

**CITY OF ESCONDIDO****MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
ESCONDIDO PLANNING COMMISSION****July 12, 2016**

The meeting of the Escondido Planning Commission was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Chairman Weber in the City Council Chambers, 201 North Broadway, Escondido, California.

**Commissioners present:** Jeffery Weber, Chairman; Bob McQuead, Vice-chairman; Michael Cohen, Commissioner; Gregory Johns, Commissioner; James Spann, Commissioner and Stan Weiler, Commissioner.

**Commissioners absent:** Don Romo, Commissioner.

**Staff present:** Bill Martin, Director of Community Development; Jay Paul, Associate Planner; Adam Finestone, Principal Planner; Owen Tunnell, Principal Engineer; and Adam Phillips, Deputy City Attorney.

**MINUTES:**

Moved by Commissioner Spann, seconded by Vice-chairman McQuead, to approve the minutes of the June 14, 2016, meeting. Motion carried. Ayes: Weber, Spann, McQuead, and Cohen. Noes: None. Abstained: Johns. Commissioner Weiler was absent from the vote. (4-0-1)

**WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS** – None.

**FUTURE NEIGHBORHOOD MEETINGS** – Received.

**ORAL COMMUNICATIONS** – None.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS:****1. CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT – PHG 15-0036:**

**REQUEST:** A proposed Conditional Use Permit to increase the number of non-ambulatory residents (aged 60 and above) in an existing 3,421 SF, residential care facility from six to ten, on a 10,385 SF lot in the R-1-6 zone (Single-Family Residential, 6,000 SF minimum lot size). No exterior additions or improvements

to the existing structure are proposed. The proposal also includes the adoption of the environmental determination prepared for the project.

**PROPERTY SIZE AND LOCATION:** Approximately 0.24-acres, on the northeast side of Wanek Road, west of East Valley Parkway and east of Socin Court, addressed as 2870 Wanek Road (APN 231-050-50).

Adam Finestone, Principal Planner, referenced the staff report and noted staff issues were whether the site could reasonably accommodate the increase in the number of residents, and whether adequate parking could be provided for the proposed use. Staff recommended approval based on the following: 1) The proposed increase in the number of residents is consistent with General Plan goals to provide housing for special needs households including the elderly. The facility allows residents to live in a residential environment rather than an institutional setting. The proposed increase to ten residents can be reasonably accommodated on site since the residence is of adequate size and adequate parking can be provided; and 2) The demand for parking was expected to be limited primarily to employees because the residents do not drive and visitation occurs on an infrequent basis. The three required spaces could be provided on the applicant's property as required by the Zoning Code. The applicant's proposed parking solution met code requirements and there were plenty of other parking opportunities for infrequent occurrences where additional spaces were needed.

Vice-chairman McQuead asked if staff had received any comments from the neighbors. Mr. Finestone replied in the negative.

Chairman Weber asked if the subject property would be subject to a higher sewer rates given the increase in occupants. Mr. Martin replied sewer rates were based on EDU's.

Chairman Weber and Mr. Martin discussed the feasibility of raising the EDU formula for residences that are converted to residential care facilities.

Discussion ensued regarding available parking and the delineation between what defined residential and institutional settings.

**Ana Osborn, Escondido, Applicant,** noted that her facility would provide for individuals needing care in a residential setting. She also stated that she had provided care for over 20 years and loved it.

**ACTION:**

Moved by Vice-chairman McQuead, seconded by Commissioner Spann, to approve staff's recommendation. Motion carried unanimously. Weiler was absent from the vote. (5-0)

**2. REGIONAL MARKET SIGN PERMIT AND ZONING CODE AMENDMENT  
- PHG 16-0009; AZ 16-0004:**

REQUEST: A modification to an existing Regional Market Sign Permit to upgrade the existing Escondido Auto Park freeway sign with a larger sign. The existing sign is approximately 630 SF in size and includes an electronic message board of approximately 267 SF per side, as well as 126 SF of internally-illuminated fixed copy per side. The new sign would be approximately 775 SF in size, and would include an LED message board of approximately 587 SF per side, as well as approximately 67 SF of internally-illuminated fixed copy per side. The sign would still be supported by two poles, though the overall height of the sign would be lowered from 80' to 73'6" and the pole covers would be painted gray. Since the proposed changes would cause the sign to exceed current size limits for Regional Market Signs, a Zoning Code Amendment is also proposed to modify those limits.

PROPERTY SIZE AND LOCATION: The project site is 1.17 acres in size and is addressed as 1130 Simpson Way (Assessor's Parcel Number 232-061-36). The site is located on the north side of Simpson Way, near its intersection with North Hale Avenue and immediately west of Interstate 15.

Bill Martin, Director of Community Development, referenced the staff report and noted staff issues were whether the proposed Zoning Code Amendment, allowing for larger Regional Market Signs, was appropriate, and whether the design of the proposed new sign was appropriate. Staff recommended approval based on the following: 1) Regulations for Regional Market Signs were added to the Zoning Code in 1995 and amended in 1996, in response to the Escondido Auto Park Association's interest in installing a freeway-oriented sign bearing a changeable message board within the Interstate 15 corridor. These regulations had not changed since the 1996 amendment. The Association now would like to upgrade the existing Regional Market Sign with one that was more modern in appearance and that utilizes LED technology for its message board. The proposed design would incorporate a larger total sign area and a larger message board than what currently exist. The total copy size (fixed plus message board) would also increase. These larger features would exceed the size limits currently set by the Regional Market Sign standards, so a code amendment is necessary. The proposed project has been reviewed by all relevant City departments, none of

which had any comments or recommendations. Caltrans also reviewed the proposed code amendment and Regional Market Sign modification and expressed no concerns with increasing the size of the sign or its message board, but did make some recommendations regarding light output, which are addressed further later in this report. These recommendations have been incorporated into the conditions of approval for the project. Finally, staff believes that the increase in the digital message board size (and the overall size of the sign) is warranted since it is consistent with current LED technology that is more efficient and has become increasingly popular in the years since the original Auto Park sign was approved; and 2) The current Regional Market Sign was installed in 1996 under 96-21-RMS and the sign had not been changed since it was first installed. The Association now would like to replace the existing sign with a new one featuring cleaner lines and a modern appearance, as well as a larger electronic message board. The applicant believed, and staff concurred, that the new design would upgrade the look of the sign and this area of the I-15 corridor.

Commissioner Weiler entered the meeting at this time.

Commissioner Cohen asked if there would be any power consumption difference with the new sign. Mr. Martin estimated that the power usage would be reduced, noting the applicant was present and could provide more input.

Commissioner Johns and staff discussed the type and timing for the screen display.

Chairman Weber and staff discussed the reasoning for the administrative adjustment language in the proposed code amendment.

Chairman Weber asked if staff foresaw any other possible entities coming forward with similar requests. Mr. Martin replied in the negative noting the regional market sign regulations had been in effect for 20 years now and no other entities had applied.

Chairman Weber and staff discussed the language related to the requirement for on-premise signs versus being subject to the Outdoor Advertising Act for an off-premise sign installation. Chairman Weber expressed his concern with the on-premise nature of the request.

**Rory Nicholls, ADTI Media**, noted that the LED technology would reduce the power usage for the sign. He stated that there was a mistake regarding the actual size of the LED sign, noting that it was less than stated in the staff report. He also elaborated that the aesthetics of the sign would be significantly increased.

Commissioners Spann, Weiler, and Cohen were in favor of the proposed sign.

**ACTION:**

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

**CURRENT BUSINESS:** None.

**ORAL COMMUNATIONS:** None.

**PLANNING COMMISSIONERS:**

Commissioner Weiler apologized for being late due to an unavoidable work commitment.

Vice-Chairman McQuead noted he would be absent from the meetings in September and the first one in October.

Bill Martin noted that the July 26<sup>th</sup> meeting was canceled.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Chairman Weber adjourned the meeting at 7:32 p.m. The next meeting was scheduled for August 9, 2016, at 7:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, 201 North Broadway, Escondido, California.

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 Bill Martin, Secretary to the Escondido  
 Planning Commission

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 Ty Paulson, Minutes Clerk