

CITY OF ESCONDIDO

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE ESCONDIDO PLANNING COMMISSION

July 12, 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; Don Yerkes, Commissioner; Guy Winton, Commissioner; Jack Campbell, Vice-chairman; Bob McQuead, Commissioner; and Jeffery Weber, Commissioner.

Commissioners absent: Edward Lehman, Commissioner.

Staff present: Bill Martin, Principal Planner; Rozanne Cherry, Principal Planner; Owen Tunnell, Associate Engineer; Corrine Neuffer, Deputy City Attorney; and Ty Paulson, Minutes Clerk.

MINUTES:

Moved by Commissioner Weber, seconded by Commissioner Winton, to approve the minutes of the June 28, 2011, meeting. Motion carried. Ayes: Campbell, Caster, Yerkes, Weber and Winton. Noes: None. Abstained: McQuead. (5-0-1)

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS – Received.

FUTURE NEIGHBORHOOD MEETINGS – None.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. **CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT – PHG 11-0026:**

REQUEST: A modification to a previously approved Conditional Use Permit to remove the existing four AT&T wireless communication panel antennas located within an approximately 73-foot-high church steeple/cross at the New Life Presbyterian Church and install nine new antenna panels within the structure. The installation of the new panels would not require any exterior modifications to the existing church steeple/cross.

LOCATION: New Life Presbyterian Church, 615 W. Citracado Parkway (APN 238-110-37).

Bill Martin, Principal Planner, referenced the staff report and requested that Item 1 be continued to the August 9, 2011 meeting.

ACTION:

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

2. MODIFICATION TO A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT – PHG 11-0005:

REQUEST: A proposed Modification to the previously approved Conditional Use Permit to allow an upgrade with more modern and efficient equipment to the existing "peaker" generating facility now owned by Escondido Energy Center, LLC. The improvements will include façade and equipment changes, a reduction in stack height and modifications to the footprints of the buildings as previously approved, an improvement in the present facility's air quality emissions, and a reduction in operating hours to 2900 hours per year. The 1.67 acre subject site is zoned M-2 (General Industrial) and is within the City's HCO (Hazardous Chemical Overlay).

PROPERTY LOCATION: Between Don Lee Place and Mission Road, east of Auto Park Way, addressed as 1968 Don Lee Place (APN 228-381-7800).

Rozanne Cherry, Principal Planner, referenced the staff report and noted staff issues were whether the configuration and appearance of the facility, including the increased height of the exhaust stack, was appropriate, and whether the changes in air quality constituents and power output were adequate reasons for the reconstruction necessary to upgrade the existing plant. Staff recommended approval based on the following: 1) The 2007 CUP modification approved an exhaust stack to a height of 70 feet. In the new configuration, the existing stack constructed at between 45 and 47 feet high will be used and extended approximately 10 feet to an overall height of less than 60 feet. The stack height proposed is allowed within the M-2 zone and subject only to the UBC (Uniform Building Code) which the project would have to meet. Other tall structures were already present within the vicinity. None of the other structures on the project site would approach the height of the stack. The Design Review Board evaluated the new configuration on April 14, 2011. The revised plans were unanimously approved as submitted; and 2) Because the reductions in pollution constituents were substantial and the output of electrical energy for our area would increase with a reduction in fuel burned, and a voluntary reduction in annual operating hours from 4,500 down to 2,900, staff felt the proposal was a reasonable trade-off with the short-term impacts of the construction activity required by the upgrade. In addition, the proposed modifications will enable the

facility to meet the required 65dBA noise limits at the property lines. Mrs. Cherry then referenced an added condition (Condition No. 24).

Chairman Caster asked why the maximum annual limit of operating hours was being reduced.

Commissioner Weber asked if the subject plant had any water discharge that would enter into the City's water treatment system.

Paul Cummins, Sacramento, noted that they had entered into a power purchase agreement with the SDG&E, noting the hours under this agreement were not as high as what was in the existing Conditional Use Permit. He also stated that the plant had no industrial wastewater discharge.

Commissioner Campbell and Mr. Cummins discussed the hours of operation and how the disbursing model worked. Mr. Cummins noted they anticipated the subject facility would operate similar to the El Cajon facility, which operated one to two hours a day. He also explained that sometimes they would be asked to run the facility for longer periods of time for special situations.

Commissioner Yerkes asked how long it would take for someone to be at the site if an emergency occurred. Mr. Cummins noted that they had full-time staff who lived in the County. He also stated that they had emergency contact numbers posted onsite.

ACTION:

Moved by Commissioner Campbell, seconded by Commissioner Weber, to approve staff's recommendation. The motion included adding Condition No. 24. Motion carried unanimously. (6-0)

3. CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT – PHG 11-0014:

REQUEST: A Conditional Use Permit to install a wireless communication facility for Verizon Wireless consisting of 12 panel antennas attached to an approximately 71-foot-high church steeple/cross at the Grace Lutheran Church. The antennas would be installed behind RF transparent screens that would be textured and painted to match the existing steeple structure. A 240 square foot equipment building would be installed on the roof of a building adjacent to the sanctuary and would be designed to match an adjacent T-Mobile equipment building.

LOCATION: Grace Lutheran Church, 643 W. 13th Avenue.

Bill Martin, Principal Planner, referenced the staff report and noted staff's main issue was whether the design and location of the proposed facility was appropriate for the site and consistent with the Wireless Facility Guidelines. Staff recommended approval based on the following: 1) The proposed project would be consistent with the Communication Antennas Ordinance since the antenna panels would be located on an existing steeple that would be modified to completely screen the antenna panels and associated cables. Equipment cabinets for the wireless facility would be located in an enclosed structure placed on an adjacent roof and designed to match the architecture of the building. The facility would not result in any adverse visual impacts since the antenna panels would be located and completely screened within the modified steeple instead of adding a new structure to the site; the facility is located on a non-residential site in a residential zone; and RF emissions would be in conformance with FCC standards; and 2) Staff felt the proposed facility would not result in a potential health hazards to nearby residents since the Radio Frequency (RF) study prepared for the proposed project indicates the facility would be within maximum permissible exposure (MPE) limits and Federal Communication Commission (FCC) standards.

ACTION:

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

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS: None.

PLANNING COMMISSIONERS:

Chairman Caster noted that there would be a general plan workshop at the next Planning Commission meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

Chairman Caster adjourned the meeting at 7:32 p.m. The next meeting was scheduled for July 26, 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