

CITY OF ESCONDIDO

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE ESCONDIDO PLANNING COMMISSION

April 10, 2012

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

Commissioners present: Guy Winton, Commissioner; Darol Caster, Chairman; Jeffery Weber, Commissioner; Merle Watson, Commissioner; James Spann, Commissioner; and Bob McQuead, Commissioner. (One position vacant)

Commissioners absent: None.

Staff present: Bill Martin, Principal Planner; Rozanne Cherry, Principal Planner; Jay Paul, Associate Planner; Owen Tunnell, Associate Engineer; Alex Brizolis, Deputy City Attorney; and Ty Paulson, Minutes Clerk.

MINUTES:

Moved by Commissioner Weber, seconded by Commissioner Winton, to approve the minutes of the March 13, 2012, meeting. Motion carried. Ayes: Winton, Weber, and Caster. Noes: None. Abstained: Spann, McQuead, and Watson. (3-0-3)

SELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR: SEATING ARRANGEMENT

ACTION:

Chairman Caster nominated Commissioner Weber for chairman. Commissioner McQuead seconded the nomination. Motion carried unanimously. (6-0)

ACTION:

Commissioner Weber nominated Commissioner McQuead for Vice-chairman. Commissioner Winton seconded the nomination. Motion carried unanimously. (6-0)

Chairman Caster and Commissioner Weber were to change seating arrangements at the next meeting.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS – Received.

1. **Westfield Exterior Revitalization Program – PHG 12-0005**
200 E. Via Rancho Parkway

FUTURE NEIGHBORHOOD MEETINGS – None.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. **TENTATIVE PARCEL MAP AND CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT – SUB 12-0002 AND PHG 12-0002:**

REQUEST: A request for a Tentative Parcel Map to re-subdivide an existing six (6) lot subdivision (Tract 880) in the R-1-7 zone (Single-Family Residential, 7,000 SF minimum lot size) into four (4) lots, in conjunction with a Conditional Use Permit for a 40-foot wide access easement.

PROPERTY SIZE AND LOCATION: Approximately 1.45-acres, on the western side of Fig Street, south of El Norte Parkway, north of Stanley Court, addressed as 1225 Cole Court (APN 229-081-20, 21, 22, 23, 24 and 25). .

Rozanne Cherry, Principal Planner, referenced the staff report and noted that staff's main issue was whether the 40-foot wide private access and utility easement was appropriate. Staff recommended approval based on the following: 1) Staff felt that the four lots, with easement access, would be consistent with surrounding development patterns and lot sizes; adequate parking can be provided on each lot; and sufficient fire access can be maintained. The easement will not adversely impact any native vegetation or mature trees; and 2) A public road was not needed for the subject site since a private road easement would be adequate to serve four (4) lots.

Commissioner Weber and staff discussed the setbacks for the existing garage.

Commissioner McQuead and staff discussed the requirement for the street light as outlined on Page 17.

Jorge Palacios, San Diego, representing the applicant, noted he was available for questions.

Commissioner Weber asked Mr. Palacios what the stockpile of dirt on the property would be used for. Mr. Palacios stated that he did not have the answer to this question.

Thomas Gruber, Escondido, indicated his property adjoined the rear of the subject property and questioned whether the new project would propose retaining walls with good neighbor fences for Parcel No. 3, noting this parcel backed up to existing swimming pools. Mr. Tunnel noted that the previous project proposed grading and installing retaining walls with good neighbor fencing due to it being a larger project. He stated that the new project was smaller and did not propose grading which alleviated the need for retaining walls.

Amber Belmonte, Escondido, concurred with Mr. Gruber and asked how far back the new fencing or retaining walls would be.

Mr. Palacios noted that the original grading plan had retaining walls due to the amount of grading needed, noting the proposed project did not propose any grading.

Commissioner Watson expressed concern with the driveway design shown on Lots 2 and 3 proposing six parking spaces in the front without any separation. He felt separating the parking would more aesthetically pleasing. Commissioner Spann concurred.

Mrs. Cherry noted that the applicant was required to provide the proposed parking spaces, noting that it was only a conceptual design and the Commission was welcome to require a separation between the parking.

Commissioner Watson felt the hammerhead turnaround for the private street should be built in the first phase of the project. Commissioner Weber concurred.

Commissioner Spann asked if the Commission would have the option to review the parking situation during the housing design phase. Mrs. Cherry replied in the negative.

Commissioner Winton was not in favor of requiring the hammerhead turnaround to be built in the first phase, noting that the applicant was trying to work within the economic constraints of the overall project. He also stated that typically the hammerhead turnaround was a requirement of the Fire Department which was not the case for this project.

ACTION:

Moved by Commissioner Winton, seconded by Commissioner Weber, to approve staff's recommendation. Motion carried unanimously. (6-0)

2. CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT MODIFICATION – PHG 11-0008:

REQUEST: A modification to a previously approved Conditional Use Permit (City File No.2005-79-CUP) for AT&T to add six additional 6'-4"-tall panel antennas onto an existing 35-foot-high wireless communication facility designed to resemble a broad-leaf tree. The existing faux tree is located towards the eastern portion of the New Hope Church facility and currently contains six, 6'-7"-tall panel antennas. The branches on the tree would be modified to screen the existing and new panel antennas and make the tree look fuller.

PROPERTY SIZE AND LOCATION: Approximately 2.03 acres generally located on the southern side of East Valley Parkway, east of Citrus Avenue, addressed as 2525 East Valley Parkway (APN 231-110-41).

Jay Paul, Associate Planner, referenced the staff report and noted staff's main issue was whether the additional panel antennas can be appropriately integrated into the existing faux tree. Staff recommended approval based on the following: 1) The proposed project would be consistent with the Communication Antennas Ordinance since the antenna panels would be located onto an existing simulated tree that was designed to accommodate wireless facilities and is a stealthy design that blends in with the surrounding environment. The additional antennas would not create an adverse visual impact since the tree would be modified to adequately integrate the new panel antennas into the existing tree and additional specimen-sized trees would be planted to provide appropriate screening from adjacent residential views. The faux tree also would be in conformance with the height requirements for the residential zone; and 2) The proposed facility would not result in potential health hazards to nearby residents since the Radio Frequency (RF) study prepared for the proposed project indicates the facility would be within maximum permissible exposure (MPE) limits and Federal Communication Commission (FCC) standards.

Chairman Caster asked if the branches would be replaced, noting that the branches and leaves had lost their color. Mr. Paul noted that the broadleaf trees did seem to fade after a while.

Kerrigan Diehl, Escondido, project applicant, noted that the older broadleaf tree designs tend to weather more than the faux Pine trees. She noted that the tree would need to be re-branched from top to bottom in order to make it uniform.

Chairman Caster asked Ms. Diehl if they were moving away from broadleaf trees. Ms. Diehl noted that some jurisdictions like them, and preferences varied from carrier to carrier.

Chairman Caster asked Ms. Diehl if she would object to the Commission adding a condition requiring that the leaves or branches be changed out. Ms. Diehl replied in the negative.

Commissioner Winton asked what the lifespan was for the newer tree material. Ms. Diehl responded that the newer material should last ten years.

Commissioner Watson suggested blending the color of the tree with the natural vegetation around the site. Ms. Diehl concurred and noted they could provide material color samples for staff in order to be more compatible.

Commissioner Winton questioned whether the branches could be changed out to Pine tree branches. Ms. Diehl noted she would check into this.

ACTION:

Moved by Commissioner Weber, seconded by Commissioner McQuead, to approve staff's recommendation. The motion included adding a condition requiring the branches and leaves to be replaced. Motion carried unanimously. (6-0)

CURRENT BUSINESS: None.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS: None.

PLANNING COMMISSIONERS:

Commissioner Winton questioned whether there would be an issue if at the General Plan sessions a purported deficiency was cited that was not addressed in the EIR. Mr. Martin replied that was a possibility depending on the significance of the deficiency.

Commissioner Winton asked if staff could prepare an acknowledgement for Jack Campbell and Ed Lehman's service to the Commission. Mr. Martin noted they had received letters from the Mayor, but that he would check into other options as well.

ADJOURNMENT:

Chairman Caster adjourned the meeting at 7:45 p.m. The next meeting was scheduled for May 7, 2012, at 7:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, 201 North Broadway, Escondido, California.

Bill Martin, Secretary to the Escondido
Planning Commissioner

Ty Paulson, Minutes Clerk