

CITY OF PALM SPRINGS  
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES  
April 14, 2010  
Council Chamber, City Hall  
3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way  
Palm Springs, CA 92262

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Chair Cohen called the meeting to order at 1:33 p.m.

**ROLL CALL:**

	<b>Present This Meeting:</b>	<b>Present to Date:</b>	<b>FY: 2009/2010 Absences:</b>
Tracy Conrad	X	11	7
Doug Donenfeld	X	18	0
Doug Hudson	X	15	1
Leslie Munger	X	12	4
Bill Scott	X	17	1
Jon Caffery, Vice Chair	X	15	3
Leo Cohen, Chair	X	16	2

**REPORT OF POSTING OF AGENDA:**

The agenda was posted for public access at the City Hall exterior bulletin board (west side of Council Chamber) and the Planning Services counter by 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 8, 2010.

**ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA:**

The agenda was accepted as presented.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS: Three (3) minutes is allowed for each speaker.**

Chair Cohen opened public comments and no appearances coming forward public comments was closed.

**1. CONSENT CALENDAR:**

Chair Cohen noted his abstention on the minutes of March 24, 2010 due to his absence.

M/S/C (Bill Scott/Doug Donenfeld, 7-0) To approve, Items 1A and 1B, as part of the Consent Calendar.

**1A. Minutes of March 24, 2010**

Approved, as part of the Consent Calendar. (Chair Cohen abstained.)

**1B. Case 3.2826 MAJ Time Extension - A request by Desert Oasis Industrial Lofts, LLC, for a one-year time extension for a previously approved project consisting of 58 service/manufacturing lofts within seven buildings located at 400 West San Rafael Road, Zone M-1, Section 34. (Project Planner: Glenn Mlaker, AICP, Assistant Planner)**

Approved, as part of the Consent Calendar.

**2. OTHER BUSINESS:**

**2A. Case 10-001 RV - A request to appeal the Planning Director's decision granting approval for a Recreational Vehicle (RV) permit located at 1520 Driftwood Drive, Zone R1C, Section 23. (Project Planner: David A. Newell, Associate Planner)**

Commissioner Munger noted her abstention on Items 2A and 2B. She stated a business related conflict of interest, would not be participating in the discussion or vote, and left the Council Chamber.

David A. Newell, Associate Planner, provided background information as outlined in the staff report dated April 14, 2010.

The Commission questioned and/or commented on the screening requirements for the R.V. and the landscaping.

Commissioner Scott suggested parking the R.V. closer to street between the two houses to decrease the neighbor's visibility.

-Marjorie Alhadeff, appellant, spoke of the impact the R.V. has had with the unsuccessful sale of her property and requested the plantings provide full coverage of the R.V.

-Stuart Smith, real estate agent, spoke of the R.V. visibility from different rooms in the house and requested notification to the neighborhood for issuance of R.V. permits.

M/S/C (Bill Scott/Tracy Conrad, 5-1/Vice Chair Caffery), 1 abstained/ Leslie Munger) To uphold the decision of the Planning Director, subject to the revised conditions:

- Landscaping to reach a height of ten feet or plant 24" box ficus along the north and east property lines.
- The applicant shall locate the RV closer to the front setback on the driveway between the subject property's house and the neighboring house to the north.

Director Ewing reported that this action is subject to appeal to the City Council within 10 working days.

### 3. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

#### 3A. **Case 3.3333 MAJ / 7.1230 AMM / TTM 36185 - A Major Architectural Application (MAJ), Administrative Minor Modification (AMM) application and Tentative Tract Map (TTM) application by Com Dyn PS, LLC for a 51-unit moderate-income town home development with off-street parking and landscaping on an approximately 3.6 acre parcel at 3130 North Indian Canyon Drive , Zone R2, Section 2 (IL). (Project Planner: Ken Lyon, Associate Planner)**

Ken Lyon, Associate Planner, provided background information as outlined in the staff report dated April 14, 2010.

Chair Cohen opened the public hearing:

The following persons spoke in favor of the project:

- Loren Bloch, president of Community Dynamics, stated that the project team thoroughly considered density during the two year development process and concluded that the density is necessary for the project. He pointed out that design presented conforms to R2 development standards. Mr. Bloch provided an overview on the site plan, elevations, landscaping, parking, courtyards, setbacks and the community outreach provided to the neighbors. Mr. Bloch requested waiving engineering condition 56 and 57 pertaining to utility undergrounding.
- Mark Dansby, Palm Springs, stated he is in favor of the proposed development because it will allow the moderately paid working people in the city to purchase these homes and will be a welcome addition to the corridor.
- John Ricci, Palm Springs, stated that he attended four neighborhood meetings and is impressed with the development team; he spoke of the changes made to the project.
- Rick Bernardin, Palm Springs, stated that this project fits the neighborhood and noted that the entire surrounding neighborhood, including the Wexler homes, were originally designed and built as low cost homes.
- Sieima Moloi, Palm Springs, emphasized the need for more affordable housing in the city and requested approval of the project because it is in compliance with the zoning requirements.

The following persons spoke in favor of the project (continued):

- Tamara Stevens, Palm Springs, stated that she met with the developer and reviewed the design and found it to be a high quality development that is appropriate for the site and sensitive to the surrounding neighbors.
- Marna Van Horn, member of Palm Springs Economic Development Corporation, stated that PSEDC met with developer and they have been responsive to the feedback from the City; she spoke of the changes made to the project.
- Loren Bloch, applicant rebuttal, addressed the density, marketability of the homes, story poles, access to the enclosed rear yards, carports and the proposed solar systems.

The following persons spoke in opposition to the project:

- Ginger Pigott, Palm Springs, spoke against the categorical exemption and requested denial of the project.
- Brian McGuire, Palm Springs, expressed concern with the density, parking, privacy issues, setbacks and traffic.
- Thomas Carnase, Palm Springs, spoke against the density, limited privacy for residents, lack of storage and the parking.
- Christopher Daily, Palm Springs, spoke in favor of historic preservation and restoration of the Wexler homes.
- Clare Victor, Palm Springs, commented that this could be another unfinished project and emphasized that the project is not suitable for this site.
- James Pigott, Palm Springs, stated his opposition to the project due to the density, parking, lack of environmental report and utility undergrounding.
- Scott Kennedy, Palm Springs, expressed concern with the lack of undergrounding the utilities and the probability of another partial built development in the city.
- Gary Johns, Palm Springs, spoke against the project due to the detached carports and limited closet space; he requested a restudy.
- Gary Wexler, Palm Springs, noted that when the Wexler homes were designed in 1962 the goal was to make affordable low-income housing; he requested careful review of the AAC's recommendations.

There being no further appearances the public hearing was closed.

A recess was taken at 3:08 p.m.

The meeting resumed at 3:15 p.m.

- David Senden, KTG Group Architects, addressed the screening of the mechanical rooftop equipment.
- Ron Gregory, project landscape architect, addressed the landscaping and water conservation.

M/S/C (Tracy Conrad/Doug Donenfeld, 3-3/Chair Cohen/ Bill Scott/ Vice Chair Caffery), 1 abstained/ Leslie Munger) To deny the project. MOTION FAILED.

Commissioner Caffery noted opposition to the motion of denial because it is a right-of-way and it will add to the mandated housing requirements for the city.

M/S/C (Vice Chair Caffery/Bill Scott, 2-4/Chair Cohen/ Tracy Conrad/ Doug Donenfeld/ Doug Hudson), 1 abstained/ Leslie Munger) That the Planning Commission approve Case 3.3333 MAJ, 7.1230 AMM, subject to the Conditions of Approval; and recommend approval of Tentative Tract Map 36185 to the City Council, as amended:

-Engineering Conditions #56 and #57 pertaining to utility underground to be deferred to covenant. MOTION FAILED. Project is denied.

Director Ewing reported the project is subject to appeal to the City Council within 10 days.

Commissioner Munger returned to the dais at 3:38 p.m.

#### **PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENTS:**

Commissioner Munger suggested people seeking to provide public comment be required to fill out a request to speak card in order to expedite the process.

Chair Cohen reported he received several calls on the bright lights at Tahquitz Canyon and Sunrise development and requested staff follow up.

Commissioner Conrad requested what the review process is for the audio boxes for pedestrian crossing at traffic signals.

#### **PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

Director Ewing provided an update on planning related items scheduled for the City Council meeting.

Discussion occurred on the direction given by Council on the non-permitted canopies and carport structures.

Commissioner Caffery expressed concern regarding a letter submitted with respect to comments made by the AAC.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further comments the Planning Commission adjourned at 3:49 p.m. to a regular meeting on Wednesday April 28, 2010, City Hall, Council Chamber, 3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way.

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Craig A. Ewing, AICP  
Director of Planning Services

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