

CITY OF ESCONDIDO**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
ESCONDIDO PLANNING COMMISSION****April 26, 2016**

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

Commissioners present: Bob McQuead, Vice-chairman; Michael Cohen, Commissioner; Gregory Johns, Commissioner; Don Romo, Commissioner; James Spann, Commissioner and Stan Weiler, Commissioner

Commissioners absent: Jeffery Weber, Chairman.

Staff present: Bill Martin, Interim Director of Community Development; Jay Paul, Associate Planner; Adam Phillips, Deputy City Attorney; Christopher McKinney, Utilities Director; Owen Tunnell, Principal Engineer; and Ty Paulson, Minutes Clerk.

MINUTES:

Moved by Commissioner Spann, seconded by Commissioner Weiler, to approve the minutes of the April 12, 2016 meeting. Motion carried. Ayes: McQuead, Spann, Cohen and Weiler. Noes: None. Abstained: Johns and Romo. (4-0-2)

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS – Received.

FUTURE NEIGHBORHOOD MEETINGS – None.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:**1. CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT – PHG 16-0004:**

REQUEST: A Modification to an existing Conditional Use Permit for Redwood Terrace Retirement Community to allow their main campus facility to replace their aging backup generator with a new 400 kW generator. The proposed generator would be installed in an enclosure to be built in an existing landscape area along

West 13th Avenue near the intersection with South Tulip Street. The zoning of the subject property is R-2-8 with a U2 General Plan designation. The proposal also includes the adoption of the environmental determination prepared for the project.

LOCATION: The main campus at 710 W. 13th Avenue (APN 236-073-01-00) is 6.27 acres in size and its location is bordered by West 12th Avenue, South Redwood Street, West 13th Avenue and South Tulip Street.

Paul Bingham, Associate Planner, referenced the staff report and noted staff issues were whether the proposal was consistent with Zoning Code standards for standby generators, and whether the changes were aesthetically appropriate for the neighborhood. Staff recommended approval based on the following: 1) The proposed 400 kW emergency backup generator would not create any adverse noise or air-quality impacts since it would be located in a landscaped area and equipped with appropriate noise attenuation devices and walls to ensure compliance with the City's Noise Ordinance. The generator would also be in conformance with State air-quality requirements due to the limited hours of operation; and 2) The proposed enclosure to house the generator will be partially integrated into the existing landscaped slope and further enhanced with additional landscaping. Staff feels the enclosure of CMU block stuccoed and painted to match the adjacent campus buildings and enhanced with further landscaping will adequately screen the equipment from public view.

Discussion ensued regarding a clarification of the proposed fuel containment for the equipment.

ACTION:

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

2. CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT – PHG 15-0021:

REQUEST: The project involves a Conditional Use Permit for the development of a city facility designed to provide advanced treatment for recycled water produced at the City of Escondido's Hale Avenue Resource Recovery Facility (HARRF) for agricultural uses. The facility would utilize membrane filtration [i.e., microfiltration (MF) or ultrafiltration (UF) membranes] and reverse osmosis (RO) technologies sized for a total production capacity of 2.0 million gallons per day (mgd). The project consists of two separate buildings (approximately 14,440 SF Chemical Storage Building and an approximately 21,775 SF MF/RO Process Building) up to approximately 37 feet in height (top of ridgeline of sloping roofs). The buildings


would contain a variety of equipment, pumps, electrical, control and storage rooms. The MF/RO facility would be designed to accommodate the installation of future equipment to provide an additional 1.0 mgd of production capacity. Underground storage tanks (90,000-gallon feed tank, 163,000-gallon inter-process tank, and a 970,000-gallon product storage tank) also would be installed, along with various above-ground pipes and holding tank(s). Primary access would be provided from E. Washington Avenue, with secondary access to El Norte Parkway. The perimeter of the site would be secured by a combination of new, six-foot-high masonry walls and decorative open fencing. The project also includes a 1,500 kW emergency backup generator. The proposal also includes the adoption of the environmental determination prepared for the project.

LOCATION: The 3.25-acre project site is located within the City of Escondido, County of San Diego, generally located on the northern side of E. Washington Avenue and southern side of El Norte Parkway, west of intersection of Washington Avenue/El Norte Parkway, east of Citrus Avenue, addressed as 2512 E. Washington Avenue (APN 225-270-54).

Commissioner Cohen recused himself from Item 2 and left the room.

Jay Paul, Associate Planner, referenced the staff report and noted staff issues were whether the proposed facility would have any adverse visual, noise and compatibility impacts to surrounding residential uses, and whether dedicated striped on-site parking would be necessary for the facility. Staff recommended approval based on the following: 1) The buildings have been designed and located to address any potential visual and compatibility impacts to surrounding uses, with appropriate setbacks from adjacent residential properties. The majority of the MF/RO equipment and systems would be housed inside of residential-like buildings designed to complement the existing neighborhood and reduce equipment noise levels. Perimeter landscape planters and new six-foot-high masonry block walls would be installed to provide additional screening, separation and noise attenuation; and 2) Section 33-767 of the Zoning Code allows the Commission to waive parking for uses with limited number of persons that would utilize the facility (i.e., utility or corporation storage yards or other similar uses). Staff believes that dedicated striped parking spaces would not be necessary for this facility due to the limited number of employees that would be present at the site at any one time. Employees on site would be infrequent and appropriate areas are available on site to accommodate city vehicles and any delivery trucks.

Commissioner Weiler questioned whether odors would be an issue. Mr. Paul replied in the negative.




Chris McKinney, Utilities Director, noted that the recycled water coming into the facility was odorless. He also noted that the ultimate disposition of the treated water would preferably be to pump it into Lake Dixon if all required permits could be secured.

Discussion ensued regarding a clarification of the distance between the block walls of the subject property and the facility as well as the proposed location for future expansions. Additional discussions ensued regarding a clarification of the pad elevations as well as containment and spillage procedures.

Kevin Davis, Project Design Engineer, provided an overview of the water treatment chemicals that would be used on the site.


Vice-chairman McQuead questioned whether onsite spills could make it to the street. Mr. Davis replied in the negative, noting that the secondary concrete containment structure that was located onsite would mitigate any accidental spills.



Diane Belnap, Escondido, stated that her residence was in close proximity to the subject site, noting her concern for her family being exposed to chemicals and odors. She stated that her bedroom window would look down into the facility and be subject to the facility's lights, noises, and odors. She felt the facility was too industrial and not compatible with the residential area. She noted that the study for the facility indicated that the noise, lighting, and odors would not be significant, noting anything over zero would be significant to her and her neighbors. She also felt her property value would be reduced. She then asked the Commissioners if they would like the subject facility next to their residence.

Jack Barnhart, Escondido, felt the proposed location was inappropriate given its proximity to residential homes. He felt a better location would be industrial and closer to agriculture. He noted that he would not have purchased his property if he knew this type of use would be allowed.

Barbara Warner, Escondido, noted that she lived off of Glen Meadow, noting that she did not receive notice about the proposed project. She was opposed to the proposed project, feeling it should be in a more suitable location. She expressed her concern with being impacted by noise and pollutants, noting she currently had lung issues. She also felt her property value would be reduced.



Leticia Nava, Escondido, noted she lived on the west side of the proposed facility and was representing nine homeowners in the area who were opposed to the project. She stated they were concerned with the facility storing hazardous materials and creating more noise. She questioned whether the project could be located in a non-residential zone that was more suitable such as a commercial

zone. She questioned when the CUP would be granted, and whether the noise study would run concurrent with the CUP. She asked whether the noise study took into consideration cumulative impacts of peak hour traffic on Washington Street along with the facility's pumps and generator, and whether it had been made public. She stated that they felt the existing sound levels were already higher than the allowable standards. She asked if an earthquake study had been conducted for the site as well as whether above ground storage tanks would be utilized. She then asked the Commission if they would like the subject facility next to their residence.

Commissioner Johns asked what the history of the zoning was for the subject property. Mr. Paul noted that the zoning for the subject property was residential with the subject use being allowed through a CUP. Commissioner Johns asked if alternate locations were considered. Mr. McKinney replied in the affirmative and noted the HARRF site could not be used due to not having sufficient space. He also stated that the proposed site was selected due to being a good location for distribution.


Commissioner Weiler asked whether the subject property was slated for a public utility use in the past. Mr. McKinney noted that City Council was briefed on this program in 2012 with the subject site being the preferred site for the past two and a half years.

Commissioner Romo asked Mr. McKinney whether he was aware of how often spills occurred that would impact the health of the community. Mr. McKinney stated that he was not aware of any such situations. He also stated that the subject facility would be designed with several layers of containment as well as chemical tanks being located indoors.

Vice-chairman McQuead asked staff to comment on the seismic integrity of the proposed structure. Mr. McKinney explained that the entire site would be excavated and re-compacted down 16 feet in order to reduce issues with potential earthquakes. Kevin Davis noted that the entire site, facility, and equipment would be designed to meet the current seismic standards.

Vice-chairman McQuead asked if the main structure would be constructed like an essential building similar to a police facility. Mr. Davis stated he did not have this information but would find out. Vice-Chairman McQuead asked if the building height was set by the height of the equipment inside. Mr. Davis replied in the affirmative.

Commissioner Johns and staff discussed the proposed height of the perimeter walls and the proposed landscaping.



Commissioner Weiler and staff discussed the proposed screening and size of the outdoor equipment.


Discussion ensued regarding a clarification of the location for the pipeline from the water treatment plant to the Hogback Reservoir tank.

Commissioner Spann questioned whether sites closer to Lake Dixon were considered. Mr. McKinney replied in the affirmative and noted that locating the facility close to Lake Dixon was only one of many factors involved in site selection.

Commissioner Romo and staff discussed alternative locations.

Vice-chairman McQuead referenced Page 8, No. 1 under the findings and expressed his view that surrounding property values would be reduced.

Commissioner Spann concurred. He also felt the proposed structures looked commercial and were too tall. He did not feel the project would be compatible with the residential neighborhood.



Commissioner Johns felt that the landscaping and walls would be inadequate to block the visual interruption, feeling the adjacent property values would be reduced.

Commissioner Romo noted he recognized the need for the proposed facility, but he was not convinced that the proposed location was the best site for the subject facility.

Commissioner Johns motioned to approve staff's recommendation. There was no second to the motion.

ACTION:

Moved by Vice-chairman McQuead, seconded by Commissioner Spann, to deny the proposed Conditional Use Permit. Motion carried. Ayes: McQuead, Spann, Weiler, Johns and Romo. Noes: None. Abstained: Cohen (5-0-1).

CURRENT BUSINESS – None.

ORAL COMMUNATIONS – None.



PLANNING COMMISSIONERS:

Commissioner Spann expressed his enthusiasm with the looks of the new cellular towers with the exception of an older one.

ADJOURNMENT:

Vice-chairman McQuead adjourned the meeting at 8:20 p.m. The next meeting was scheduled for May 10, 2016, at 7:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, 201 North Broadway, Escondido, California.



Bill Martin, Secretary to the Escondido
Planning Commission



Ty Paulson, Minutes Clerk