

CITY OF ESCONDIDO

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE ESCONDIDO PLANNING COMMISSION

March 8, 2011

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: Darol Caster, Chairman, Edward Lehman, Commissioner; Jack Campbell, Vice-chairman; Guy Winton, Commissioner; Bob McQuead, Commissioner; Don Yerkes, Commissioner; and Jeffery Weber, Commissioner.

Commissioners absent: None.

Staff present: Bill Martin, Principal Planner; Jay Paul, Associate Planner, Owen Tunnell, Associate Engineer; Corrine Neuffer, Deputy City Attorney; Homi Namdari, Assistant City Engineer; and Ty Paulson, Minutes Clerk.

MINUTES:

Moved by Commissioner Lehman, seconded by Commissioner Weber, to approve the minutes of the February 8, 2011, meeting. Motion carried unanimously. (7-0)

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS – None.

NEIGHBORHOOD MEETINGS – None.

CITY COUNCIL UPDATE – None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. **GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT – PHG 09-0009:**

REQUEST: General Plan Amendment to change the underlying General Plan Land-Use Designation on 11.62 acres of privately-owned land and 2.54 acres of City-owned land from Light Industrial (LI) and General Commercial (CG) to Planned Commercial (PC). The 11.62-acres of privately-owned land currently operates as a local outdoor swap meet. The 2.54-acre City-owned parcel is a concrete-lined flood control channel (Reidy Creek) that bisects the project site. No development projects have been submitted in conjunction with this General Plan Amendment.

PROPERTY LOCATION: The 14.16-acre site is located adjacent to Quince Street on the east, Washington Avenue on the south, and Mission Avenue on the north in the City of Escondido, County of San Diego, addressed as 635 W. Mission Avenue. The project site is comprised of three privately-owned parcels (APNs 228-270-72, -73 and -77) and one City-owned parcel (APN 228-270-57) known as the Reidy Creek Flood Control Channel.

Jay Paul, Associate Planner, referenced the staff report and noted staff issues were whether the proposed Planned Commercial land-use designation would be consistent with General Plan policies and would provide for desired redevelopment opportunities for the area. Staff recommended approval based on the following: 1) The proposed General Plan Amendment conformed to the policy for amending the City's General Plan that required the consideration of physical, social or city-wide economic factors or changes that have made the existing plan designation appropriate from the standpoint of the general public welfare. In this situation, the site was in an area that had experienced economic decline since the 1990 General Plan was adopted. Future redevelopment of the site would continue to provide opportunities to revitalize the area and bolster an underutilized commercial/industrial property and result in a stronger draw along the West Mission Avenue commercial area; and 2) The Mitigated Negative Declaration assess both the individual and cumulative project impacts. Mitigation measures had been identified related to Traffic, Hazardous Materials and Greenhouse Gases that could result from future development of the site. The mitigation measures and limitations built into the General Plan language would reduce potentially significant impacts to less than a significant level. The attached Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program identified necessary mitigation measures, their timing, and the party responsible for implementation.

Chairman Caster and Mr. Paul discussed how potential traffic impacts would be factored into approving uses for the subject area.

Chairman Caster asked if staff had considered revising the M-1 area to General Commercial or some other designation. Mr. Paul replied in the negative and noted that this would also require a revision to the General Plan.

Commissioner Weber asked what zoning would be proposed if the subject proposal was not before the City. Mr. Martin noted that the subject area was being looked at in the General Plan update. He also noted that the proposal could be considered an interim plan that potentially could be changed again as part of the General Plan Update process, although the proposal seemed fairly consistent with the General Plan alternatives currently being studied for the area.

Commissioner Weber questioned whether the average daily trips (ADTs) were being considered for the surrounding properties as part of the subject proposal. Mr. Paul replied in the affirmative.

Commissioner Weber asked Mr. Paul if the project would go forward in phases if approved. Mr. Paul stated that it was unknown yet as to what would happen with the property until a formal proposal was brought forward.

Commissioner Campbell asked how the ADTs were being considered and how they were spread out. Mr. Tunnell noted that the traffic study analyzed the seven surrounding intersections, looking at potential trigger points.

John Boarman, Linscott Law & Greenspan, noted that the traffic study took into consideration the peak hour needs. He also stated the traffic study that was conducted was appropriate given the level of analysis needed for this project.

Commissioner Lehman asked if there were any restrictions with regard to the flood control channel that ran through the subject property. Mr. Paul replied in the affirmative, noting that the some other entities such as Fish and Game, Army Corp of Engineers, and Regional Board might have some restrictions or permit authority.

Commissioner Yerkes asked if legal access was provided to Washington Avenue and Quince Street. Mr. Paul replied in the affirmative.

David Ferguson, Escondido, representing Dan and Jeff Johnson, provided the background history for the site. He noted that they had conducted extensive studies, noting that the original lease for the swap meet expired in 2006 but had options for the swap meet to remain open. He noted that the subject plan was developed out of what the City was looking for, the influences around the site, and what the market might dictate in the future. He stated that they felt the subject proposal created flexibility so as to meet the market and City's needs. He noted that they concurred with staff's recommendation. Mr. Ferguson stated that the City owned the flood control channel, noting his view that they had complete control over it. He stated that the traffic study took into account the projected growth for the surrounding properties. He also stated that the project would be consistent with the vision currently being considered for the General Plan.

Chairman Caster asked when the current lease option for the swap meet expired. Mr. Ferguson noted that the option was up this year with two other potential options being worked out.

Commissioner Weber asked if any of the surrounding property owners objected to the subject proposal. Mr. Ferguson replied in the negative.

Mr. Paul noted that although the City owned the flood control channel, the funds that were used to construct the channel were paid for by the Soils Conservation Service who would have a say with regard to any revisions to the channel. He also noted that the City would take full control of the channel in 10 years.

ACTION:

Moved by Commissioner Winton, seconded by Commissioner McQuead, to approve staff's recommendation. Motion carried. Ayes: Campbell, Caster, Winton, McQuead, Lehman, and Yerkes. Noes: Weber. (6-1)

CURRENT BUSINESS – None.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS: None.

PLANNING COMMISSIONERS – No Discussion.

ADJOURNMENT:

Chairman Caster adjourned the meeting at 7:46 p.m. The next meeting was scheduled for April 12, 2011 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