

CITY OF PALM SPRINGS
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
September 24, 2014
Council Chamber, City Hall
3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way
Palm Springs, CA 92262

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Hudson called the meeting to order 1:30 pm.

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: Commissioner Calerdine, Commissioner Lowe, Commissioner Middleton, Commissioner Roberts, Commissioner Weremiuk and Chair Hudson

ABSENT: Vice-Chair Klatchko

ALSO PRESENT: Planning Director Fagg, AICP, Principal Planner Robertson, Associate Planner Newell, Planning Administrative Coordinator Hintz and Assistant Director of Engineering Khamphou

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 4:00 pm on Thursday, September 18, 2014.

ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA:

Commissioners Calerdine and Roberts noted their abstention on the minutes September 10, 2014.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Chair Hudson opened the public comments and with no appearances coming forward public comments was closed.

1. CONSENT CALENDAR:

1A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: AUGUST 27, 2014 AND SEPTEMBER 10, 2014

ACTION: Approve the Planning Commission Minutes of August 27, 2014 and September 10, 2014 (as amended).

Motion: Commissioner Weremiuk, seconded by Commissioner Roberts and unanimously carried 6-0-1 on a roll call vote.

AYES: Commissioner Calerdine, Commissioner Lowe, Commissioner Middleton, Commissioner Roberts, Commissioner Weremiuk, Chair Hudson

ABSENT: Vice-Chair Klatchko

2. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

2A. PALM SPRINGS, LLC, FOR A FINAL PDD PLANS APPROVAL FOR PLANNED DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT 324 TO CONSTRUCT A MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT CONSISTING OF A 150-ROOM HOTEL WITH RETAIL AND PARKING STRUCTURE LOCATED AT 400 NORTH PALM CANYON DRIVE, ZONE PD324 (CASE NO. 5.1091 PD 324). (ER)

Principal Planner Robertson reviewed the Final PDD plans as outlined in the staff report and presented the modifications that were made to the project.

Commissioner Calerdine stated that although he missed the last meeting when this project was presented he reviewed the DVD and minutes pertaining to this project.

Commissioner Roberts stated that he was not able to review the project and requested a summary of the Commission's concerns discussed at the previous meeting.

Chair Hudson stated the Commission's concerns at the last meeting:

- Pedestrian access from the parking structure to the adjacent streets - sidewalk connections have been incorporated.
- Additional exhibits to the south elevation - some exhibits have been provided.
- The grade change between the automobile drop-off at the hotel and pedestrian connection to Indian Canyon (5 ft. drop) - applicant has included a stair element and a ramp.
- A request for a more detailed look at the building and type of materials - not much detail has been provided.
- Additional 3D images of the project - close up and from a distance - not enough has been provided.

Chair Hudson invited the applicant to come forward and present the project:

LAWRENCE RAEL, applicant, stated that they are in substantial compliance with the original approval and addressed the modifications made to the project.

JOSEPH SMART, SMS Architects, provided a presentation of the south side elevation, 3D setbacks, ground-level hotel experience including the vehicle arrival, courtyard, landscaping, walkways, building materials and railings, decorative screen panels and shading study for the building.

Chair Hudson opened the public comments and with no appearances coming forward he closed public comments.

Commissioner Roberts provided the following comments:

- Project has areas that are very successful especially on Alejo Road.
- Further revise the upper stories of the building to reduce the massing and there are areas that are exposed.
- The upper floor looks heavy and minimal.

Commissioner Middleton provided the following comments:

- There are many things that are great about this project.
- Landscaping is good but lined-up palm trees do not provide shade.
- Concern about parallel or angled parking on Indian Canyon.
- First floor is very attractive; however, additional colors on the upper floor may be a solution for this.

Commissioner Weremiuk provided the following comments:

- The angled parking be eliminated and add additional landscaping to enhance Indian Canyon.
- The building is too stark and does not have enough variation on the exterior materials.
- The building is too close to the street and looks heavy.

Commissioner Calerdine stated that he is satisfied with the site layout but does not like the colors and materials.

ACTION: To continue to a date uncertain to allow the applicant to come back with the following revisions to the project:

- The applicant to make some changes - especially from the 2nd floor up, perhaps stepping it back or least some material options for texture.

- Provide better shading along the Indian Canyon and Alejo Road frontages.
- Screening of the parking areas (along the Indian Canyon and Alejo Road) frontages needs to be improved.
- Provide better articulation especially of the guest rooms.
- Revise the upper stories of the building to reduce the massing and incorporate more sculptural elements.
- Remove the angled parking and replace with additional landscaping on Indian Canyon.

Motion: Commissioner Roberts, seconded by Commissioner Weremiuk and unanimously carried 6-0-1 on a roll call vote.

AYES: Commissioner Calerdine, Commissioner Lowe, Commissioner Middleton, Commissioner Roberts, Commissioner Weremiuk and Chair Hudson

ABSENT: Vice-Chair Klatchko

3. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

3A. CONT'D - BARISTO GROUP, LLC FOR A ZONE CHANGE FROM R-3 TO R-2 AND AN AMENDMENT TO A PREVIOUSLY APPROVED PLANNED DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT (PD-288) FOR THE THIRD AND FINAL PHASE OF THE PD INCLUDING NEW ARCHITECTURE AND SITE CHANGES FOR THE 11 REMAINING UNITS ON THE VACANT LAND LOCATED ON THE EAST SIDE OF LUGO ROAD, BETWEEN ARENAS ROAD AND BARISTO ROAD (CASE 5.0977- PD288 AMND, ZC AND TTM 36626). (DN)

ACTION: To table and remove from agenda.

Motion: Commissioner Weremiuk, seconded by Commissioner Lowe and unanimously carried 6-0-1 on a roll call vote.

AYES: Commissioner Calerdine, Commissioner Lowe, Commissioner Middleton, Commissioner Roberts, Commissioner Weremiuk, Chair Hudson

ABSENT: Vice-Chair Klatchko

3B. CONT'D - DOUGLAS C. JONES FOR A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT AND VARIANCE TO CONSTRUCT TWO WIRELESS TELECOMMUNICATION FACILITIES CONSISTING OF SIXTY-SIX FOOT TALL MONOPOLES, EXCEEDING THE MAXIMUM PERMITTED ZONING HEIGHT, DESIGNED AS PALM TREES AT A VACANT PARCEL OF LAND LOCATED ON THE WEST SIDE OF GOLDEN SANDS MOBILE HOME PARK AT 3430 NORTH SUNRISE WAY, ZONE O (CASE NOS. 5.1321 CUP AND 6.533 VAR). (DN)

Associate Planner Newell presented the proposed project as outlined in the staff report.

Commissioner Roberts questioned the possibility of having an analysis by an independent engineer on the cell tower antenna applications. Planning Director Fagg responded that the department does not have the budget to bring in independent analysis.

Commissioner Middleton said it is not acceptable to provide notice only to the owners of the adjacent mobile home park but the tenants need to be notified as well.

Chair Hudson opened the public hearing:

NORM MACLEOD, representing CIG Wireless, spoke about the need for coverage in this area.

JIM RUSH, general manager, Four Seasons, stated that the board has reviewed the proposed project and they are in favor of increasing the height of the tower to over 50 feet; the area to the west that lacks coverage.

DOUG JONES, applicant, commented that he assisted in obtaining the signatures and walked the trailer park and they were not interested in signing the petition.

ROSA MARIE KEYES, resides at Four Seasons, commented on the lack of cellular coverage at their home and recently had to add a landline.

RUTH SIGORIE, resident at FOUR SEASONS, suggested the Commission take into consideration a higher tower to avoid them coming back for more height.

JULIO FIGUEROA, director, external affairs, provided information on updating AT & T's network.

MIKE HAYES, commented on palm tree versus poles and was available for further discussion.

NORM MACLEOD, spoke on their intent to bring service to the community.

There being no further appearances the public hearing was closed.

Commissioner Weremiuk asked for clarification on the height required to allow for co-location (without the palm fronds). The applicant responded that the height of 57 feet pole would be necessary.

Commissioner Middleton clarified her statement about notifying the tenants of the adjacent mobile home park.

Associate Planner Newell clarified that a sign was posted on the site several months ago to provide notification of the proposed cell tower.

ACTION: Approve the 57 foot antenna height, and recommend City Council approve Conditional Use Permit, subject to Condition of Approval, as amended:

- The Planning Director to approve the precise location of the antennas to be located as far as possible from the adjacent recreation building.

Motion: Commissioner Calderine, seconded by Commissioner Lowe and unanimously carried 6-0-1 on a roll call vote.

AYES: Commissioner Calderine, Commissioner Lowe, Commissioner Middleton, Commissioner Roberts, Commissioner Weremiuk, Chair Hudson
ABSENT: Vice-Chair Klatchko

A break was taken at 3:19 pm. The meeting resumed at 3:29 pm.

3C. CAROLYN FELDSINE, OWNER, REQUESTING A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO CONSTRUCT AN 803-SQUARE FOOT CASITA WITH KITCHEN FACILITIES THAT IS GREATER THAN 1/50TH OF THE LOT SIZE LOCATED AT 1150 VIA MONTE VISTA, ZONE R-1-A, SECTION 10. (CASE NO. 5.1349 CUP) (GM)

Associate Planner Mlaker presented the proposed project as outlined in the staff report.

Chair Hudson disclosed he lives just outside the 500 foot radius of this property.

Commissioner Weremiuk requested a smart water controller be installed.

Chair Hudson opened the public hearing and with no appearances coming forward the public hearing was closed.

ACTION: Approve, as amended:

- The applicant shall install a Smart Water Controller.

Motion: Commissioner Weremiuk, seconded by Commissioner Middleton and unanimously carried 6-0-1 on a roll call vote.

AYES: Commissioner Calderine, Commissioner Lowe, Commissioner Middleton, Commissioner Roberts, Commissioner Weremiuk, Chair Hudson
ABSENT: Vice-Chair Klatchko

4. NEW BUSINESS:

4A. PALM SPRINGS FREEWAY DEVELOPMENT, FOR A ONE-YEAR TIME EXTENSION FOR A PREVIOUSLY APPROVED CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO DEVELOP A 65-ROOM HOTEL, TWO DRIVE-THRU RESTAURANTS, PRKING AND SIGNAGE AT 610 WEST GARNET AVENUE, ZONE M-1-P, SECTION 15 (CASE NO. 5.0856 CUP). (GM)

Associate Planner Mlaker presented the proposed project as outlined in the staff report.

JACK VANDER WOUDE, applicant, spoke about the current water moratorium and a new opportunity to install on-site advanced treatment system; he requested one more time extension to move forward.

Commissioner Weremiuk commented that because of the urgencies the applicant is facing to move forward she is in favor of the one-year time extension.

Commissioner Calerdine commented that he would like to see the hotel move forward, as well.

ACTION: Approve as submitted.

Motion: Commissioner Lowe, seconded by Commissioner Weremiuk and unanimously carried 6-0-1 on a roll call vote.

AYES: Commissioner Calerdine, Commissioner Lowe, Commissioner Middleton, Commissioner Roberts, Commissioner Weremiuk, Chair Hudson

ABSENT: Vice-Chair Klatchko

PLANNING COMMISSION REPORTS, REQUESTS AND COMMENTS

Commissioner Roberts suggested incorporating a technical analysis on the cell tower applications from an independent engineer. Staff will follow-up.

Commissioner Weremiuk commented that she not be in attendance for next meeting and possibly the next one too.

Commissioner Weremiuk suggested meeting again on an informal basis prior to the Planning Commission meetings at 12:30 pm.

PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

No comments were made.

ADJOURNMENT:

The Planning Commission adjourned at 3:53 pm to Wednesday, October 8, 2014, at 1:30 pm, City Hall, Council Chamber, 3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way.

Flinn Fagg, AICP
Director of Planning Services

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