

CITY OF ESCONDIDO

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

June 23, 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; Gregory Johns, Commissioner; and Don Romo, Commissioner.

Commissioners absent: James Spann, Commissioner; and Guy Winton, Commissioner.

Staff present: Bill Martin, Deputy Planning Director; 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 Romo, to approve the minutes of the June 9, 2015, meeting. Motion carried. Ayes: McQuead, Weber, Romo, and Hale. Noes: None. Abstained: Johns. (4-0-1)

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS – None.

FUTURE NEIGHBORHOOD MEETINGS – None.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. MASTER AND PRECISE PLAN MODIFICATION – PHG 14-0032:

REQUEST: A proposed modification to a Master and Precise Development Plan for Ford of Escondido and Hyundai of Escondido to include demolition of the two separate showroom structures; construction of new, approximately 6,435 SF Ford and approximately 6,687 SF Hyundai showroom buildings; and construction

of a 6,012 SF wash/detail building. The proposal also includes the adoption of the environmental determination prepared for the project.

LOCATION: The Ford/Hyundai dealership is located on the southeastern corner of Auto Park Way and Andreasen Drive, addressed as 1717 and 1919 Auto Park Way.

Jay Paul, Associate Planner, referenced the staff report and noted that staff had not identified any issues with this request. Staff recommended approval based on the following: 1) Staff supported the project design, architecture and phasing plan because the new buildings would reflect a high quality of design and materials, and would be in conformance with the contemporary design of the other auto dealerships throughout the Escondido Auto Park. Appropriate on-site parking and circulation would be maintained, and the project design and building setbacks/orientation would not create any adverse compatibility or noise impacts to adjacent residential properties to the south.

Discussion ensued regarding a clarification of Page 19 of the staff report.

Commissioner Hale referenced the customer parking area, feeling it lacked landscaping. Mr. Paul noted that there were no proposed changes to the parking area.

Commissioner Romo and staff discussed the height limits for the Hyundai facility.

Commissioner Romo questioned whether the height of the facility could be raised in order to better screen the rooftop equipment from public view. Mr. Paul replied in the affirmative.

Chairman Weber and staff discussed Page 27 of the staff report with regard to the sewer lot tie arrangement.

David Clear, representing Escondido Ford and Hyundai, noted that the drawings of the rooftop equipment was for reference only, noting that the units would not be able to be seen if someone was driving or walking by. He also stated that they had no issue with screening the units.

Neil Sander, representing Escondido Ford and Hyundai, noted that he was the engineer of record and was available for questions.

Commissioner Hale felt additional landscaping was needed along the Auto Park Way setback and asked staff to look into what was required for the zoning.

Mr. Martin noted that some latitude was allowed due to this being a Planned Development, but noted staff would look into this.

ACTION:

Moved by Chairman Weber, seconded by Commissioner Johns, to approve staff's recommendation. The motion included requiring that the rooftop equipment be hidden from public view. Motion carried unanimously. (5-0)

2. CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT – PHG 15-0008:

REQUEST: A proposed Conditional Use Permit to install a 210-kilowatt "clean energy server" behind Home Depot to fulfill the majority of the store's operational power needs. The server will utilize low-emissions solid oxide fuel cell technology to generate electricity using steam and natural gas. Since the server will not provide 100% of the Home Depot's electrical needs, the store will continue to get some power from the San Diego Gas & Electric grid. The server will be located behind the Home Depot store, adjacent to a wall that separates the store property from the mini-storage property to the south. This location was previously approved for the staging of trailers for sale by Home Depot, and the server will not block customer parking or impede traffic circulation. The proposal also includes the adoption of the environmental determination prepared for the project.

LOCATION: The property is 11.28 acres and is addressed as 1475 East Valley Parkway.

Bill Martin, Deputy Planning Director, referenced the staff report and noted staff issues were whether the design and location of the proposed facility was appropriate for the site, and whether the proposed facility is consistent with the Electric Generating Facilities section of the Zoning Code (Section 33-1122). Staff recommended approval based on the following: 1) The proposed clean energy server will not interfere with traffic circulation in the Home Depot parking lot, since it will be located within striped spaces that were created for the staging of trailers, and not within any aisles or driveways. Bollards will be installed around the server to protect it from vehicular collisions, and these bollards will also not interfere with regular traffic flow. The bollards are located within a water line easement as shown on the site plan. On the recommendation of the Utilities Division, the project has been conditioned to require the applicant to either relocate the bollards outside of the easement area, or to design them to be removable to facilitate future water line repairs and maintenance. The proposed server location will not cause parking issues, provided that the items currently stored in this location are not displaced to customer parking areas, as discussed

further later in this staff report and addressed in the proposed conditions of approval. The project was discussed at the staff design review meeting on March 19, 2015; staff was satisfied with the overall design and location of the server and made no recommendations; 2) The applicant had provided noise specifications for the server that demonstrate that noise levels will not exceed City standards or become a nuisance to surrounding uses, including the apartment complex on the south side of Grand Avenue. The proposed server site will be shielded from view of the neighboring uses to the south by the wall separating the store property from the mini-storage property, and from uses to the north by the Home Depot store itself. The server is expected to emit heat, but the applicant has stated that the amount is comparable to what is released at the tail pipe of a vehicle; and 3) The proposed project is consistent with the provisions of Section 33-1122 (Electric Generating Facilities) of the Zoning Code. The solid oxide fuel cell technology chosen by the applicant utilizes the efficient, state-of-the-art technology; operates with natural gas as its fuel source; and generates low pollutant emissions. Home Depot will obtain the majority of its day-to-day electrical needs from this server, with the remaining portion provided by the San Diego Gas & Electric power grid. Materials provided by the applicant indicate that solid oxide fuel cells produce less carbon dioxide (on a pounds per megawatt hour basis) than the west coast power grid, so this decrease in dependency on SDG&E should translate into a reduction in Home Depot's carbon footprint. The Electric Generating Facilities code requires applicants to provide documentation that the San Diego Air Pollution Control District (SDAPCD) has reviewed the application and deemed it complete. The applicant for this project has provided a copy of a Distributed Generation certification from the State of California Air Resources Board, which grants an exemption to Bloom Energy Corporation (the manufacturer of this clean energy server) from permit requirements of SDAPCD for its ES-5700 fuel cells, based on certain emission standards for oxides of nitrogen, carbon monoxide, and volatile organic compounds (VOCs). The exemption is valid until September 21, 2016. As a courtesy, staff still sent a copy of the project's site plan to the SDAPCD during the initial 30-day review period, and no comments were received.

Vice-chairman McQuead asked if the Fire Department had any comments regarding safety concerns for the type of system being proposed. Mr. Martin replied in the negative.

Commissioner Romo noted that his understanding was that the system would run 24 hours a day, seven days a week at 47 decibels. Mr. Martin noted that proposed decibel levels would be within the City's noise ordinance levels. He also stated that the location would not be located near a residential area.

Andrew, Rappe, Escondido, representing Home Depot, noted that his company was the engineer and contractor and were available for questions.

Chairman Weber asked Mr. Rappe if they had considered moving the location away from the truck dock further to the west. Mr. Rappe noted that they wanted to be close the electrical disconnect, which was one of the main factors for the proposed location.

Commissioner Johns asked Mr. Rappe what the potential was for a carbon monoxide leak. Mr. Rappe stated that the unit would have to be struck very hard, noting that carbon monoxide was not stored in the unit.

Commissioner Johns asked Mr. Rappe if he was aware of a unit every leaking carbon monoxide. Mr. Rappe replied in the negative.

ACTION:

Moved by Commissioner Romo, seconded by Chairman Weber, to approve staff's recommendation. Motion carried unanimously. (5-0)

ORAL COMMUNATIONS: None.

PLANNING COMMISSIONERS: No Comments.

Commissioner Hale and Mr. Martin discussed administrative approvals for generating stations.

ADJOURNMENT:

Chairman Weber adjourned the meeting at 8:37 p.m. The next meeting was scheduled for July 14, 2015, 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

