in certain emergency circumstances with limited (one-hour) or no prior notice. (Gov. Code § 54956.5.) Second, the Brown Act contains authority allowing action on items not included on a posted regular agenda in certain emergency situations. (Gov. Code § 54954.2(b)(2).) Lastly, in certain emergency situations, the Brown Act allows for a public meeting location to change without notice as long as local media is notified “by the most rapid means of communication available at the time.” (Gov. Code § 54954(e).)

Notably, the emergency provisions above in the Brown Act pertain only to notice, location, and agency action. No provision of the Brown Act contemplates abrogating the public’s right to provide comments during a public meeting either in-person or, if necessary, by teleconferencing or video conferencing. (See Cal. Gov. Code §§ 54953(b)(1), (b)(3), (b)(4).)

Even if Governor Newsom’s March 17 EO and March 21 EO were valid under the California Constitution as to the Brown Act, a local agency that does not permit public comment during a public meeting fails to comply with those orders. The March 17 EO explicitly states:

All state and local bodies are urged to use sound discretion and to make reasonable efforts to **adhere as closely as reasonably possible to the provisions of the Bagley-Keene Act and the Brown Act**, and other applicable local laws regulating the conduct of public meetings, **in order to maximize transparency and provide the public access to their meetings**. (March 17 EO, p. 4.)

Many municipalities are allowing public comment during teleconferenced meetings, which shows that adherence to the Brown Act provisions discussed above is possible during the COVID-19 state of emergency. For example, the Cities of San Francisco, Los Angeles, and other cities allow members of the public to directly address the decision-making body through Zoom or other teleconference services during the virtual meeting. Thus, any local agency which does not provide for public comment during a public meeting—teleconferenced or otherwise—violates the California Constitution, article I, section 3(b)(7) and the Brown Act as well as in violation of Governor Newsom’s executive orders.

For the above reasons, we request that the City continue consideration of the Project until after the lifting of the COVID-19 State of Emergency to allow full public participation and full compliance with the Brown Act and the California Constitution.

II. THE NONEMERGENCY DEMOLITION PERMIT WOULD BE APPROVED OR RECOMMENDED IN VIOLATION OF THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT

A. Background Concerning the California Environmental Quality Act

CEQA has two basic purposes. First, CEQA is designed to inform decision makers and the public about the potential, significant environmental effects of a project. (14 California Code of Regulations (“CCR” or “CEQA Guidelines”) § 15002(a)(1).) “Its purpose is to inform the public and its responsible officials of the environmental consequences of their decisions *before* they are made. Thus, the EIR ‘protects not only the environment but also informed self-government.’ [Citation.]” (*Citizens of Goleta Valley v. Board of Supervisors* (1990) 52 Cal. 3d 553, 564.) The EIR has been described as “an environmental ‘alarm bell’ whose purpose it is to alert the public and its responsible officials to environmental changes before they have reached ecological points of no return.” (*Berkeley Keep Jets Over the Bay v. Bd. of Port Comm’rs.* (2001) 91 Cal. App. 4th 1344, 1354 (“*Berkeley Jets*”); *County of Inyo v. Yorty* (1973) 32 Cal. App. 3d 795, 810.)

Second, CEQA directs public agencies to avoid or reduce environmental damage when possible by requiring alternatives or mitigation measures. (CEQA Guidelines § 15002(a)(2) and (3); see also, *Berkeley Jets*, 91 Cal. App. 4th 1344, 1354; *Citizens of Goleta Valley v. Board of Supervisors* (1990) 52 Cal. 3d 553; *Laurel Heights Improvement Ass’n v. Regents of the University of California* (1988) 47 Cal. 3d 376, 400.) The EIR serves to provide public agencies and the public in general with information about the effect that a proposed project is likely to have on the environment and to “identify ways that environmental damage can be avoided or significantly reduced.” (CEQA Guidelines § 15002(a)(2).) If the project has a significant effect on the environment, the agency may approve the project only upon finding that it has “eliminated or substantially lessened all significant effects on the environment where feasible” and that any unavoidable significant effects on the environment are “acceptable due to overriding concerns” specified in CEQA section 21081. (CEQA Guidelines § 15092(b)(2)(A–B).)

While the courts review an EIR using an “abuse of discretion” standard, “the reviewing court is not to ‘uncritically rely on every study or analysis presented by a project proponent in support of its position.’ A ‘clearly inadequate or unsupported study is entitled to no judicial deference.’” (*Berkeley Jets, supra*, 91 Cal. App. 4th 1344, 1355 [emphasis added, quoting *Laurel Heights*, 47 Cal. 3d at 391, 409 fn. 12]. Drawing this line and determining whether the EIR complies with CEQA’s information disclosure requirements presents a question of law subject to independent review by the courts. (*Sierra Club v. Cnty. of Fresno* (2018) 6 Cal. 5th 502, 515; *Madera Oversight Coalition, Inc. v. County of Madera* (2011) 199 Cal. App. 4th 48, 102, 131.) As the court stated in *Berkeley Jets, supra*, 91 Cal. App. 4th at 1355:

A prejudicial abuse of discretion occurs “if the failure to include relevant information precludes informed decision-making and informed public participation, thereby thwarting the statutory goals of the EIR process.

The preparation and circulation of an EIR is more than a set of technical hurdles for agencies and developers to overcome. The EIR’s function is to ensure that government officials who decide to build or approve a project do so with a full understanding of the environmental consequences and, equally important, that the public is assured those consequences have been considered. For the EIR to serve these goals it must present information so that the foreseeable impacts of pursuing the project can be understood and weighed, and the public must be given an adequate opportunity to comment on that presentation before the decision to go forward is made. (*Communities for a Better Environment v. Richmond* (2010) 184 Cal. App. 4th 70, 80 [quoting *Vineyard Area Citizens for Responsible Growth, Inc. v. City of Rancho Cordova* (2007) 40 Cal. 4th 412, 449–450].)

B. CEQA Background on Historic and Cultural Resources

Historic resources are given special recognition under CEQA. See *Friends of Sierra Madre v City of Sierra Madre* (2001) 25 C4th 165, 186; *Citizens for a Sustainable Treasure Island v City & County of San Francisco* (2014) 227 CA4th 1036, 1065. Under CEQA, objects of historic significance fall within the definition of the environment that can be affected by a proposed project. Pub Res C §21060.5. Historic resources that are subject to CEQA's requirements are defined by statute, and significant adverse impacts on historic resources are classified as significant environmental impacts. (Pub Res C §21084.1.) .

Architectural and historic resource impacts can be significant impacts that must be studied under CEQA Guidelines App. G. Under Pub. Res. Code § 21084.1, a project may have a significant effect on the environment if it causes a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource. The fact a resource is not listed in a state or local register or identified in a survey does not preclude a lead agency from determining a resource is historically significant. *See* CEQA Guidelines § 15064.5(a)(4). A historical resource is “materially impaired when a project ... [d]emolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics of a historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its eligibility for inclusion” as a state or local historic resource. (*Id.*, subd. (b)(2)(C).) This is significant under CEQA. (*See e.g.*, Pub. Res. Code § 15064.5(b); *Ocean View Estates v. Montecito Water Dist.* (2004) 116 Cal.App.4th 396, 401; *Quail Botanic Gardens v. City of Encinitas* (1994) 29 Cal.App.4th 1597, 1603-1605.)

C. City of Escondido Municipal Code Sec. 33-803 Procedure for Issuance of Nonemergency Demolition Permit

Having made a preliminary finding that the building in question is a significant historical resource, the City must, according to Article 40 of the Zoning Ordinance governing Historical Resources under Sec. 33-803 of the Escondido Municipal Code (“EMC”) provide evidence of the satisfaction of the following requirements to the director of community development or designee:

- (1) Advertisement of the resource’s availability in at least one (1) local newspaper and the San Diego Daily Transcript, published for a minimum period of two (2) weeks prior to the HPC public hearing and/or city council public hearing;
- (2) Research into the feasibility of relocating a significant resource within the community including a licensed contractor’s bid for the cost of moving the resource. For structures the research shall include cost of improving the structure to meet relevant building code standards;
 - (A) In the case of a demolition application involving an income-producing property, whether the owner can obtain a reasonable return from the property without the granting of a demolition permit.

- (c) Findings. The city council may approve a demolition request upon making finding number 1, 4, and 5, and either number 2 or 3:
- (1) That the City of Escondido’s inventory of significant historical resources is not diminished by the demolition of the subject resource, and that there remains in the community a like resource, i.e., use, site, architectural style, or example of an architect’s work;
 - (2) That all feasible economic and physical alternatives to demolition have been evaluated, and that the applicant has shown that there is no alternative left to pursue, other than demolition;
 - (3) That the continued existence of the historical resource is detrimental to the public health, safety and welfare;
 - (4) If the property is approved for demolition, the Historical Society and/or other appropriate historic agency has access to the building to retrieve any historic material, and to provide photo documentation of the resources conducted according to Historic American Building Survey (HABS) specifications;
 - (5) The applicant shall have, or will have a plot plan or development plan approved by the city prior issuance of a demolition permit.
1. *The City Has Not Certified the Final EIR and Recommendation or Approval of the Demolition Permit is Premature*

If agency approval is discretionary rather than ministerial, evaluation of environmental impacts is a necessary condition precedent prior to granting a permit. Cal. Pub. Res. Code. § 21080(a). To determine whether an agency action is discretionary or ministerial, courts apply a functional test that examines "whether the agency has the power to shape the project in ways that are responsive to environmental concerns." (*Friends of Juana Briones House v. City of Palo Alto* (2010) 190 Cal. App. 4th 286, 302.) An approval is discretionary if the agency has authority to modify the project or deny approval for environmental reasons; it is ministerial if the applicant can legally compel the agency to approve it without changes to mitigate its impacts. *McCorkle Eastside*

Neighborhood Group v. City of St. Helena (2018) 31 Cal. App. 5th 80, 89; *Friends of Juana Briones House* at 302.

Here, the City has authority to modify or deny approval of the demolition permit, thus issuance of a permit is subject to review under the requirements of CEQA. The proposed demolition of the 121-141 N. Fig. Street structure is also part of the Project itself and cannot be evaluated apart from consideration of all the issues contained in the Project's Draft EIR, as well as those issues bearing on any potential demolition. The City cannot separately issue or recommend a demolition permit for a historical structure for a project before it has considered all of the project's environmental impacts and certified the EIR. Any hearing for issuance of a demolition permit of the 121-141 N. Fig. Street structure puts the cart before the horse—only the Draft EIR for the Project has been circulated for comment and the City has not certified a Final EIR.

Importantly, the Historic Preservation Commission's July 16, 2020 Agenda for Item No.: H.2 considering the demolition permit does not meaningfully address the fact that the Project DEIR considers alternatives to demolition such as preservation and relocation—and the current analysis is not final. (Ex. A, DEIR, pp. 7-1~7-18.) The Project may yet be modified or changes may be made in response to public comments before the Final EIR is certified and a Notice of Determination issues.

The Commission needs to delay its recommendation to the City Council until after the Final EIR for the Project is certified.

2. *The Commission Relies on Information Provided in the Draft EIR Which is Not Supported by Substantial Evidence*

The fact that the Commission takes up this agenda item now, instead of waiting until the certification of the Final EIR for the Project raises another error. The Draft EIR's analysis of cultural resources, specifically the demolition of the 121-141 N. Fig. structure is not supported by substantial evidence as outlined in Commenters previous comments to the City. (Ex. B, Southwest Carpenters' Comment Letter, pp. 10-11.)

The DEIR identifies the 121-141 N. Fig building as a historic building eligible for designation under the California Register of Historical Resources, Criterion 3.¹ Hence, there is a potential for a significant impact identified in the DEIR as Impact CR-1. (DEIR, p. 4.2-25.) As stated in the DEIR, the 121-141 N. Fig building was designed by Russell Forester, a recognized architect, is a good example of the International Style, and it has not been modified since completion in 1965. (DEIR, p. 4.2-25.)

The DEIR concludes that mitigation measure M-CR-1 is required, calling for documentation of the structure prior to demolition—but the DEIR fails to adequately analyze alternatives such as preservation or relocation in its analysis. The DEIR concludes that removal/demolition of the structure is required but fails to base that conclusion on substantial evidence. The DEIR refers to Chapter 7, or its Alternatives analysis, for further discussion of the issue. Yet this analysis lacks any discussion why demolition and removal of the structure would be required to preserve the desired housing density, instead of relocation or preservation. The DEIR should include a discussion based upon substantial evidence relating to why a marginally reduced footprint alternative that retains the 121-141 N. Fig structure is infeasible, or why relocation is infeasible or undesirable. There is no such factual discussion in the DEIR, only conclusory statements. The DEIR and the Commission’s Staff Report also acknowledges that relocation is a possibility without adequately exploring the execution of any relocation plan.

Moreover, the DEIR’s conclusion that implementation of mitigation measure M-CR-1, which concludes that “preserving the historical record of the resource through research and documentation consistent with National Parks Service Guidelines for Historical Buildings” would mitigate impacts to less than significant is unsupported by substantial evidence. The DEIR itself concludes that the 121-141 N. Fig building is a historic building eligible for designation under the California Register of Historical Resources, Criterion 3.

As the National Parks Service Guidelines for Historical Guidelines notes:

Important historic properties cannot be replaced if they are destroyed. Preservation planning provides for conservative use of these properties, preserving them in place

¹ Criterion 3 for eligibility on California Register of Historical Resources: “Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region or method of construction or represents the work of a master or possesses high artistic values.” https://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=21238.

and avoiding harm when possible and altering or destroying properties only when necessary.²

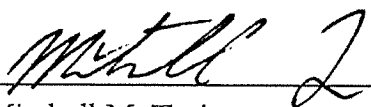
Preservation in place is “generally preferred: and “only when a decision is made that a particular property will not be preserved in place, . . . [then] the need for documentation must then be considered.”³ Since the National Parks Service Guidelines express a preference for preservation over destruction, the DEIR’s conclusion that the Project will not have a significant impact on cultural resources is unsupported. The Guidelines clearly state that a need for documentation should only be considered when preservation or relocation have been exhausted or excluded as possibilities.

Again, no such final decision has been rendered that the building cannot be preserved or relocated, nor are the DEIR’s preliminary comments or analysis supported by substantial evidence, and the Commission may not rely upon them in making any recommendation.

V. CONCLUSION

Commenters request that the City reconsider recommendation or issuance of a demolition permit after such time as the Project’s Final EIR has been certified.

Sincerely,



Mitchell M. Tsai
Attorneys for Southwest Regional
Council of Carpenters

Attached:

Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Palomar Heights Project (Ex. A); and

² The Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation: Standards, *available at* https://www.nps.gov/history/local-law/arch_stnds_1.htm

³ The Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation: Note on Documentation and Treatment of Historic Properties, *available at* https://www.nps.gov/history/local-law/arch_stnds_4_2.htm

Southwest Regional Council of Carpenters May 4, 2020 Comment Letter on the Draft
Environmental Impact Report for the Palomar Heights Project (Ex. B).

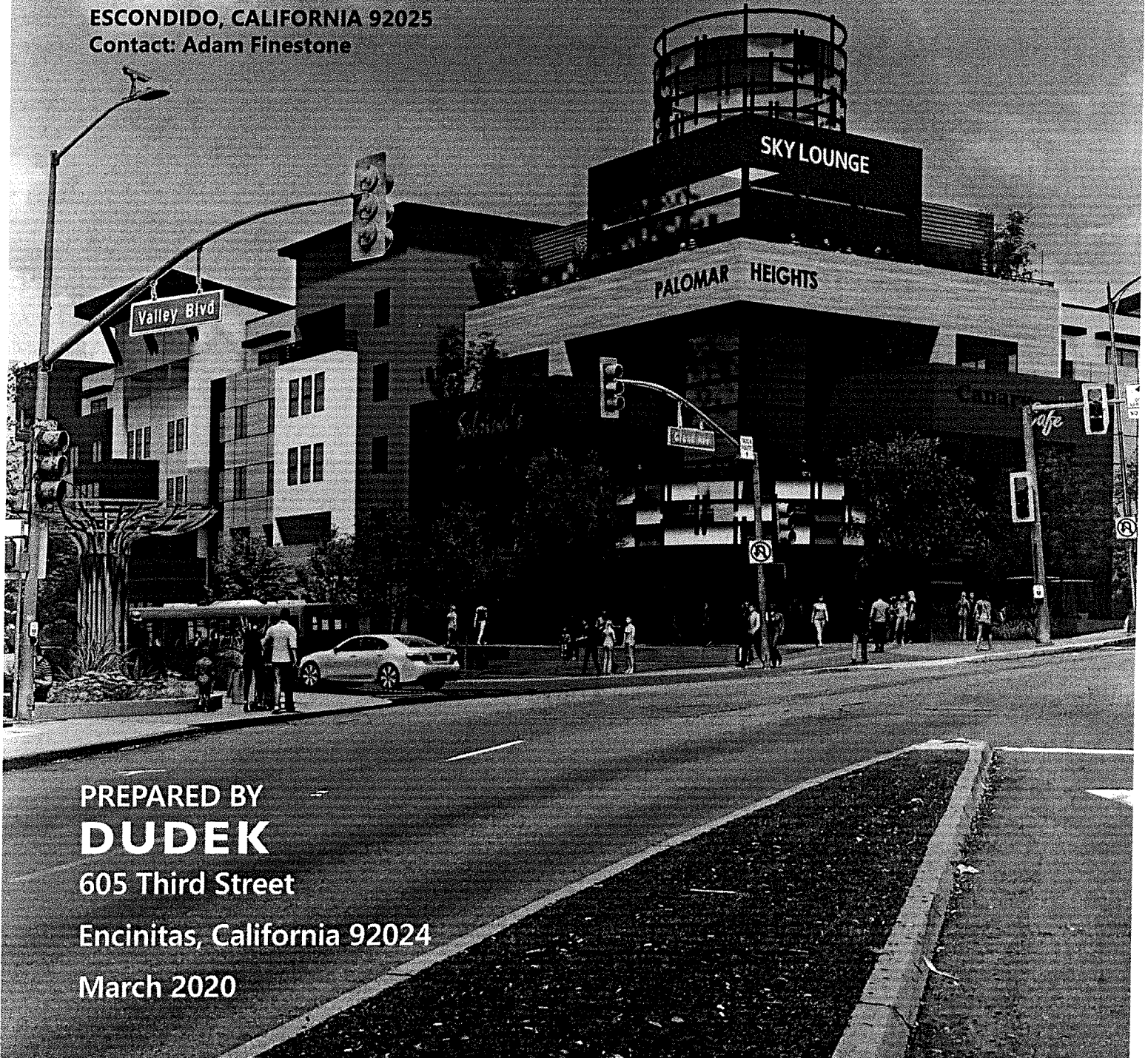
EXHIBIT A

Draft Environmental Impact Report

PALOMAR HEIGHTS



CITY OF ESCONDIDO
PLANNING DIVISION
201 N. BROADWAY
ESCONDIDO, CALIFORNIA 92025
Contact: Adam Finestone



PREPARED BY
DUDEK
605 Third Street
Encinitas, California 92024
March 2020

Adam Finestone

From: Sheikh, Faisal <Faisal.Sheikh@law.nyls.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, July 22, 2020 3:36 PM
To: Palomar Heights Project; Lori Pike
Cc: dulce.mchavira@gmail.com
Subject: [EXT] Re: Support for Palomar Heights - Please send letter to City of Escondido Council Members!

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender email address AND know the content is safe.

Honorable Mayor Paul McNamara
Deputy Mayor Consuelo Martinez
Council Member Olga Diaz
Council Member Michael Morasco
City of Escondido
City Hall, Second Floor
201 North Broadway
Escondido, CA 92025

RE: Support for Palomar Heights

Dear Honorable Mayor and Council members:

The City of Escondido has a tremendous opportunity to further its mission of planning for more vitality and vibrancy in the downtown area by approving the Palomar Heights project. Today, I would like to pledge my support for Palomar Heights.

The current design features 510 residential units, 10,000 square feet of commercial space and numerous community and resident benefits. Palomar Heights has been carefully crafted to complement businesses and generate the much-needed foot traffic to our downtown corridor, helping our businesses to thrive. In this unpredictable phase all of us are uncertain of what the future holds. The time is now to be united in our support for operators like Palomar Heights who are willing to invest in our city so we can flourish for years to come.

This project would significantly contribute to our city's housing supply. From age-targeted senior housing, to for-sale townhomes and apartments for rent Palomar Heights will invite a diverse population into our community to enliven downtown throughout the day and into the night.

This project would be a welcomed addition to our downtown and I encourage you to join me in support.

Thank you.

Faisal Sheikh
Cell: +1 619 635 4133

Confidentiality Notice:

Email is covered by the Electronics Privacy Act, 18 U.S.C. Sections 2510-2521, and is legally privileged. This email may contain confidential and privileged material for the sole use of the intended recipient(s) to which it is addressed and may contain information which is privileged, confidential and exempt from disclosure under law. If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any dissemination, distribution or copying of this communication is strictly prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please telephone us immediately and please delete this communication. Thank you for your cooperation.

cc: Ms. Dulce Chavira

Adam Finestone

Sent: Friday, July 24, 2020 1:15 PM
To: Palomar Heights Project
Subject: [EXT] I Support Palomar Hieghts

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender email address AND know the content is safe.

Dear Mayor McNamara and City Council, I have taken the time today to send you this letter of support for Palomar Heights. Palomar Heights is vital to the revitalization of downtown Escondido. We have seen so many exciting changes in the last few years and we need to continue the progress, the time is now! Please consider my support in your approval of the Palomar Heights project as it will offer new residents a home in the downtown area, provide new retail and restaurant opportunities and will significantly increase foot traffic to help surrounding businesses thrive. Please join me in support of Palomar Heights.

Adam Finestone

Sent: Tuesday, July 28, 2020 7:49 PM
To: Palomar Heights Project
Subject: [EXT] I Support Palomar Hieghts

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender email address AND know the content is safe.

Dear Mayor McNamara and City Council, I have taken the time today to send you this letter of support for Palomar Heights. Palomar Heights is vital to the revitalization of downtown Escondido. We have seen so many exciting changes in the last few years and we need to continue the progress, the time is now! Please consider my support in your approval of the Palomar Heights project as it will offer new residents a home in the downtown area, provide new retail and restaurant opportunities and will significantly increase foot traffic to help surrounding businesses thrive. Please join me in support of Palomar Heights.

Adam Finestone

Sent: Saturday, August 1, 2020 3:21 AM
To: Palomar Heights Project
Subject: [EXT] | Support Palomar Heights

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender email address AND know the content is safe.

Dear Mayor McNamara and City Council, I have taken the time today to send you this letter of support for Palomar Heights. Palomar Heights is vital to the revitalization of downtown Escondido. We have seen so many exciting changes in the last few years and we need to continue the progress, the time is now! Please consider my support in your approval of the Palomar Heights project as it will offer new residents a home in the downtown area, provide new retail and restaurant opportunities and will significantly increase foot traffic to help surrounding businesses thrive. Please join me in support of Palomar Heights.

Adam Finestone

From: joseph holtz <drjoeh@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, July 27, 2020 2:35 PM
To: Planning
Subject: [EXT] Medical office building on Fig St.

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender email address AND know the content is safe.

Hello,

The purpose of this email is to give my opinion about a proposal to to give a historical designation to an old medical building on Fig St. that would normally be torn down to make room for the new residential complex on the site of the old Palomar Hospital. I am against saving this building. The time and money necessary would be better spent on something truly historical and deserving of the designation.

Thank You and best regards,
Joseph Holtz DDS

Adam Finestone

Sent: Monday, August 3, 2020 10:24 AM
To: Palomar Heights Project
Subject: [EXT] | Support Palomar Heights

CAUTION : This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender email address AND know the content is safe.

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Adam Finestone

From: pgourdie@cslstaffing.com
Sent: Tuesday, August 4, 2020 5:07 PM
To: Palomar Heights Project
Subject: [EXT] I Support Palomar Hieghts

CAUTION : This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender email address AND know the content is safe.

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Adam Finestone

Sent: Thursday, August 6, 2020 6:11 PM
To: Palomar Heights Project
Subject: [EXT] I Support Palomar Hieghts

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Adam Finestone

Sent: Monday, August 10, 2020 10:30 PM
To: Palomar Heights Project
Subject: [EXT] I Support Palomar Heights

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Dear Mayor McNamara and City Council, I have taken the time today to send you this letter of support for Palomar Heights. Palomar Heights is vital to the revitalization of downtown Escondido. We have seen so many exciting changes in the last few years and we need to continue the progress, the time is now! Please consider my support in your approval of the Palomar Heights project as it will offer new residents a home in the downtown area, provide new retail and restaurant opportunities and will significantly increase foot traffic to help surrounding businesses thrive. Please join me in support of Palomar Heights.

Adam Finestone

Sent: Saturday, August 15, 2020 10:18 PM
To: Palomar Heights Project
Subject: [EXT] | Support Palomar Hieghts

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Adam Finestone

Sent: Wednesday, August 19, 2020 3:49 PM
To: Palomar Heights Project
Subject: [EXT] I Support Palomar Hieghts

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender email address AND know the content is safe.

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Adam Finestone

Sent: Saturday, August 22, 2020 11:55 AM
To: Palomar Heights Project
Subject: [EXT] I Support Palomar Hieghts

CAUTION : This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender email address AND know the content is safe.

Dear Mayor McNamara and City Council, I have taken the time today to send you this letter of support for Palomar Heights. Palomar Heights is vital to the revitalization of downtown Escondido. We have seen so many exciting changes in the last few years and we need to continue the progress, the time is now! Please consider my support in your approval of the Palomar Heights project as it will offer new residents a home in the downtown area, provide new retail and restaurant opportunities and will significantly increase foot traffic to help surrounding businesses thrive. Please join me in support of Palomar Heights.

Email frank.miller2010@hotmail.com

Meeting type Planning Commission

Meeting Date 8/25/2020

Planning Case # _____

Subject READ OUT LOUD

Position In Opposition

First and Last Name Frank Miller

Street Address 609 E, 5th Avenue **City** Escondido **Zip** 92025

Comments:

I own a home in Old Escondido, in District 3. I recently saw a photo of the proposed senior and affordable housing for the old city hall/hospital site (Grand and Valley Boulevard) and objections to the proposal by local architect Ken Erickson. The photo showed a jumble of concrete boxes with a large twisted metal object adjacent. I was aghast that this historic site could be so thoughtlessly spoiled. The photo looked like a strip mall gone terribly wrong.

As you know, the site was formerly occupied by the city hall (1938) and fire and police stations (1940) built with adobe walls and tile roofs. The architectural style was a modern take on the Old California hacienda style and was completely appropriate to the era and the site. At the top of the hill was the original low-rise, ranch-style hospital built in 1950. These structures were Escondido's crown jewels, and sadly they are gone. The site itself needs to be respected and some memory of these buildings and of our Rincoln del Diablo heritage preserved.

I recommend starting over on the design of this site.

Thank you.

Adam Finestone

Sent: Sunday, August 30, 2020 9:09 AM
To: Palomar Heights Project
Subject: [EXT] I Support Palomar Hieghts

CAUTION : This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender email address AND know the content is safe.

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Adam Finestone

Sent: Wednesday, August 26, 2020 1:05 AM
To: Palomar Heights Project
Subject: [EXT] I Support Palomar Hieghts

CAUTION : This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender email address AND know the content is safe.

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Adam Finestone

Sent: Wednesday, August 26, 2020 1:05 AM
To: Palomar Heights Project
Subject: [EXT] I Support Palomar Hieghts

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Adam Finestone

Sent: Wednesday, September 2, 2020 9:21 AM
To: Palomar Heights Project
Subject: [EXT] I Support Palomar Heights

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Dear Mayor McNamara and City Council, I have taken the time today to send you this letter of support for Palomar Heights. Palomar Heights is vital to the revitalization of downtown Escondido. We have seen so many exciting changes in the last few years and we need to continue the progress, the time is now! Please consider my support in your approval of the Palomar Heights project as it will offer new residents a home in the downtown area, provide new retail and restaurant opportunities and will significantly increase foot traffic to help surrounding businesses thrive. Please join me in support of Palomar Heights.



North County Group
Sierra Club San Diego
P.O. Box 2141
Escondido, CA 92033

September 4, 2020

Chair and Planning Commission Members
Escondido Planning Commission
Via Email

RE: Request to DENY Specific Plan amendments and Palomar Heights proposal; recommend that the City Council convey a recommendation to the Palomar Hospital Board to re-issue a Request for Proposals for the Old Palomar Hospital site.

Dear Chair and Planning Commission members,

Sierra Club North County Group (NCG) represents 2,600 members in inland North San Diego County and our Chapter has 15,000 members in the County. NCG has a long-standing interest in this issue and has been very involved in efforts to secure the kind of high-density, transit-oriented infill project the city needs. NCG has been an active participant in the Palomar Heights environmental review and we have attached our comment letters on the Notice of Preparation and the Draft Environmental Impact Report.

We strongly support transit-oriented development projects and the old hospital site is probably the best location in the entire city for a signature, quality, high-density project offering a range of housing options. The site is currently zoned for 1,350 DU. The Integral proposal includes only 510 DU. It includes no affordable units. This is a transportation supported development location that should not be squandered on an ordinary townhome product like the proposed Palomar Heights.

1. Any development at this site should be high-density closer to the planned zoning.

This site is perfect for higher density development. Just some of the reasons include:

- It has high density zoning already.
- It will not gentrify a neighborhood.
- It has close proximity to services, downtown Escondido, and transit.
- Taller buildings should be acceptable there since site already has high-rise buildings.
- It is the signature, cornerstone location in downtown Escondido.

We understand that staff has suggested that 1,500 DU is too high logistically, however, a future project should get much closer to this density. We recommend no fewer than 900-1,000 DU minimum density.

2. Any exemption to the Community Facilities District (CFD) fees is inappropriate. Development must get used to paying its own way.

We understand Integral is resisting the necessary Community Facilities District (CFD) fees appropriate to its project. CFDs are important because they ensure that developer profits are not subsidized by future generations of taxpayers. While we understand developers are not used to this, the time has come for them to pay the true cost of their projects. To more properly reflect the cost of development, Escondido City Council necessarily adopted a Community Facilities District rules for significant new development in the city. Appropriate development in the city should be required to pay these fees. It is the cost of doing business.

The I-didn't-know-about-it defense raised at the August 26th, 2020 meeting by Integral is no-excuse. Sierra Club NCG, even though we are not a developer with a major project underway in the city, has known and followed this issue since January. To blame their lack of awareness on staff or COVID in no defense. Decision-makers should not give Integral a pass on this issue.

Last, our experts have advised us that any reduction or exemption to fees will constitute a public subsidy under the law and additional requirements must be applied.

3. Any development in this location must include affordable housing.

This project has an opportunity to fulfill both above moderate (market rate), work force, and affordable categories needs by leveraging as much of the current density and taking advantage of incentives such as the state's density bonus program (up to 35% additional density and other incentives if there is provision of deed-restricted affordable units).

We need to expand and diversify our housing options to include designated affordable housing and workforce market rate housing affordable to our professional families, teachers, public safety, health care, construction labor force, and other working families.

4. Any development here should integrate walkable/bikeable and transit use and GHG reduction measures into its design.

A primary feature of this location is its location along a major transportation corridor, next to downtown, two blocks from the Escondido Bike Trail, and one mile from a major transit stop. To meet climate goals, new housing like this should incorporate easy access to transportation options. Innovative car sharing, cost of use parking, and other car commuting should be part of the proposal. In addition to major environmental benefits, locating housing closer to jobs also

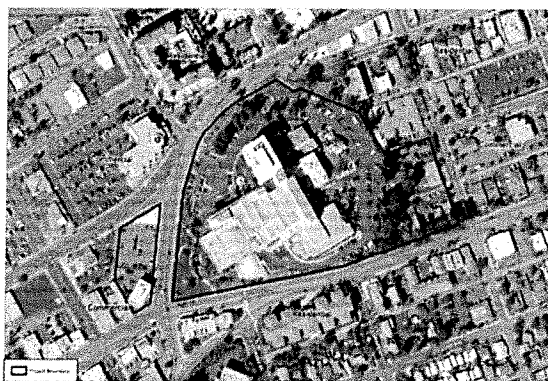


Figure 1 Location on the transportation corridor

lowers the transportation burden for households. In Escondido, transportation costs range from 22% of the household budget.

Further, the project should include many of the GHG reducing measures under discussion for the new Escondido Climate Action Plan where appropriate.

5. Integral has failed to propose a project that meets the needs of the city. It is time to move on.

Integral has had almost two years to bring a project to the city that meets its needs and has failed to do so. As a community we need to move on to find a developer who can propose a project that meets the community needs.

In so many ways, Escondido and the world have changed since the RFP was initially awarded. The region and the city need a partner that reflects those needs and changes. We have seen the 'highest-and-best' proposal from Integral of what their vision for the site is, and it is not the vision of our members or our community.

6. The project should be denied, a true objective appraisal be conducted, and the Request for Proposals re-issued.

We join others in wanting housing and progress on this site and believe the best and the most expedient way to sell the property and secure a quality project is to re-open the option to compete for this site to other development interests. We ask the Planning Commission to offer that opinion to the City Council for its consideration.

Sierra Club NCG is a strong supporter of an appropriate, higher-density urban infill project in this signature location in the heart of Escondido. We know we must densify our urban and transportation corridors if we are to effectively address the climate crisis. Further, we must provide housing products for a range of income levels.

7. Site should be integrated into the East Valley Specific Plan Initiative

The target area due east of the old hospital site is currently undergoing re-visioning by the city. This is an exciting development that any project at the old hospital site should anchor. Sierra Club NCG is developing comments separately on that effort, but the vision should be integrated.

In conclusion, there are new realities our city and world face now and there is new interest in our city. We should ensure that we capitalize on these changing dynamics. This project does not address or respond to the new realities of our city and we ask that you recommend against it.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Suzi Sandora

Chair,
Sierra Club NCG, Executive Committee

Saura Hunter

Chair,
Sierra Club NCG Conservation Committee

cc.

Mike Strong, Escondido Community Development Director
Mayor and City Council
Palomar Hospital Board

Adam Finestone

From: Mike Strong
Sent: Friday, September 4, 2020 9:20 AM
To: Julie Procopio; Jay Petrek; Adam Finestone
Subject: Fwd: [EXT] Correction of the record related to implications made about Services CFD

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "earthlover@sbcglobal.net" <earthlover@sbcglobal.net>
Date: September 4, 2020 at 8:49:59 AM PDT
To: Paul McNamara <pmcnamara@escondido.org>, Consuelo Martinez <cmartinez@escondido.org>, Olga Diaz <Odiaz@escondido.org>, Michael Morasco <Mmorasco@escondido.org>
Cc: Jeffrey Epp <Jepp@escondido.org>, Mike Strong <mstrong@escondido.org>, Julie Procopio <jprocopio@escondido.org>
Subject: [EXT] Correction of the record related to implications made about Services CFD

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender email address AND know the content is safe.

Dear Mayor and City Councilmembers,

I have just had a chance to review the public comments from representative of Integral at the August 26th Council meeting related to Palomar Heights.

I am compelled to state a few things for the record and object to the implication by Integral that the decision on the Services CFD was done by stealth or surprise.

1. I'm here to validate personally that the CFD vote **did not** come out of thin air and, had Integral been paying attention to the city, it would know this has been under analysis, discussion and development for over a year!
2. I'm just a run-of-the-mill, lay-about general Sierra Club member (not even a developer) and I've known about it since January.
3. In fact, along with other organizations we have had a meeting and calls with your staff, all pre-COVID, to discuss and understand the CFD proposals.
4. This issue has been under development since June, 2019 and was discussed at the budget meeting of that year.
5. If Integral paid any attention, there are lots of issues and opportunities that they should know about, but apparently they can't be bothered.
6. That Integral does not follow city activities or care or invest in its challenges and solutions, is more evidence that this developer is not the one for us.

We state, again, this is the wrong project, and the wrong company, to develop this singular and important site for our city.

Sincerely
Laura Hunter

“May your choices reflect your hopes, not your fears.”
--Nelson Mandela

Adam Finestone

From: info@domainworld.com
Sent: Saturday, September 5, 2020 6:35 PM
To: Palomar Heights Project
Subject: [EXT] I Support Palomar Hieghts

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender email address AND know the content is safe.

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Adam Finestone

From: info@domainworld.com
Sent: Sunday, September 6, 2020 4:06 AM
To: Palomar Heights Project
Subject: [EXT] I Support Palomar Hieghts

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Adam Finestone

From: info@domainworld.com
Sent: Sunday, September 6, 2020 8:13 AM
To: Palomar Heights Project
Subject: [EXT] I Support Palomar Hieghts

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Adam Finestone

From: info@domainworld.com
Sent: Sunday, September 6, 2020 3:14 PM
To: Palomar Heights Project
Subject: [EXT] I Support Palomar Hieghts

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Adam Finestone

Sent: Sunday, September 6, 2020 3:45 PM
To: Palomar Heights Project
Subject: [EXT] I Support Palomar Hieghts

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Adam Finestone

From: info@domainworld.com
Sent: Sunday, September 6, 2020 5:00 PM
To: Palomar Heights Project
Subject: [EXT] I Support Palomar Hieghts

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September 8, 2020 PC Meeting

Email hipmktgchic@gmail.com

Meeting type Planning Commission

Meeting Date 9/8/2020

Planning Case # SUB 18-0011, PHG 18-0049, ENV 18-0009

Subject Parking impact of the redevelopment of former Palomar Hospital Downtown Campus and surrounding property

Position In Opposition

First and Last Name CAROL A LORD

Street Address 16955 OLD ESPOLA ROAD **City** Poway **State** CA **Zip** 92064

Comments I oppose any reduction in parking spaces for this project. We own the property at 706 E. Ohio and already there will be an impact with parking of cars that won't fit on the proposed property. If any reduction of parking spaces for this project is approved then I propose that you make the first two blocks of E. Ohio Street (700 block) resident only parking for the residents on East Ohio Street. Thank you.



Palomar Heights

Palomar Health Downtown Campus

September 9, 2020

Mr. Adam Finestone
Principal Planner
City of Escondido

Adam,

I've reviewed the applicant's 5th submittal. As in the case of the previous four, the necessary changes for the project to comply with the Downtown Specific Plan (DTSP) have not been made. My past comments, noted in detail in my October 2, 2019 letter, are still relevant. The proposed site development concept simply does not meet the standards and fundamental goals of the DTSP.

In summary, after five submittals, where planning, grading and design changes have not been made to bring the project into conformance with the DTSP, this project should not go forward, let alone be approved.

This is an extraordinary site that deserves a worthy project. What's proposed is ordinary at most and can be found on any flat site in any Southern California city.

Respectfully,
Ken Erickson, Architect

Palomar Heights
Palomar Health Downtown Campus

September 11, 2020

Request to Deny the Palomar Heights Project

Dear Chairman Weiler and Planning Commission members,

The approved Downtown Specific Plan (DTSP) was developed over an eight-year period and adopted in August 2013. During this time, residents, downtown business owners, Downtown Business Association, City staff, Planning Commissions and City Councils gave input, discussed and debated the proposed specific plan with the goal of updating the vision for Downtown.

This effort not only recognized and respected the historic character of downtown but also considered the future, envisioning an attractive, pedestrian friendly, economically vital city center providing social, cultural and residential focus. To ensure all Downtown development fulfills the vision of the DTSP, as the governing document, proposed projects are to be reviewed and assessed for compliance by its principles and guidelines.

I have reviewed the five submittals with observations and comments based on the approved DTSP. More detailed observations are on the second page.

General Observations:

The proposed project, employs site and grading designs that ignore existing site topography and the surrounding context resulting in significant grade change along street edges and public sidewalks. This approach, along with the fact that Buildings 1, 18, 23 & 24 propose parking garages on the ground floor level, isolates the project physically, visually and psychologically from the surrounding neighborhoods and does not provide the pedestrian environment which is a central goal of the DTSP.

Conclusions:

- This site is a once-in-a-generation opportunity. Any project built here will likely remain for many years and will, for better or worse, impact Downtown and Escondido.
- The project as proposed is a forced fit. It is a suburban solution that can be found on any flat site, anywhere. It does not add to the character, scale and established walkable rhythm of downtown. It is, in fact, the antithesis of what was envisioned by the Downtown Specific Plan.
- Every building matters. Each one (good or bad) is part of the visual fabric that expresses Escondido's character and values. We should not accept, just for the sake of adding more housing, compromised site planning, grading design and architecture.
- We live in an age of indistinguishable architecture that erodes the differences and distinctiveness of cities and neighborhoods. This site, our historic downtown and Escondido residents deserve a project designed specifically for this site, in a unique neighborhood and city.
- We have a thoughtful Downtown Specific Plan that, by employing time tested planning principles, honors the scale and rhythm of the historic character of downtown, yet embraces this current place in time and the future.
- Successful planning and architecture must embrace and react to the nature of its site and surrounding context. It is important to note that the proposed development will require a Specific Plan Amendment, General Plan Amendment, and Grading Exemptions.

This site, Downtown and the residents of Escondido, deserve an extraordinary project that contributes to the character, vitality and, Pride in Place of Escondido. What has been proposed is ordinary at best.

Respectfully,



Ken Erickson, Architect

September 11, 2020

Detailed Observations

Apartment Buildings:

Building One

- Along East Valley Parkway, there are retaining walls 2-21' in height and with slope banks resulting in the ground-floor garage being an average of 11' above the adjacent sidewalk. The first floor of residential is approx. 9-10' above that. Distances from building to street and sidewalk are approx. 20' and 35'.

Building 18

- Limited grade elevation information was provided, but based on section B, it appears at one point the ground-floor (garage level) is 10 -12' below Grand Avenue with the face of building 8-10' away from a retaining wall. The first floor of residential is approx. 9-10' above that.

Building 23

- Limited grade elevation information was provided, but it appears the ground-floor (garage level) is 5 - 10' above Valley Boulevard. The first floor residential is approx. 9-10' above that.
- The intersection of Grand Ave. & Valley Blvd. is one of the most important in the Downtown. What is built here will be seen on Grand Avenue from blocks away and contribute to the visual experience.

Building 24: Senior Apartments :

- The first floor of residential varies in height from 10-12' above the adjacent sidewalk
- The small lobby has solid walls with only one door to Valley Boulevard. This will appear as a secondary entrance and does not contribute to the activation of the pedestrian experience.
- On the front elevation, several openings for garage ventilation are shown. With the garage floor below the sidewalk level, there will be views into the parking area, which is strongly discouraged in the DTSP.

The "Villas" and "Rowhomes":

- The Villas and Rowhomes are automobile-orientated suburban solutions. With surface parking, drive aisles and driveways, these buildings (the "Villas" in particular) will be surrounded by large areas of asphalt.
- The majority of Villas have unit entries located on drive aisles where cars access garages. The landscaping in this area amount to small pockets every 20'. This space, with 3-story buildings on either side, is essentially an alley, which does not provide pedestrian oriented entries.
- Adjacent to Fig Street, with the combination of retaining walls and slope banks, the building ground-floors range from 11- 20' above the adjacent sidewalk.
- Adjacent to Grand Avenue, some buildings are approx. 7' away from retaining walls and as much as 8' below street level.

GREG DANSKIN ARCHITECT

September 11, 2020

Dear Honorable Commissioners,

A few times in the life of a city, the people who call that place home are presented with an opportunity that has the potential to either elevate or diminish the experience of living in that city. Creating an inviting urban environment that welcomes visitors and provides a strong Character of Place and Community is not easy. Even so, it is worthwhile to expend the required effort to achieve success.

The Palomar Heights Project as conceived does not rise to the occasion, when it could in fact create a great civic experience at what is arguably one of the most critical locations in Escondido. I have written elsewhere regarding the project's falling short of the vision set forth in the Escondido Downtown Specific Plan, and the inability of the building types and site planning proposed to achieve that level of quality appropriate to the place.

As we have all seen, one of the most critical components to a successful urban environment is a strong pedestrian network of connections. This project lacks that, and in fact contrasts that by walling off the future residents from the rest of the city, giving little physical or even adequate visual connection to Escondido's core downtown and surrounding areas.

One of the greatest assets of the site is the topography. The design reveals that the proposed building types are not suited to this location, but to a relatively flat suburban plat, evidenced by the number and height of the retaining walls, magnitude of vehicular drives, and contorted pedestrian movements. The elevated nature of the site ought to be celebrated and used to the advantage it provides. Instead, the interior is left to row homes that offer the residents no view to anything but the next row home balcony. The term 'Villa' is a misnomer, as a true villa has a very different nature. All put together, the interior has more the sense of a large hotel with no sense of community. The name given to a thing ought to speak to the reality of the thing, so to an observation: the name 'Heights' may have been chosen to reflect the elevation of the project (which is then disguised by the massing of the buildings), but is it associated with a vibrant urban community experience, or will it be describing an area of Downtown Escondido pretending to be more than it is?

As a matter of being able to adequately study the proposal, a physical model of sufficient scale ought to be required as a primary component of the submittal process, otherwise the space and its relationship to the surrounding area cannot be adequately ascertained, even from well-done renderings.

Because this property is a public asset, because there is a responsibility to build the most well-considered project in that location, and also because this project will likely be there for more than 50 years, it is important to make sure that the critical urban issues are addressed in the best way possible, that it is a true contribution to the community, and that what is ultimately built does not diminish Escondido, but in fact elevates the urban environment it becomes a part of.

Respectfully Submitted,

Greg Danskin
Architect