

CITY OF ESCONDIDO

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

November 13, 2012

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: James Spann, Commissioner; Guy Winton, Commissioner; Merle Watson, Commissioner; Bob McQuead, Vice-chairman; Jeffery Weber, Chairman; Gregory Johns, Commissioner; and Darol Caster, Commissioner.

Commissioners absent: None.

Staff present: Jay Petrek, Principal Planner; Bill Martin, Principal Planner; Owen Tunnell, Associate Engineer; Gary McCarthy, Senior Deputy City Attorney; and Ty Paulson, Minutes Clerk.

MINUTES:

Moved by Commissioner Caster, seconded by Vice-chairman McQuead, to approve the minutes of the October 23, 2012 meeting. Motion carried. Ayes: Spann, Johns, McQuead, Weber, Watson, and Caster. Noes: None. Abstained: Winton. (6-0-1)

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS – Received.

FUTURE NEIGHBORHOOD MEETINGS – Received.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. GENERAL PLAN HOUSING ELEMENT ADOPTION – PHG 11-0028:

REQUEST: General Plan Housing Element adoption setting forth the City's housing goals and policies for the years 2013-2020.

PROPERTY SIZE AND LOCATION: Citywide

Jay Petrek, Principal Planner, referenced the staff report and noted staff issues were whether the Housing Element was in compliance state law, and whether the Housing Element policies/programs would address community-wide housing needs. Staff recommended approval based on the following: 1) The Housing Element had undergone separate California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) review and has been found in compliance with state law; and 2) The state's review of the Housing Element's policies and programs had determined that Escondido's housing needs could be adequately addressed.

Commissioner Caster and staff discussed the City's share of regional housing needs.

Commissioner Caster questioned why the City should outline providing 2,264 low-income units when only 1,719 were required.

Veronica Tam, Tam and Associates, noted that the additional units provided a cushion for a no net loss, which provided a buffer.

Commissioner Caster questioned whether SANDAG's calculations were the same for each jurisdiction. Mr. Petrek noted that the effort was extensively negotiated in an attempt to keep the jurisdictions consistent. He also stated that the region-wide average was close to 40 percent when Escondido was almost 4% higher.

Vice-chairman McQuead and Mr. Petrek discussed the proposed sites for homeless shelters.

Chairman Weber referenced Page A4, Paragraph 3, dated November 1, 2011 and questioned whether this was a valid criticism. Mr. Petrek replied in the negative, noting that the subject letter references building very low-income units. Ms. Tam noted that the thing to remember is that the housing element was a planning goal and not a requirement to build. She stated that 90 percent of the cities met the moderate income housing, but when it came to low and very low-income housing most cities would not have met their allocation with no penalties.

Chairman Weber referenced Page X72 1.5 (Density Bonus) and asked if this would be more or less restrictive than what was currently being used. Mr. Petrek noted that this would provide more incentives for the density bonus.

Chairman Weber referenced Page IV-96 and asked that Figure IV-50 be better clarified. Mr. Petrek concurred.

Chairman Weber and staff discussed Page IV-91 with emphasis being on public art fees and traffic impact fees.

Chairman Weber noted a correction of Page IV-8.

Commissioner Caster asked if the grants associated with approval of the subject document could only be used for low-income housing. Mr. Petrek replied in the negative.

Commissioner Winton referenced Page IV-91 and expressed his concern with the comparison of Escondido with coastal cities.

Commissioner Caster expressed concern with the housing development document being an exercise to meet the State's regulators versus being a working document. He expressed concern with the information in subject document not being geared toward improving or representing Escondido.

Commissioner Johns asked if the subject document could be enforced. Ms. Tam noted that any programs related to the zoning code had to be adhered to, however, many of the other programs were voluntary.

Commissioner Caster noted that the key was to have the zoning available for affordable housing but not to actually build them out.

Commissioner Spann noted that he was opposed to the State regulating the type of housing a city was to provide.

ACTION:

Moved by Commissioner Spann, seconded by Commissioner Johns, to approve staff's recommendation. Motion carried unanimously. (7-0)

CURRENT BUSINESS:

- 1. Request from Commissioner Caster to discuss Article 43 (Abandoned Service Stations) of the Escondido Zoning Code in relation to 555 W. Grand Avenue.**

Mr. Martin noted that the Commission had been provided with Article 43 of the zoning code that was adopted in 1977. He stated that to his knowledge this had only been used once in 1979.

Commissioner Caster noted that the subject property had been abandoned for a long period of time, noting his view that subject gas station should be torn down given all of the work done improving the subject area. Commissioner Spann concurred.

Mr. Martin noted that staff received inquiries typically on a monthly basis about the subject property. He also stated that Section 33-842 had a provision for conversions of gas stations with a CUP.

Commissioner Caster felt if the ordinance was not going to be enforced then the ordinance should be revised.

Chairman Weber questioned whether his reading was correct in that the process started with the Director of Community Development and then a hearing would occur before the Commission. Mr. McCarthy replied in the affirmative. He also stated that property owner had been responsive, noting that the gas tanks had been removed. He also stated that from a management view, the City might not be able to recover the costs for demolishing the gas station.

Chairman Weber felt this type of issue was better addressed at the staff level.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS: None.

PLANNING COMMISSIONERS: No comments.

ADJOURNMENT:

Chairman Weber adjourned the meeting at 8:02 p.m. The next meeting was scheduled for November 27, 2012, 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