

CITY OF PALM SPRINGS
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
December 14, 2011
Council Chamber, City Hall
3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way
Palm Springs, CA 92262

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Donenfeld called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

	Present This Meeting:	Present to Date:	FY: 2011/2012 Absences:
Tracy Conrad*	X	10	1
Philip Klatchko	X	7	4
Leslie Munger	X	9	2
J.R. Roberts	X	11	0
Doug Hudson, Vice Chair	X	8	3
Doug Donenfeld, Chair	X	11	0

*Commissioner Conrad arrived at 1:35 p.m.

REPORT OF POSTING OF AGENDA:

The agenda was available for public access at the City Hall exterior bulletin board (west side of Council Chamber) and the Planning Services counter by 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, December 6, 2011.

ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA:

The agenda was accepted, as presented.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Chair Donenfeld opened public comments:

- Darron Dahle, (spoke in reference to Item 2B and 2C), provided background information on the hotel management group.
- Mark Davis, (read a letter from John Gilmer in reference to Item 2B), in support of the vivid accent colors for the hotel repaint.

- Jack Caussiu, (read a letter from Sidney Williams in reference to Item 2B) commented that the bold colors will invigorate the hotel and attract a younger demographic.
- Brian Helder, local photographer, in reference to Item 2B, spoke in support of the vibrant colors and cutting edge architecture.
- Chris Menrad, (read a letter from Joseph Rosa) in support of the modern esthetics and bright accent colors.
- Jonathan DeWitt, business owner, spoke in favor of the courtyard and urged approval of the bold architecture.
- Michael Chandler, encouraged approval of the architecture and bold colors.
- Angela Valente Romeo, commented that this city is known for its vitality, life and architecture.
- William Stiles, urged approval of the vibrant colors for the hotel repaint.
- Rodolfo Castillo, urged approval of the bold colors for the proposed project.

There being no further appearances public comments was closed.

1. CONSENT CALENDAR:

1A. Minutes of November 22, 2011.

Approved, as part of the Consent Calendar. (Noting Commissioner Hudson's abstention.)

1B. Case 5.1108-PD 326 - A request for a one-year time extension by Wessman Development for a previously approved PDD 326 for the development of a 66-unit clustered town-home complex located at 1501 - 1601 South Belardo Road, Zone PD 326, Section 22. (Project Planner: Edward O. Robertson, Principal Planner)

Approved, as part of the Consent Calendar.

1C. Case 3.3108-MAJ - A request for a one-year time extension by Indian Oasis Self Storage, LP, for the previously approved construction of a 645-unit self storage facility located at 900 San Luis Rey Drive, Zone M-1, Section 20. (Project Planner: Edward O. Robertson, Principal Planner)

Approved, as part of the Consent Calendar.

ACTION: To approved, Items 1A, 1B and 1C, as recommended.

Motion J.R. Roberts, seconded by Leslie Munger and unanimously carried on a roll call vote.

AYES: Leslie Munger, Tracy Conrad, Philip Klatchko, J.R. Roberts, Chair Donenfeld, Vice Chair Hudson

2. OTHER BUSINESS:

2A. SP 11-011 Sign Program / Historic Site 1 - A request to amend a sign program for the Stergio's Building located at the Desert Regional Medical Center at 1150 North Indian Canyon Drive, Zone PD-185, Section 11. (Project Planner: David A. Newell, Associate Planner)

David Newell, Associate Planner, provided background information as outlined in the staff report dated December 14, 2011.

-John Cross, representing Best Signs, addressed Commissioner Conrad's concerns relating to modifications to the identification signs.

-Dale Barnhart, director of facilities, Desert Regional Medical Center, responded to Commission concerns regarding the Joslin logo and the additional identification signage on the building.

Commissioners Munger, Roberts and Vice Chair Hudson expressed concern with the the "unbalanced" look of the identification signs on the building.

ACTION: To approve the amendment to the Sign Program and recommend approval to City Council, as amended:

- Stucco finish on monument directory signs shall match the existing building stucco;
- Eliminate cap on monument signs;
- Remove the Joslin logo from sign program;
- Joslin sign font to be consistent with other font used in program;
- Complex identification sign proposed on northerly trellis to be modified to exclude rectangle frame around "S"-shaped element on both ends of sign and to be heavier gauge;
- Desert Health Care District and Desert Health Care Foundation wall signs on west elevation to be relocated and centered below Stergios Building identification sign on west elevation;
- Relocate descriptive historic plaque to east side of entry at same height as existing;

Motion Tracy Conrad, seconded by Leslie Munger and carried 4-2 on a roll call vote.

AYES: Leslie Munger, Tracy Conrad, Philip Klatchko, Chair Donenfeld

NOES: J.R. Roberts, Vice Chair Hudson

2B. Case 3.2954 MAA APPEAL - An appeal by Lance O'Donnell of O2 Architecture, representing the Saguaro Hotel Group, of the Director's decision to deny a request to repaint a hotel building located at 1800 East Palm Canyon Drive, Zone R-3, Section 24. (Project Planner: Glenn Mlaker, AICP, Assistant Planner)

Commissioner Conrad noted a property-related conflict of interest on Item 2B and 2C and would not be participating in the discussion and vote. She left the Council Chamber at 2:24 p.m.

Glenn Mlaker, Associate Planner, provided background information as outlined in the staff report dated December 14, 2011.

Commissioners Munger, Roberts, Vice Chair Hudson and Chair Donenfeld disclosed that they toured the project site.

-Jeremy Selman, representing Fidel Real Estate Group, spoke about the company's goals and dedication in creating a unique hospitality experience.

-Peter Stamberg, applicant, provided an overview on color theory and the relationship to architecture. Mr. Stamberg noted that the proposed colors reference the wildflowers of the desert.

Commissioner Roberts noted appreciation for the changes that have been made to the project and requested clarification on preservation of the bright colors.

Commissioner Klatchko referenced the brightly colored "Horton Plaza" in downtown San Diego that ultimately attracted many people and brought lots of attention to the mall. He spoke in favor of the proposed colors.

Vice Chair Hudson commended the design team for their use of color and commented that the bold colors would bring a higher level of vibrancy to the City.

Commissioner Munger commented that the use of color has an "uplifting" effect.

ACTION: To approve the proposed colors, as submitted.

Motion Chair Donenfeld, seconded by Leslie Munger and carried on a roll call vote.

AYES: Leslie Munger, Philip Klatchko, J.R. Roberts, Chair Donenfeld, Vice Chair Hudson

RECUSE: Tracy Conrad

2C. Case 11-099 SI - A request by Best Signs Inc., representing the Saguaro Hotel Group for a sign permit located at 1800 East Palm Canyon Drive, Zone R-3, Section 24. (Project Planner: Glenn Mlaker, AICP, Assistant Planner)

Glenn Mlaker, Assistant Planner, provided background information as outlined in the staff report dated December 14, 2011.

-Jim Cross, representing Best Signs, was available for questions from the Commission pertaining to the structural elements of the sign.

-Peter Stramberg, applicant, provided an overview on the size and type of material for the proposed sign.

ACTION: To approve, subject to Conditions of Approval, as amended:

-Per the Architectural Advisory Committee's recommendations.

-To allow flexibility regarding the final sign support pole size to provide proper structural stability.

Motion J.R. Roberts, seconded by Vice Chair Hudson and carried on a roll call vote.

AYES: Leslie Munger, Philip Klatchko, J.R. Roberts, Chair Donenfeld, Vice Chair Hudson

RECUSE: Tracy Conrad

3. PUBLIC HEARING:

Commissioner Conrad re-entered the Council Chamber at 2:56 p.m.

3A. Case 5.1160 AMND PDD 341 / TPM 35989 AMND - A request by Nexus / O & M LLC, for a previously approved Planned Development District known as "Convention Center Commons" for an amendment to a Tentative Tract Map to Change the Zone from R-E-O (Retail-Entertainment-Office) to R-A (Resort-Attraction) and revise the Development Standards located at the northwest corner of Tahquitz Canyon Way and Hermosa Drive, Section 14. (Project Planner: Ken Lyon, Associate Planner)

Ken Lyon, Associate Planner, provided background information as outlined in the staff report dated December 14, 2011.

Chair Donenfeld opened the public hearing:

-Rob Eres, (applicant), Nexus Development, provided an overview on the project and amenities for the luxurious resort-style senior living facility.

There being no further appearances the Public Hearing was closed.

Vice Chair Hudson preferred to see more public benefit than that of the project itself and commented that the building architecture does not take advantage of the site.

Chair Donenfeld spoke in opposition of the location for this type of facility; noting the importance of Tahquitz Canyon Way as the gateway to the City.

Commissioner Klatchko pointed-out the nearby Rite Aid store and surrounding residential use and concluded that this project may work next to a hotel on the vacant site. He commented that he is not impressed with the overall appearance of the proposed architecture.

Commissioner Roberts expressed a preference to have this project moved towards the eastern portion of the vacant site and concluded that this is not the ideal location for this type of facility.

Commissioner Munger reiterated the importance of providing viability for the Convention Center area and felt that the use would deter tourists to the area.

Commissioner Conrad appreciated the decrease in density and expressed no concern with this type of use on Tahquitz Canyon Way.

ACTION: To deny, the proposed amendment.

Motion J.R. Roberts, seconded by Leslie Munger and carried 4-2 on a roll call vote.

AYES: Leslie Munger, J.R. Roberts, Chair Donenfeld, Vice Chair Hudson

NOES: Tracy Conrad, Philip Klatchko

Director Ewing reported that this Planning Commission decision would require an appeal by the applicant to move forward to the City Council.

PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENTS:

Commissioner Roberts expressed concern with the level of lighting emitting from the interior of the 7-Eleven building on Vista Chino Way and with the “red” overspray paint on the palm trees.

Vice Chair Hudson requested staff follow up on two items at the Morrison Development:

1. The lighting glare emitting from the installed landscape fixtures.
2. The exposed rooftop down spouts.

Commissioner Munger commended the Architectural Advisory Committee on their good work.

PLANNING DIRECTORS REPORT:

Director Ewing reported that the City Council would be meeting tonight and the next Architectural Advisory Committee would be held on Tuesday, December 27, 2011.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further comments the Planning Commission adjourned at 3:47 p.m. to Wednesday, January 11, 2012 City Hall, Council Chamber, 3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way.

Craig A. Ewing, AICP
Director of Planning Services

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