



CITY OF PALM SPRINGS
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING SERVICES

MEMORANDUM

Date: November 12, 2015
To: Planning Commission
From: Department of Planning Services *JRF*
Subject: Agenda Item 3A – Downtown Landscape / Hardscape Plans
Case Nos. 5.1290 PD-361, 3.3605 MAJ, 3.3606 MAJ, 3.3607 MAJ, 3.3785
MAJ and 3.3908 MAJ.

At a joint special meeting of the Planning Commission and Architectural Advisory Committee (AAC) on October 28, 2015, a presentation was given on the proposed landscape, hardscape and lighting concepts for the downtown Museum Market Plaza Specific Plan. After questions, both bodies continued the item to their next regularly scheduled meeting to allow additional study of the plans and exhibits. Should the Planning Commission have further questions on the proposal, the landscape architect will be available at the Commission's meeting.

The AAC will review the proposal on November 9, 2015, and staff will present their recommendation to the Planning Commission at the meeting. Staff recommends that the Planning Commission determine (1) the plans are consistent with the Design Guidelines of the Museum Market Plaza (Downtown) Specific Plan, and (2) the conditions related to landscape, hardscape and lighting have been fulfilled for previously approved development applications. Based on discussion at the joint meeting, the following changes should be considered:

1. Evaluate if alternative species is appropriate for Italian Cypress trees.
2. Landscape treatment and street lights along Palm Canyon Drive and Tahquitz Canyon Way to remain consistent with the existing corridors.
3. Adequate seating shall be provided throughout pedestrian public spaces.

Attachments:

1. Draft October 28, 2015 AAC/PC Joint Meeting Minutes (excerpt)
2. October 28, 2015 AAC/PC Joint Meeting Staff Report (without attachments)

JOINT SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
PLANNING COMMISSION
ARCHITECTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
CITY OF PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
OCTOBER 28, 2015

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Klatchko called the meeting to order at 12:07 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Architectural Advisory Committee: Gary Fredricks, William Fauber, Michael Hirschbein, Randy Purnel, Susan Secoy-Jensen and Sean Lockyer*

Excused: Kenny Cassady and Maria Song

Planning Commission: Philip Klatchko, JR Roberts, Lyn Calerdine, Doug Dorenfeld, Randy Lowe, Lisa Middleton and Kathy Weremiuk

*Arrived at 12:25 pm.

Chair Klatchko requested a 10-minute recess so that the Planning Commission and Architectural Advisory Committee and members of the public could inspect the 3-D massing model of the Museum Market Plaza Specific Plan area, which was on display in Council Chambers.

Chair Klatchko reconvened the meeting at 12:20 pm.

REPORT OF POSTING OF AGENDA: The agenda was posted by 12:00 pm, Thursday, October 22, 2015.

1. PUBLIC COMMENT:

JOHN MARKSBURY, commented that the rights-of-way of Main Street and Andreas Road are too narrow; and that Main Street should be for pedestrians only.

JOY BROWN MEREDITH, stated that more details about the project needs to be provided to the public, discussed the approval process for the development, and stated that the design was too high and too dense and was not what the public was expecting.

ROBERT BRUGMAN, commented that there was a palpable excitement about downtown with the construction of the project, and supports the modern architecture of the buildings.

FRANK TYSEN, stated that he supports new hotels near the Convention Center, but not downtown. The design as is under construction is not going to encourage people to walk around downtown, and the development will destroy the Palm Springs brand.

DAVID ZIPPLE, voiced his concerns that the building heights wouldn't have been approved if a model had been provided earlier in the process; he also stated that the project is too urban and too industrial, and that Planning Commission should restrict height.

EMILY HEMPHILL, stated that we are not here to revisit the Specific Plan, we're here to review clear depictions in the original Specific Plan of height and density, and that there has not been any deception in terms of the overall development plan.

BRIAN BARGER, commented that no one thought the development was going to be as dense as it is.

MICHAEL JOHNSTON, stated that the densities were going to be more than anticipated and that the parking requirements are insufficient.

Chair Klatchko closed public comments.

2. DISCUSSION ITEM:

2A PALM SPRINGS PROMENADE, LLC FOR REVIEW OF THE DOWNTOWN PALM SPRINGS RENOVATION PROJECT LANDSCAPE, HARDSCAPE AND LIGHTING, AS REQUIRED BY PROJECT CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL, GENERALLY LOCATED NORTHWEST TAHQUITZ CANYON WAY AND PALM CANYON DRIVE, CASE NOS. 5.1290 PD-361, 3.3605 MAJ, 3.3606 MAJ, 3.3607 MAJ, 3.3785 MAJ AND 3.3908 MAJ.

Director Fagg provided background on the development of the hardscape/landscape plan and the efforts of the joint City Council/Planning Commission subcommittee in reviewing the plan.

Vice-Chair Roberts outlined the recommendations of the joint City Council/Planning Commission subcommittee. Commissioner Weremiuk also commented on the efforts of the subcommittee.

Associate Planner Newell provided a staff report on the proposed plan, and noted its conformance with the Museum Market Plaza Specific Plan. He also noted that the plan required the approval of the Planning Commission to satisfy conditions of approval of the various buildings that had been approved to date.

TOM DOCZI, TKD Associates, provided an overview of the project on behalf of the developer.

The Commissioners and Committee Members had the following individual comments and questions:

- Commissioner Middleton noted that she was impressed with the overall project and with the design of the plaza area at the intersection of Tahquitz Canyon and Palm Canyon; she verified the proposed tree types, and expressed concern with the use of Italian Cypress trees.
- Member Secoy-Jensen questioned if the proposed landscaping would be consistent with the landscape treatment on the other sides of the street (outside of the project area), and that both sides of the street should have a similar treatment. She also suggested that there should be a continuity of the landscape treatment along Tahquitz Canyon Way, as one travels from the airport to the downtown area.
- Commissioner Donenfeld expressed concern with the width of the pedestrian promenade between the Kimpton Hotel and the Il Corso Restaurant, and questioned if the pathway could be widened by reducing the width of the adjacent planters.
- Member Hirschbein verified if the planters could also be used for seating, and the need to provide seating along the promenade (Market Street) on Blocks A and B. He also verified the details of the grade change along Palm Canyon and the possibilities for seating, and requested additional information on the design of the water features.
- Chair Klatchko requested information about the phasing of the landscape plan, and how the undeveloped parcels would be addressed in the interim period.
- There was a general consensus of the Commission and Board that the landscape/hardscape drawings should be available for review by the general public, and also that the 3-D model be made available for public review.

Upon a consensus vote of the Commission and Board, it was determined that the item would be continued to the regular meeting of the AAC on November 9th, and the regular meeting of the Planning Commission on November 12th.

3. ADJOURNMENT: The Planning Commission adjourned at 1:35 pm to Wednesday, October 28, 2015, at 1:30 pm, Council Chamber, City Hall, 3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way, Palm Springs.



Architectural Advisory Committee and Planning Commission

- Joint Meeting Staff Report -

DATE: October 28, 2015

SUBJECT: PALM SPRINGS PROMENADE, LLC FOR REVIEW OF THE DOWNTOWN PALM SPRINGS RENOVATION PROJECT LANDSCAPE, HARDSCAPE AND LIGHTING, AS REQUIRED BY PROJECT CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL, GENERALLY LOCATED NORTHWEST TAHQUITZ CANYON WAY AND PALM CANYON DRIVE, CASE NOS. 5.1290 PD-361, 3.3605 MAJ, 3.3606 MAJ, 3.3607 MAJ, 3.3785 MAJ AND 3.3908 MAJ.

FROM: Department of Planning Services

SUMMARY

The Architectural Advisory Committee and Planning Commission will hold a joint meeting to review and consider landscape, hardscape and exterior lighting plans for the downtown redevelopment project located northwest of Tahquitz Canyon Way and Palm Canyon Drive. This report analyzes the proposed plans against the Design Guidelines contained within the Museum Market Plaza (Downtown) Specific Plan. The downtown park is not part of this review.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Review, discuss and analyze plans to determine consistency with the design guidelines envisioned by the Museum Market Plaza Specific Plan; and
2. Approve and determine conditions related to landscape, hardscape and exterior landscape lighting have been fulfilled.

ISSUES:

- Downtown landscape subcommittee has met regularly since November 2014 and the latest recommended plan is attached to this report.

BACKGROUND:

<i>Planning Areas</i>		
Specific Plan	Yes	<i>Museum Market Specific Plan</i>
Design Plan	Yes	<i>Museum Market Specific Plan</i>
Airport Overlay	None	
Indian Land	None	

Initially adopted in 2009, the Museum Market Plaza Specific Plan provides policy guidance and zoning requirements for a 13.6-acre site formerly known as the Desert Fashion Plaza and area generally located northwest of Tahquitz Canyon Way and Palm Canyon Drive. The Specific Plan seeks to facilitate high-quality development while recognizing the importance of open space for public gatherings.

As downtown development projects have been approved, the review of the sidewalk hardscape and landscape design has been deferred. This was done to allow the applicant the ability to develop a unified design theme throughout the Specific Plan project area, as well as work with a city-designated subcommittee on its development.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The applicant has submitted conceptual hardscape and landscape improvement plans for the following areas:

- Palm Canyon Drive – westerly frontage from the Hyatt Hotel to Tahquitz Canyon;
- Tahquitz Canyon Way – northerly frontage from Palm Canyon Dr. to Belardo Rd.;
- Belardo Road extension through site from Museum Dr. to Tahquitz Canyon;
- Main Street – the newly constructed street from Museum Dr. to Palm Canyon Dr.;
- Andreas Road extension through site from Palm Canyon Dr. to Belardo Rd.
- Market Street – a pedestrian access way from the Hyatt Hotel through the center of Blocks A, B and C to the corner of Palm Canyon Dr. and Tahquitz Canyon.

The exhibits provide clarity on the pedestrian and vehicular environment throughout the specific plan site. Crosswalks are proposed with pavers. Sidewalks between building perimeters and streets will include a uniform paver throughout. The pedestrian paseo, (Market Street) has an identifiable paver with distinct pattern that transects the middle of blocks A, B and C, and is designed to draw pedestrians from the expansive corner at Palm Canyon and Tahquitz Canyon to the new southerly entrance at the Hyatt Hotel. The "Walk of Stars" will continue along the sidewalk adjacent to Palm Canyon Drive.

Tree and plant materials are proposed along sidewalks throughout the site. California Fan Palms will continue the tree-lined theme along Palm Canyon Drive. A mix of tree

species frame streets and the internal paseo. Low growth plants are utilized within tree wells and landscape planters.

ANALYSIS:

Connectivity and Streetscenes. Subsection 2.a. of the Specific Plan Design Guidelines provides a general discussion on connectivity and streetscapes envisioned for the downtown project:

Within the Specific Plan, a hierarchy of definitive intersections is to be created. Street surfaces at selected intersections will be given visual definition by the introduction of special surface finishes, while landscaped sidewalk projections or 'bulbs', together with building corner cutbacks, will create useable public open spaces and contribute to a more pleasing pedestrian experience. All design treatments will be consistent with the unified Urban Design concept, with special interest and variety being achieved in the detailing. Key definitive intersections should be created at all four corners of the Main Plaza and at the junctions of Tahquitz Canyon Way with Belardo Road and North Palm Canyon Drive. Secondary definitive intersections may be created at other minor intersections within the Specific Plan area.

A number of these guidelines are part of the proposed plans. The proposed street system incorporates corner 'bulbs' and a pronounced paving pattern at most of street intersections. Special interest is created with the proposed street concrete and band patterns shown throughout the plan. Pedestrian walkways feature enhanced paving to achieve a pleasing pedestrian experience. The Belardo and Tahquitz intersection will be upgraded with similar pavers. Muted colors are proposed throughout the hardscape area. The expansive paver treatment at the corner of Palm Canyon and Tahquitz Canyon is designed to provide special detail to this key intersection, attracting and drawing users through the project site.

Landscaping. Subsection 3 of the Specific Plan Design Guidelines describes landscapes requirements, including the importance of quality design, a consistency with the local desert setting and the emphasis on linkages and connectivity through landscaping. The Guidelines suggests the use Landscape Zones, Entries and Focal Points, and a Continuity of Theme to accomplish these requirements.

The three **Landscape Zones** are iterated below followed by an evaluation of the proposed plan's conformance:

- *The **Streetscape Zone** is designed to integrate into the landscaping patterns already occurring in Downtown Palm Springs. Street trees and plantings will emulate the rows of palm trees which now flank Palm Canyon Drive, and will*

extend throughout the primary streets in all planning areas. Shade trees are provided at intersections to break up the linear nature of the palms, and cool the environment for both pedestrians and vehicles. Plantings are focused on potted palms and annual color, which does not block pedestrian activity.

- *The Transition Zone has a less intense focus on palm trees, and introduces a greater variety of shade trees and shrubs. The Transition Zone plants should apply to the secondary streets and the residential areas, to soften the built environment, and provide greater shade and cooling. Planting areas should include a mix of potted palms and plants, as well as planting beds surrounding street trees, to reflect a less intense urban environment.*
- *The Open Space Zone applies not only to the Main Plaza, but also to the common area open spaces that will be created within each Block. This Zone includes the widest variety of plant materials, and is intended to connect the Streetscape and Transition Zones. In areas away from the Main Plaza, the focus should be on canopy and accent trees, and a higher intensity of groundcovers, particularly in areas where the primary uses are residential.*

The proposed plan includes a mixture of shade and palm trees throughout the project site. Palm Canyon, Main Street and the paseo on Block C are framed with palm trees, whereas Belardo Road, Andreas Road and the paseo on Blocks A and B are framed with a mix of palm and shade trees. Shrubs are planted throughout the tree wells and various planters. Large three to four foot size boulders will be installed in the landscape area adjacent to the north side of Tahquitz Canyon Way, west of Palm Canyon Drive. The downtown park (described as Main Plaza above) is separate from the current proposal and will be evaluated at a later date.

Guidance on **Entries and Focal Points** is given in the Specific Plan. The Plan identifies Major and Minor Entries and Major and Minor Focal Points. Emphasis is given on the front of the Art Museum as a Major Focal Point, noting the area should be designed to draw the eye from as far away east as possible and include significant vertical elements, extensive special paving and public art. Staff believes much of this will be accommodated with the improvement of Blocks H1 and H2, which are the properties owned by the City directly to the east on both sides of Main Street.

The Minor Focal Points should be enhanced with landscaping and hardscape which is at a pedestrian scale and includes enhanced paving, street furniture, directional signage and shade.

Finally, **Continuity of Theme** is a discussion on overall landscape design theme continuing throughout the Specific Plan. The purpose of deferring landscape/hardscape review on development projects was to ensure this exact concept be carried out.

Tree and Plant Species. The Specific Plan provides a landscape palette for the three Landscape Zones mentioned above (see attached). The table below indicates if the proposed tree and plant species can be found in the recommended palette:

Trees & Palms			Part of SP Palette?
<u>QTY</u>	<u>BOTANICAL NAME / COMMON NAME</u>	<u>CONT</u>	
7	<i>Brahea armata</i> / Mexican Blue Palm	36' box	N
29	<i>Cupressus sempervirens</i> 'Stricta' / Columnar Italian Cypress	24' box	N
11	<i>Ligustrum lucidum</i> / Glossy Privet	24' box	S (similar species)
8	<i>Olea europaea</i> 'Swan Hill'™ / Swan Hill Olive Standard Trunk	24' box	N
58	<i>Phoenix dactylifera</i> / Date Palm	16' BTH	Y
31	<i>Tipuana tipu</i> / Tipu Tree	36' box	Y
2	<i>Tipuana tipu</i> / Tipu Tree	Not a Pc	-
<u>QTY</u>	<u>BOTANICAL NAME / COMMON NAME</u>	<u>CONT</u>	
108	<i>Chamaerops humilis</i> / Mediterranean Fan Palm	36' box	Y
2	<i>Chamaerops humilis</i> / Mediterranean Fan Palm	Existing	-
1	<i>Cycas revoluta</i> / Japanese Sago Palm	24' box	Y
25	<i>Geijera parviflora</i> / Australian Willow	36' box	S
35	<i>Washingtonia filifera</i> / California Fan Palm	Existing	-
20	<i>Washingtonia robusta</i> / Mexican Fan Palm	14' BTH	Y

<u>Shrubs</u>			Part of SP Palette?
<u>QTY</u>	<u>BOTANICAL NAME / COMMON NAME</u>	<u>SIZE</u>	
107	Bougainvillea x 'Oo-La-La' TM / Oo-la-la Bouganvillea	5 gal	Y
1,676	Carissa macrocarpa 'Tuttie!' / Natal Plum	5 gal	Y
3	Cereus peruvianus / Peruvian Apple Cactus Multi-trunk	5 gal	N
6	Cordia parvifolia / Small-Leaf Gelgertree	15 gal	N
123	Daniella revoluta / Baby Bliss	5 gal	N
48	Echinocactus grusoni / Golden Barrel Cactus	5 gal	N
21	Equisetum hyemale / Horsetail Reed Grass	5 gal	N
91	Hesperaloe parviflora / Red Yucca	5 gal	Y
<u>Cacti</u>			Part of SP Palette?
<u>QTY</u>	<u>BOTANICAL NAME / COMMON NAME</u>	<u>SIZE</u>	
6	Agave desmettiana / Dwarf Century Plant	15 gal	N
28	Dasylirion acrotrichum / Green Desert Spoon	15 gal	Y
24	Yucca rostrata / Beaked Yucca	6' Ht Trl	N
<u>Vines</u>			Part of SP Palette?
<u>QTY</u>	<u>BOTANICAL NAME / COMMON NAME</u>	<u>SIZE</u>	
8	Calliandra inaequilatera / Pink Powder Puff	15 gal	Y

Street Furniture, Lighting and Art. The Specific Plan describes these elements as important for enlivening character and contributing to a strong sense of local identity. The Guidelines explain:

The Museum Market Plaza is a pedestrian oriented area and street furniture should be designed to the human scale and placed to enhance the pedestrian experience. While consistent with the general design

principles included in the Palm Springs Downtown Urban Design Plan, a variation on the recommended theme that complements the Urban Design concept for the Museum Market Plaza should be implemented within the confines of the Specific Plan. Special detailing will define the Museum Market Plaza as an area of distinctive identity, while maintaining continuity of theme ensures that the downtown area as a whole engenders a clearly perceptible sense of place. While allowing for interesting variations in complementary design, all elements must work together to create a distinctive, unified identity.

Examples of street furniture are provided in the Design Guidelines:

Street Furniture



Similar contemporary fixtures and furniture pieces are proposed throughout the pedestrian pathways. The pedestrian paseo leading from the corner of Palm Canyon and Tahquitz Canyon is lined with benches on both sides and will include in-ground lighting features to attract attention and pedestrian interest. Additionally, market lights strung between palm trees in this area will further enhance the pedestrian experience. The in-ground lighting feature is also proposed at the northeast corner of the project site and will draw interest into the project from Palm Canyon Drive.

Lighting will also be installed at key locations. Intersections and pedestrian cross-walks will be illuminated with a consistent street light fixture throughout the Specific Plan area. Bollards will provide low-level illumination at all street corners.

CONCLUSION:

The Specific Plan envisions a comprehensive urban design concept that is distinctive to its identity. For nearly a year, the applicant and landscape subcommittee have worked to create and refine this identity to its current state. The unified design theme will contribute to lively and multi-purpose sidewalks that are important for a vibrant downtown experience.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:

The project was previously evaluated under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) when initially approved by City Council. Since the proposal is being reviewed as a requirement of the project conditions, no further environmental analysis is required.



David A. Newell
Associate Planner



Flinn Fagg, AICP
Director of Planning Services

Attachments:

1. Museum Market Plaza Specific Plan – Design Guidelines (excerpt)
2. Proposed Landscape and Hardscape Plans