

CITY OF ESCONDIDO

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
ESCONDIDO PLANNING COMMISSION**

June 9, 2015

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

Commissioners present: Jeffery Weber, Chairman; Bob McQuead, Vice-chairman; Ed Hale, Commissioner; Don Romo, Commissioner; James Spann, Commissioner; and Guy Winton, Commissioner.

Commissioners absent: Gregory Johns, Commissioner.

Staff present: Bill Martin, Deputy Planning Director; Ann Dolmage, Associate Planner; Jay Paul, Associate Planner; Owen Tunnell, Principal Engineer; Adam Phillips, Deputy City Attorney; and Ty Paulson, Minutes Clerk.

MINUTES:

Moved by Commissioner Hale, seconded by Commissioner Spann, to approve the minutes of the May 26, 2015, meeting. Motion carried unanimously. (6-0)

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS – Received

FUTURE NEIGHBORHOOD MEETINGS – None.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. MODIFICATION TO A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT – PHG 14-0030:

REQUEST: A proposed Modification to a Conditional Use Permit to redevelop the Emmanuel Faith Community Church campus. The multi-phased project would take approximately 25 years to complete. Phase 1 (estimated to be completed within five years of project approval) would demolish seven existing children's buildings and replace them with a 45,000 SF Nursery/Children's Building, to house a new weekday preschool/daycare center and existing weekend religious programs. Phases 2 through 4 would include demolition of existing junior high meeting rooms, construction of a new 24,000-SF Training

Center/Youth Complex, renovation of existing Junior High and High School/College Assembly buildings (plus lobby expansion for the latter), demolition of two existing nursery buildings, renovation of the existing Education Center into offices and meeting rooms (plus lobby expansion), demolition of existing café and maintenance buildings and construction of new ones attached to the existing Family Center, expansion of the existing 1,600-seat Worship Center to 2,000 seats, and reconfiguration of on-site parking lots and outdoor gathering spaces. A portion of an existing 6' chain link fence, adjacent to the existing turf play area and within the front setback area, would be retained as a "play field fence" as defined in the City of Escondido Zoning Code. Total square footage of buildings on the site would increase from 132,665 to 191,813, and on-site parking would be reduced from 712 to 679 spaces. An existing 732-space off-site parking lot at the southwestern corner of 17th Avenue and Felicita Drive would not be modified as a result of this project, and would continue to be available for church activities. The proposal also includes the adoption of the environmental determination prepared for the project.

LOCATION: 639 East 17th Avenue.

Commissioner Romo recused himself from Item 1 and left the dais.

Ann Dolmage, Associate Planner, referenced the staff report and noted staff issues were whether all of the components of the phased Master Development Plan are appropriate for the site, and whether the project would have any adverse visual, noise and compatibility impacts to surrounding residential uses, whether sufficient parking could be provided to accommodate the range of anticipated uses, and whether the project provides safe access to the church campus from the off-site parking lot. Staff recommended approval based on the following: 1) The 17.56-acre church property has sufficient area to accommodate all of the proposed phases, including parking, drop-off areas, and setbacks from residential uses. The site has a history of church-related use that spans over 40 years. New and renovated structures have been designed to be visually compatible with existing structures, and located to address any potential visual, noise, or compatibility impacts to surrounding uses. The service area enclosure adjacent to the new maintenance building will not be a significant source of noise for neighbors to the east, since the enclosure will be screened by a solid wall and gate and will be used only for truck parking and loading/unloading (all shop activities will take place inside the building itself). Noise levels from the outdoor play areas associated with the new nursery & children's building are not expected to exceed City limits, per analysis in the Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) prepared for this project. No changes are proposed for the off-site parking lot, which will minimize noise and other impacts for the residential neighborhoods to the west of the church. Construction noise is expected to occur during project implementation, but will be limited to certain hours as

described in Section 17-234 of the Municipal Code. The MND states that the project is expected to cause impacts to traffic in the area, due to the expansion of the Worship Center to accommodate 400 additional seats, as well as the addition of the nursery & children's building, which will house a new weekday daycare and preschool for up to 200 children (in addition to existing weekend and evening programs). The MND proposes mitigation measures to reduce these traffic impacts to a less than significant level, including restriping portions of East 17th Avenue to create new left-hand and right-hand turn lanes and to extend existing turn lanes, installing a new traffic signal at the intersection of East 17th Avenue and Encino Drive, and contributing a fair share payment toward a new traffic signal at Encino Drive and Bear Valley Parkway; 2) Currently, the church has 1,444 parking spaces, including 712 on the church site and 732 in the off-site parking lot on the west side of Encino Drive. Upon completion of the project, the church will have 1,411 spaces (679 on-site and 732 off-site), for a loss of 33 spaces. The applicant has provided calculations to demonstrate that while the number of church parking spaces will decrease as the total square footage of church buildings increases, the minimum required parking for the completed project should only be 1,120 spaces, assuming all uses occurring on the church site are added together with no overlap. This would leave the church with a surplus of 291 spaces at project build-out. Additionally, since not all church functions will take place on the same day or at the same time, the actual parking need could be less than 1,120 spaces, resulting in an even larger surplus; and 3) Since the project would increase development on the church site by nearly 60,000 square feet, but will decrease the capacity of on-site parking by 33 spaces, one anticipated effect is that on-site parking will become more difficult to obtain, especially during peak times. More visitors will park in the off-site parking lot and cross Encino Drive to access the church campus, which could be a safety hazard if not properly managed. The church submitted a traffic management plan for their original City CUP, and has been using crossing guards and golf cart shuttles to help people safely travel between the off-site lot and the main campus. As part of the application package for PHG 14-0030, the applicant has prepared an updated plan that would be deployed during Sunday morning services, special events of 500 people or more, and whenever the off-site parking lot is open. This plan calls for the continued use of crossing guards and describes standards for their training. The applicant is also willing to consider eliminating on-street parking along Encino Drive in the area between the northernmost driveway and the intersection with 17th Avenue, to reduce vehicle circulation in this area and to give vehicles more room when turning right onto 17th Avenue from northbound Encino Drive.

Commissioner Winton referenced Exhibits 4 and 5 and asked why the proposed offsite parking lot was not part of the subject CUP. Mr. Martin noted that the subject request proposed no changes to the offsite parking lot, which had previously been incorporated into the CUP.

Commissioner Hale asked if there was an assessment of the existing traffic management plan that showed performance of the existing plan. Mr. Tunnell referenced Condition No. 2 and noted that a formal traffic management plan would be conducted before Phase 1 was completed.

Vice-chairman Spann was in favor of the proposed plan. He also noted that traffic was handled well at the subject site.

Chairman Weber expressed his concern with not being able to visualize the scale or impact of the new structures.

Chairman Weber felt the subject CUP should include language for the offsite parking lot. He then requested information regarding the reasoning behind the proposed 25-year phasing plan.

Commissioner Hale asked if part of the Commission approval included the proposed design. Mr. Martin replied in the affirmative.

Chairman Weber asked whether the applicant would pay a fair share contribution for the traffic signal at 17th and Encino. Mr. Tunnell replied the applicant would construct that signal as part of Phase 1, and would pay a fair share contribution for a future signal at Encino and Bear Valley Parkway.

Terri Strom, Carlsbad, Applicant, noted that the proposed phasing plan over 25 years allowed the church time to fund each phase. He stated that each phase lined up with the previous one, noting each would be able to stand on its own.

Chairman Weber felt that the daycare center would create most of the impacts, noting his concern with a commercial use in a residential area. He expressed his concern with the proposed 25-year plan further impacting the area along with unintended consequences of the daycare significantly impacting the area with no way to make changes in the future.

Mr. Strom noted that Phase 1 included the childcare facility, noting that they had worked extensively with City staff on Phase 1 with regard to mitigating traffic impacts.

Chairman Weber stated that he was concerned with the hours of operations of the daycare center and additional activities during the evening in the subject facility potentially creating traffic impacts. Mr. Strom noted that the daycare would not overlap other activities in the same facility.

John Culea, San Diego, Member of Emmanuel Faith Community Church, stated that the daycare would provide improved safety and needed child care

services for the community with architecture that would be fitting to the neighborhood.

Jim North, Escondido, Emmanuel Faith Community Church, thanked the City staff for their help and guidance. He stated that their intent was to gradually work the preschool function into the church campus operations, noting that they did not currently offer this service. He indicated that the architects tried to stay within the footprints and height of the existing facilities. He also noted that the colors would be consistent with existing buildings.

Chairman Weber asked if the preschool would be operated by the church personnel or outsourced. Mr. North noted that they had not looked into this yet.

Commissioner Winton asked if the cost of the childcare service would be at market rate. Mr. North replied in the affirmative and noted that it would be open to the public.

Pastor Dennis Keating, Emmanuel Faith Community Church, affirmed their commitment to work with the City to understand the traffic generated by the church, which he indicated they were aware of. He noted that they were fundamentally committed to ensuring the safety of anyone visiting the church, noting that the childcare facility would provide help to families in Escondido. He stated that their mission was to be a benefit to the City.

Vice-chairman Spann was in favor of the proposed phasing plan. He also felt the daycare operations would not impact traffic.

Vice-chairman McQuead felt the project was well designed and concurred with the conditions of approval. He felt the 25-year phase plan was appropriate. He also stated that he supported the architecture, scale and footprint of the proposed plan.

Commissioner Hale stated he was in favor of the project. He expressed his concern with potential overlap parking issues during peak operations but deferred to staff's recommendation. He also stated that he was in favor of the 25-year plan noting that this was one of the first church phasing plans that had reasonably assessed timeframes.

Mr. Martin stated that it was likely some changes would be proposed during the 25-year timeframe, noting this could bring the project back to the commission for additional review.

ACTION:

Moved by Commissioner Hale, seconded by Vice-chairman McQuead, to approve staff's recommendation. The motion included reaffirming the offsite parking lot is included as part of the CUP. Motion carried. Ayes: Spann, McQuead, Weber, Winton, and Hale. Noes: None. Abstained: Romo. (5-0-1).

2. MODIFICATION TO A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT – PHG 15-0001:

REQUEST: A modification to the previously approved Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for Calvin Christian High/Middle School to construct a new, approximately 15,515 SF, auditorium building with fixed/telescopic seating to accommodate up to 600 people (400 on lower floor and 200 on upper mezzanine level). The building also would include space to accommodate a 757 SF multi-use conference center, various storage and mechanical/electrical rooms, bathrooms and dressing rooms, concession area, 906 SF classroom on the first floor, 723 SF covered terrace on second floor (southeastern corner of building) and exterior elevator structure. The project also includes the installation of a canopy structure over the pedestrian walkway between the existing gymnasium and administration/classroom buildings to the new auditorium building. The building would be approximately 32 feet in height to the top of the roof parapet, and up 35 feet in height to a pitched roof element over the exterior elevator structure. A cross feature up to approximately 9-feet-high is proposed to be installed on top of this roof structure. The proposal also includes the adoption of the environmental determination prepared for the project.

LOCATION: Northeastern corner of N. Broadway and Vista Avenue in the City of Escondido, County of San Diego, addressed as 2000 North Broadway (APNs 224-120-54 and -55).

Commissioner Hale recused himself from Item 2 and left the dais.

Jay Paul, Associate Planner, referenced the staff report and noted staff had not identified any issues with this project. Staff recommended approval based on the following: 1) The 13.17-acre school property had sufficient area to accommodate the proposed new building and uses that would be conducted within the building. The project would not generate the need for any additional parking and there was sufficient parking to serve the site. The building had been designed and located to minimize any potential visual, noise or compatibility impacts to surrounding uses.

Chairman Weber asked if staff had received any complaints about lighting. Mr. Paul replied in the negative.

Terry Kok, Escondido, Superintendent for Calvin Christian Schools, thanked staff for their help on the subject project. He stated that drama and music was very important to the school. He noted that the project would take some of the noisier activities out of the gym and move them away from residences into a soundproof facility.

Commissioner Winton and staff discussed the height of the elevator tower.

Commissioner Winton noted that he would support a variance to allow the elevator tower to be higher for aesthetic reasons. Mr. Kok noted that the subject tower would incorporate a stairwell that wrapped around the tower.

Commissioner Romo concurred with allowing a height variance for the elevator tower.

Vice-chairman McQuead and staff discussed the landscape plan.

ACTION:

Moved by Commissioner Winton, seconded by Commissioner Romo, to approve staff's recommendation. Motion carried. Ayes: Weber, Winton, McQuead, Spann, and Romo. Noes: None. Abstained: Hale. (5-0-1)

ORAL COMMUNATIONS: None.

PLANNING COMMISSIONERS:

Vice-chairman Spann noted he would be absent from the June 23rd and July 14th meetings.

Commissioner Hale and staff discussed the written communication received.

ADJOURNMENT:

Chairman Weber adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m. The next meeting was scheduled for June 23, 2015, at 7:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, 201 North Broadway, Escondido, California.

Bill Martin

Bill Martin, Secretary to the Escondido
Planning Commission

Ty Paulson

Ty Paulson, Minutes Clerk