

**TOWN OF YUCCA VALLEY
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**

MARCH 17, 2009

Chair McKoy called the regular meeting of the Yucca Valley Planning Commission to order at 7:00 p.m.

Commissioners present: Chair Dennis McKoy, Commissioners Shannon Goodpaster, Robert Lombardo, Dawn Rowe and Margo Sturges

Chairman McKoy led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Mr. Goodpaster moved to approve the Agenda, which motion was seconded by Ms. Sturges and passed unanimously by voice vote.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. SITE PLAN REVIEW SPR 05-08 – GATEWAY PROFESSIONAL CENTER

A request to construct a 9,660 square foot, 2 story office building and future building pad with landscaping, parking and associated improvements on three parcels totaling 33,200 square feet. The proposed project is located 425' west of Geronimo Trail, between 29 Palms Highway and Santa Fe Trail and is identified as Assessors Parcel Numbers 586-122-07, 08 and 23.

With reference to the complete printed staff report provided in the meeting packets and preserved in the project and meeting files, Associate Planner Robert Kirschmann presented the project discussion to the meeting. Phase one is a 9,660 square foot, two story office building with landscaping, parking and associated improvement. The first story is proposed to be medical uses, the second story is proposed to be office/commercial. Phase two includes development of the vacant pad and any necessary parking adjustments. The dirt pad is required to be treated to prevent erosion and cordoned off to prevent it being used for parking. The project is located on three parcels totaling 33,200 square feet. The project is designated Old Town Mixed Use and Old Town Commercial/Residential.

There are 41 parking stalls on the rear 2 lots, 4 on the front parcel 2 of which are handicapped slots, and there are 2 off-site stalls on SR62 and 4 on Santa Fe Trail. This is a total of 51 stalls which exceeds the standard by 8 stalls. This would allow a 2,000 sf building on the rear pad. According to the Old Town Specific Plan street parking within 100 feet of the project can also be counted but has not yet been included. A majority of the parking is located across the alley from the main building. The alley will be improved to Town standards and an enhanced walkway for pedestrian safety will be provided

across the alley and through the parking area. 2 handicapped stalls are required for the project and are provided. Parking and circulation will be reevaluated when the applicant applies for approvals to construct the rear building.

The building elevations are very attractive and provide extensive relief to the buildings including balconies, clock tower elements and mixed materials. A water wall feature is proposed facing SR62. The meter panels and utility connections are proposed on the south side of the building and will be either screened from view or located inside. The project is conditioned to use at minimum a split face stone on the east elevation to provide the appearance of stucco and to be painted to match the structure. 3 areas on the east side will be recessed with fake windows applied because the Fire Department requires a fire wall.

The Old Town Specific Plan proposes the narrowing of the travel lanes on SR62 which is not possible at this time. The project has been conditioned to pay its fair-share for the narrowing but not construct. The Commission is requested to discuss and provide guidance to staff regarding this type of payment by new projects which front on SR62 in Old Town. The alternative is for the Town to pay the entire expense of the future narrowing when SR62 is rerouted through the Old Town area.

Staff requests that COA #3 be amended to read: This approval shall become null and void if the occupancy or use of the land has not taken place within two (2) years of the Town of Yucca Valley date of approval, consistent with Ordinance 91. Extensions of time may be granted *as authorized by state or local authority, and approved by the Town*. The Applicant is responsible for the initiation of an extension request.

Staff recommends approval of the project.

Mr. Goodpaster stated the Conceptual Grading Plan appears to propose three 2,500 gallon septic tanks and asked if that acceptable.

Mr. Kirschmann replied the Grading Plan was not revised with the Site Plan. The project was originally for 3 separate buildings with 3 separate septic tanks. There will probably be 2 now. The septic plans will have to be submitted to County Health for approval and perhaps to the CA Regional Water Quality Control Board. That is a standard COA.

Mr. Goodpaster requested and received confirmation that the requested discussion refers to in-lieu fees for the narrowing of SR62 for all future projects in the Old Town Specific Plan area.

Deputy Town Manager Shane Stueckle commented an assessment district is possible or the RDA may pick up the entire cost of the narrowing for existing projects.

Ms. Rowe requested and received confirmation that the parking lots will be paved as part of this project.

Ms. Sturges questioned the undergrounding of utilities. Mr. Kirschmann stated the ordinance allows for an in-lieu fee if there is less than 200 feet of frontage.

Ms. Sturges questioned the paving of the alley to a 30 foot width but only 20 feet easterly to Geronimo. Mr. Kirschmann replied the standard alley width is 20 feet. There

is an easement of 30 feet for that alley. The intent is to have the alley improved along this project to 30 feet to accommodate parking and backing of vehicles then to narrow the alley to 20 feet east to Geronimo.

Ms. Sturges questioned COA 33. Mr. Kirschmann replied the applicant has 2 options; they can either provide the drainage report or they can provide for a retention basin sized larger than what would ordinarily be required.

Ms. Sturges stated she has a concern that the proposed white color of the building may be a bit stark given its large size and prominence on SR62. Mr. Kirschmann suggested she ask the applicant during his comments.

Mr. Lombardo asked how drainage, run-off and flooding will be mitigated. Mr. Kirschmann replied the front portion of the property is located within a FEMA flood zone. Applicant engineer will have to determine what the base flood elevation will be and fill will have to be added to meet that elevation. The project area currently does pond during rain events.

Mr. McKoy asked if there would be enough parking if the second story were also used for medical offices. Mr. Kirschmann replied there would be enough if the Phase 2 building is not constructed. Additional parking would then have to be provided for the other building.

Mr. Lombardo questioned handicapped access to the second floor. Mr. Kirschmann replied elevators are required for a third floor.

Mr. McKoy opened the public hearing.

Applicant Howard Sonksen stated they are not sure what the market demand will be but they would prefer the project to be fully occupied by health care professionals. They have the capacity to increase parking in unallocated space in the rear lots. They would need 5 additional parking spaces for all medical. If they install an elevator they will lose about 250 square feet. They are not certain what will be on the rear lots and they will go through this process again when they develop the rear lots. The zoning will even allow housing back there.

He does not want to impair the project over the color of the buildings. They have used Navajo White in the past but the trend is more toward brown tints often used on Santa Fe style structures. They had to bring some color to the PC and they need to get the approvals. It will be at the entrance to the Town and will be prominent. They want a nice looking building. It probably won't be completely white and they don't want to have to come back to the PC for colors. It will probably involve 4 colors, one each for the tile, the main wall and 2 trims. He suggested that planning staff could approve the final mix of colors.

Mr. McKoy closed the public hearing and requested staff comments.

Mr. Kirschmann suggested that COA #44 be added stating: In conjunction with the building permit submittal the applicant shall provide a color scheme consistent with the Towns' adopted Commercial Design Guideline and the Old Town Specific Plan.

Ms. Sturges questioned the subject of the requested Commission discussion of the payment of in-lieu fees for the narrowing of SR62.

Mr. Stueckle replied the owners of property that fronts on the highway paid to widen SR62 and build those improvements years ago. With the adoption of the Old Town Specific Plan, at some point in the future the highway will be narrowed. The question is should development pay for the narrowing of SR62 or should that be an RDA project. The Commission will not be setting policy this evening and staff will carry the policy issue forward to the Town Council. Commission actions this evening would set the COA for this specific project. As the COA are currently written the project is not conditioned to pay any cost for the narrowing of SR62. Staff wanted to make sure the PC had the opportunity to have that discussion.

Ms. Sturges stated the Old Town area is going to be the jewel of Yucca Valley and she thinks the Town should pay for the improvements all at one time for consistency and as an incentive for developers to take interest in Old Town.

Mr. Lombardo questioned the cost of narrowing vs. the cost of widening SR62.

Mr. Stueckle replied the cost for narrowing is less expensive because there are fewer grading issues.

Mr. Lombardo stated he has a mixed view but would probably lean toward the Town paying the entire bill for it.

Mr. Goodpaster stated he does not feel the developer should have to incorporate that cost into a project. Regarding the colors, that area has a wide mix of colors already and no color will be a perfect fit. The architecture of this project is gorgeous.

Ms. Rowe agreed stating in-lieu fees will not encourage growth or development and the RDA should pay for the narrowing.

Mr. McKoy agreed that developers should not pay in-lieu fees for this. The Old Town Specific Plan is the Town's design.

Ms. Sturges asked when the rear area is going to be built. Mr. Kirschmann replied the grading, parking lots and street improvements will all be built as part of Phase 1. The rear pad will also be graded but left vacant as dirt until the use is determined. An amendment to this Site Plan Review will be required at that time.

Mr. Stueckle stated that, based upon the Commission comments this evening, there is one COA to be added regarding color and COA #3 is to be modified.

Mr. Kirschmann restated the amendment to COA #3 and the additional COA as:

COA # 3: This approval shall become null and void if the occupancy or use of the land has not taken place within two (2) years of the Town of Yucca Valley date of approval, consistent with Ordinance 91. Extensions of time may be granted as *authorized by state or local authority, and approved by the Town*. The Applicant is responsible for the initiation of an extension request.

COA #44: In conjunction with the building permit submittal the applicant shall provide a color scheme consistent to the Towns' adopted Commercial Design Guideline and the Old Town Specific Plan.

Mr. Goodpaster moved that the Planning Commission approve Site Plan Review, SPR 05-08, based on the findings in the staff report, and the amended Conditions of Approval as stated above. The motion was seconded by Mr. Lombardo and passed unanimously by voice vote.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

2. REORGANIZATION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

A. Nominate and Elect Chairman

Mr. McKoy requested nominations for Chairman.

Ms. Sturges nominated Commissioner Shannon Goodpaster to be Chairman which nomination was seconded by Mr. Lombardo. There being no other nominations, Mr. Goodpaster was elected by voice vote of 4-0-1. Mr. Goodpaster abstained.

Mr. McKoy turned the gavel over to Mr. Goodpaster.

B. Nominate and Elect Vice Chairman

Mr. Goodpaster requested nominations for Vice Chairman.

Ms. Sturges nominated Commissioner Robert Lombardo to be Vice Chairman which nomination was seconded by Mr. McKoy. There being no other nominations, Mr. Lombardo was elected by voice vote of 4-0-1. Mr. Lombardo abstained.

CONSENT AGENDA: MINUTES –

Approve as submitted the minutes of the regular Planning Commission meetings held on January 6, 2009 and March 3, 2009.

Ms. Sturges requested that the vote on the agenda item be separated as she was not a Commissioner during the January 6, 2009 meeting.

Mr. McKoy moved that the Planning Commission approve as submitted the minutes of the Regular Planning Commission Meeting held on January 6, 2009. The motion was seconded by Mr. Lombardo and passed by voice vote of 3-0-2. Ms. Rowe and Ms. Sturges abstained.

Ms. Sturges moved that the Planning Commission approve as submitted the minutes of the Regular Planning Commission Meeting held on March 3, 2009. The motion was

seconded by Mr. McKoy and passed by voice vote of 4-0-1. Mr. Lombardo abstained as he had not attended the meeting.

STAFF REPORTS AND COMMENTS:

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

Mr. Kirschmann reported on the following future agenda items:

April 7, 2009: TM 17985 – Golestani – divide 20 acres into 20 single family residential lots with paved public streets, curb, gutter, sidewalks, etc. – NE corner of Palomar and Juarez.

CUP 01-08 – Warren Vista Center (Rite Aid and Fresh & Easy) Sign Program

COMMISSIONER REPORTS AND REQUESTS:

Ms. Sturges thanked the applicant for bring the Gateway Professional Center forward.

Mr. McKoy agreed.

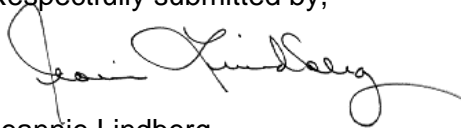
ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mr. Goodpaster announced that the next regular meeting of the Yucca Valley Planning Commission will be held on Tuesday, April 7, 2009; and a Special joint study session of the Town Council and Planning Commission will be held at 6:00 pm on Tuesday, March 24, 2009 to discuss a potential Native Plant Protection & Management Ordinance

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm

Respectfully submitted by,



Jeannie Lindberg
Administrative Assistant III