

CITY OF ESCONDIDO

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

December 8, 2009

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; Jack Campbell, Commissioner; Edward Lehman, Commissioner; Bob McQuead, Commissioner; Guy Winton, Commissioner; and Jeffery Weber, Commissioner.

Commissioners absent: Barry Newman, Vice-chairman.

Staff present: Bill Martin, Principal Planner; Homi Namdari, Assistant City Engineer; Barbara Redlitz, Assistant Planning Director; Jay Petrek, Principal Planner; and Ty Paulson, Minutes Clerk.

MINUTES:

Moved by Commissioner Weber, seconded by Commissioner Lehman, to approve the minutes of the November 24, 2009, meeting. Motion carried unanimously. (6-0)

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS – None.

NEIGHBORHOOD MEETINGS – None.

CITY COUNCIL UPDATE – None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. VARIANCE– PHG 09-0039:

REQUEST: A request for a Variance from the Zoning Code to reduce the required front-yard setback at a church in the R-1-8 zone from 15 feet to two feet for the construction of a six-foot-high, wrought iron fence.

LOCATION: Approximately 11.04 acres on the southwestern corner of Sheridan Avenue and Conway Drive, addressed as 1445 Conway Drive.

Bill Martin, Principal Planner, referenced the staff report and noted staff issues were whether the proposed Variance meets the required findings for approval. Staff recommended approval based on the following: 1) There were exceptional or extraordinary circumstances related to the subject property that would justify

approval of a portion of the Variance request. Staff feels that granting the Variance along the southern portion of the site, at the parking area, is necessary for the preservation and enjoyment of a substantial property right possessed by other properties in the vicinity, due to the location of San Diego County Water Authority waterlines. Without the Variance it would be difficult for the church to adequately provide security to the campus. However, staff feels that granting the Variance request for the northern portion of the fence in front of the main sanctuary building where there is no paved parking area, would not be justifiable, since a six-foot-high fence which is in conformance with required setbacks could be located in that area and provide adequate security.

Commissioner McQuead and staff discussed the options for sight distance.

Commissioner Weber asked if the Water Authority right-of-ways would override the subject variance.

Charles Kruger, Architect for the project, concurred with staff's recommendation with the exception of the proposed fence location near the sanctuary. He stated that connecting the fence to the existing sanctuary would expose it to vandalism occurring currently. He noted that the Water Authority was very specific with regard to keeping the fence away from their waterline and what materials could be used. He asked that they be allowed to install the fence in a straight line which would allow enough room away from the pipeline and be more aesthetically pleasing.

Commissioner McQuead asked Mr. Kruger when the current sanctuary would be changed to meeting rooms. Mr. Kruger noted it would be changed in approximately five years.

Commissioner Lehman asked if the recently approved master plan for the church had the same location for the proposed fence. Mr. Kruger replied in the affirmative.

Commissioner Weber asked if the Water Authority had limitations for the fence going east and west. Mr. Kruger noted that the only limitation had to do with the types of material they could use for the fence footings.

Commissioner McQuead asked if the site had security cameras.

Christine Whitten, Church of the Resurrection, replied in the negative. She also noted that they had received quotes for lighting and cameras but were told that it would probably not help.

Commissioner McQuead and Ms. Whitten discussed the proposed access to the site.

Commissioner Winton asked if the recently approved Master Plan showed the fence in the subject location. Ms. Redlitz responded affirmatively and noted that a fence would be allowed. However, the height of the fence resulted in the need for a Variance.

Samuel Dean, Escondido, noted he lived in close proximity to the subject property. He was concerned with the proposed fence near the sanctuary being located two feet from the curb and impacting views and being unsightly. He was in favor of placing the fence further back towards the sanctuary as recommended by staff.

Commissioner McQuead expressed support for the applicant's desire to see a uniform appearance for the fence location and not leave the front of the sanctuary unprotected.

Chairman Caster was in favor of the applicant's proposed location for the fence.

ACTION

Moved by Commissioner Weber, seconded by Commissioner Lehman, to approve staff's recommendation. Motion carried. Ayes: Campbell, Lehman, McQuead, Weber, and Winton. Noes: Caster. (5-1)

2. MODIFICATION TO A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT – PHG 09-0031:

REQUEST: Modification to a Conditional Use Permit to add additional antennas to an existing 80-foot-high Sprint/Nextel wireless communication facility. Clearwire proposes to use the existing upper array on the pole and remove several of the existing Spring/Nextel antennas to accommodate up to five new rectangular panel antennas and five circular antennas. The upper array is approved for a maximum of 12 antennas. With the removal of existing antennas and the installation of the new antennas, there would be up to a total of 14 antennas mounted onto the upper array. The supporting equipment cabinet would be located within the existing Sprint/Nextel equipment building.

LOCATION: On the southern side of Hubbard Avenue, between Conway Drive and Ash Street, addressed as 1255 Hubbard Avenue (APN 227-430-25).

Bill Martin, Principal Planner, referenced the staff report and noted staff issues were 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 facility would be consistent with the Communication Antennas Ordinance since the facility would co-locate on an existing communications antenna. The number of new panels would be limited to be in scale with the existing antenna array. The proposed equipment cabinets would be placed within an existing enclosure area and landscaping

installed to screen views. The facility (as conditioned) would be consistent with the Wireless Facility Guidelines since it would not result in any adverse visual impacts; is located on a non-residential site in a residential zone; would use an existing facility to mount the panels rather than construction of an additional structure; and would be in conformance with FCC emission standards; and 2) 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. The proposed project also would not result in an increase in RF emissions previously approved for the site.

Commissioner Lehman asked if the subject approval was for 14 antennas versus 12. Mr. Martin replied in the affirmative.

Doug Munson, Representing Clearwire, noted he was available for questions.

ACTION:

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

CURRENT BUSINESS:

1. Additional discussion on SANDAG Smart Growth Design Guidelines.

Jay Petrek, Principal Planner, referenced some examples in the SANDAG Smart Growth Design Guidelines that had previously been provided to the commissioners and requested input.

Commissioner McQuead asked if the subject document discussed increasing the size of pedestrian sidewalks. Mr. Petrek replied in the affirmative.

Commissioner Weber referenced Page 65 of the guidelines (sidewalk zones), noting his view that urban sidewalks needed to be increased in size. He felt the sidewalk designs and building design needed to be linked with the traffic flow.

Chairman Caster noted concern with the mixed use commercial units in some parts of the town being vacant and others being occupied, noting his view that the reason why needed to be determined.

Commissioner Lehman and Mr. Petrek discussed the Smart Growth concept with regard to preserving open space.

Commissioner Weber felt urban corner locations with traffic signals needed to be protected for commercial use and potential national retailers. These locations are under utilized and not suitable for ground-floor residential.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – None.

PLANNING COMMISSIONERS – No discussion.

ADJOURNMENT:

Chairman Caster adjourned the meeting at 7:52 p.m. The next meeting was scheduled for January 12, 2010 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