

PLANNING COMMISSION
ARCHITECTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
CITY OF PALM SPRINGS
JOINT MEETING MINUTES
August 10, 2015
Council Chamber, City Hall
3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way
Palm Springs, CA 92262

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Klatchko called the meeting to order 1:00 pm.

ROLL CALL:

Present This Meeting:

Planning Commission -

Philip Klatchko, Douglas Donenfeld, Randy Lowe,
Lisa Middleton and Kathy Weremiuk

Architectural Advisory Committee -

Gary Fredricks, Kenny Cassady, William Fauber,
Michael Hirschbein, Randy Purnel, Susan Secoy-
Jensen, Maria Song and Sean Lockyer

Excused This Meeting:

Lyn Calerdine and J.R. Roberts

Staff Present:

Flinn Fagg

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 pm on Thursday, July 30, 2015.

1. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

2. **DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

A. Water Conservation & Turf Replacement

Katie Ruark, Desert Water Agency, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the agency's Turf Buy Back program.

The Commission and Committee Members had the following general questions after the presentation:

- The types of permeable materials that are allowed in landscape areas as part of the rebate program;
- The requirements relative to the use of artificial turf;
- Method of calculating the 50% plant coverage and difference with the City's policy on coverage;
- Whether trees are encouraged as part of the turf replacement program;
- Whether backyard turf would be included as part of the replacement program;
- The overhead/operating expenses for the program;
- Whether design fees could be reimbursed as part of the rebate program; and
- How the City coordinates with DWA in the implementation process.

Flinn Fagg, Director of Planning Services, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the zoning requirements relative to turf removal and the City's water efficient landscaping ordinance.

The Commission and Committee Members had the following discussion pertaining to the City's ordinances and processes:

- Member Secoy-Jensen noted issues with the quality of submitted landscape plans. She recommended that a checklist be developed to assist applicants in preparing submittal packages.
- Chair Fredricks stated that the cost of hiring a professional to prepare landscape plans could be covered under the rebate programs. He noted that two of the problems with submitted plans are the legibility of the plan documents and lack of information regarding plant sizes. He recommended that professionals be involved in the preparation of landscape plans.
- Member Song questioned the definition of "qualified landscape professional". She stated that the two primary issues with landscape applications are the quality of the landscape design and the thoroughness of information provided as part of the submittal package. Member Song supported the preparation of a checklist for applicants to use as part of the submittal process, and that landscape plans should represent the plants at full maturity.
- Member Purnell stated that landscape maintenance companies tend to have the most problems in putting together a complete application package, and that he would like to see a higher level of design in the landscape submittals. He discussed the need for City staff with training in landscape architecture or the use of a consultant in assisting with landscape reviews. He also stated that landscape design should be held to the same level as architectural design.

- Commissioner Weremiuk questioned if HOA's should be required to hire a design professional to prepare landscape plans, and suggested that a subcommittee of landscape professionals be tasked with reviewing landscape plans prior to AAC review.
- Commissioner Donenfeld agreed that the City needs staff members with landscape expertise in reviewing and assisting applicants with plans. He opposed the suggestion that a landscape architect be required for the preparation of landscape plans based on costs, and proposed that a higher standard should be required for larger properties where the costs could be better dispersed.
- Commissioner Middleton suggested that education is an important component of the process, and that seminars be developed to assist applicants in preparing submittals.
- Vice Chair Cassady suggested that a threshold for landscape review should be the size of the project and/or budget, and properties with high visibility.
- Commissioner Weremiuk summarized the discussion as follows:
 - A new threshold should be developed by which landscape plans are required to be reviewed by AAC, based upon frontage on primary thoroughfares and size of the area to be rehabilitated; and
 - Staff should develop a checklist to assist applicants in the submittal process.

Following the presentations and discussion, the study session was adjourned at 2:40 p.m.

B. Architectural Review Process: (*The Item was deferred to a future study session.*)

3. ADJOURNMENT: The Planning Commission adjourned to Wednesday, August 12, 2015, at 1:30 pm, Council Chamber, City Hall, 3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way, Palm Springs.

ADJOURNMENT: The Architectural Advisory Committee adjourned to Monday, August 10, 2015, at 3:00 pm, Council Chamber, City Hall, 3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way, Palm Springs.

Flinn Fagg, AICP
Director of Planning Services