

CITY OF PALM SPRINGS
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
October 28, 2015
Council Chamber, City Hall
3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way
Palm Springs, CA 92262

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Klatchko called the meeting to order at 1:50 pm.

ROLL CALL:

Present This Meeting: Commissioner Calerdine, Commissioner Donenfeld,
Commissioner Lowe, Commissioner Middleton,
Commissioner Weremiuk, Vice-Chair Roberts and Chair
Klatchko

Absent This Meeting: None

Staff Present: Flinn Fagg, Michael Daudt, Terri Hintz, Savat Khamphou,
Ken Lyon, Glenn Mlaker and David Newell

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, October 22, 2015.

ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA:

Chair Klatchko moved Item 3A (Unfinished Business) to the front of the agenda.

Chair Klatchko reported an abstention on Item 2B due to a property-related conflict of interest and would not be participating in the discussion or vote.

The agenda was accepted, as amended.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Chair Klatchko opened public comments:

RON HANSON, spoke in reference to Item 3A, said he is in support of Far West Industries recommendations to modify the existing proposal.

FRANK TYSEN, spoke in opposition of the Downtown project and suggested the Commission slow down and wait until the new Council is seated to review this project.

ROBERT BRUGEMAN, downtown business owner, said there are many people who support the Downtown project.

MARINA ROSSI, welcomed the hotel competition and spoke in favor of good development in any town; but questioned if there is a demand for all the office spaces and hotel rooms.

DAVID ZIPPEL, spoke about the importance in preserving the village-feel of Palm Springs.

There being no further appearances public comments was closed.

1. CONSENT CALENDAR:

1A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: OCTOBER 14, 2015 STUDY SESSION MINUTES

ACTION: Approve, as submitted.

Motion: Commissioner Donenfeld, seconded by Vice-Chair Roberts and unanimously carried on a roll call vote.

AYES: Commissioner Calerdine, Commissioner Donenfeld, Commissioner Lowe, Commissioner Middleton, Commissioner Weremiuk, Vice-Chair Roberts, Chair Klatchko

3. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: (Item was called out of order.)

3A. DAVID ENDRES / DEBBIE REICHLING FOR A MAJOR ARCHITECTURAL APPLICATION FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A 4,170-SQUARE FOOT HOUSE ON A HILLSIDE LOT AND AN ADMINISTRATIVE MINOR MODIFICATION REQUESTING AN INCREASE IN BUILDING HEIGHT LOCATED AT 2355 NORTH MILO DRIVE, ZONE R-1-C (CASE 3.2938 MAJ & 7.1456 AMM). (GM)

Associate Planner Mlaker reviewed the changes the Commission requested at their last meeting. He reported that staff has received a letter from the property owner requesting the modified application be withdrawn and the previous application be submitted for review.

JAMES CIOFFI, project architect, explained that the owner is adamant to proceed with the original design and feels lowering the house will affect his views to the east.

Commissioner Roberts clarified if the noticing requirements were met and said they gave the applicant a lot of latitude and does not see any other option but to deny the project.

ACTION: Deny.

Motion: Commissioner Weremiuk, seconded by Vice-Chair Roberts and unanimously carried on a roll call vote.

AYES: Commissioner Calerdine, Commissioner Donenfeld, Commissioner Lowe, Commissioner Middleton, Commissioner Weremiuk, Vice-Chair Roberts, Chair Klatchko

2. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

2A. SAGE COURTYARD LP, FOR A VARIANCE REQUEST TO REDUCE THE SIDE YARD SETBACK ON THE STREET SIDE FACING EAST ANDREAS ROAD TO FIVE (5) FEET FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW CARPORTS AT THE SAGE COURTYARD APARTMENT COMPLEX LOCATED AT 2300 EAST TAHQUITZ CANYON WAY, ZONE R-3 (CASE 6.540 VAR). (GM)

Associate Planner Mlaker provided background information as outlined in the staff report.

The Commission asked technical questions pertaining to:

- The landscaping along the sidewalk and how it will buffer the carports.
- Why does the new carport design differ from the existing design?
- Would solar panels be an option for carports?

Chair Klatchko opened the public hearing:

GEORGE MOBAYED, Investment Concepts, provided details on the materials and indicated that the landscape will be desertscape and will include a significant amount of trees.

DOUG DOMINIANO, concerned about property maintenance in this area.

There being no appearances the public hearing was closed.

ACTION: Approve, per landscape recommendations and conditions of approval subject to:

1. Submission of Minor Architectural Application (MAA) to be reviewed by the AAC for carport design and landscape plan for area between perimeter wall and sidewalk adjacent to East Andreas Road.
2. Landscape plan to be reviewed by Planning Commission as a consent item with recommendation by the AAC.

Motion: Vice-Chair Roberts, seconded by Commissioner Lowe and unanimously carried on a roll call vote.

AYES: Commissioner Calerdine, Commissioner Donenfeld, Commissioner Lowe, Commissioner Middleton, Commissioner Weremiuk, Vice-Chair Roberts, Chair Klatchko

2B. MOJAVE BLUE LP, FOR A VARIANCE REQUEST TO REDUCE THE SIDE YARD SETBACK ON THE STREET SIDE FACING EAST ANDREAS ROAD TO FIVE (5) FEET FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW CARPORTS AT THE MOJAVE BLUE APARTMENT COMPLEX LOCATED AT 2720 EAST TAHQUITZ CANYON WAY, ZONE R-3 (CASE 6.541 VAR). (GM)

Vice-Chair Klatchko previously noted a conflict of interest and left the Council Chamber at 2:22 pm.

Associate Planner Mlaker provided background information as outlined in the staff report.

The Commission asked technical questions pertaining to:

- Property maintenance.
- Refurbishing of 5 foot wall.
- Will the same type of wooden trellis be used?

Vice-Chair Roberts opened the public hearing and with no appearances coming forward the public hearing was closed.

ACTION: Approve, subject to conditions; and

1. Restore wall.
2. Landscape screening up to 5 feet.
3. Return to AAC for review of carport design and landscaping.
4. Return to the Planning Commission for landscape review as a consent item.

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

AYES: Commissioner Calerdine, Commissioner Donenfeld, Commissioner Lowe, Commissioner Middleton, Commissioner Weremiuk, Vice-Chair Roberts, Chair Klatchko

Chair Klatchko re-entered the Council Chamber at 2:31 pm.

2C. THE PALMS HOA FOR A VARIANCE REQUEST TO REDUCE THE SIDE YARD SETBACK ON THE STREET SIDE FACING THERESA DRIVE FROM THE REQUIRED TWENTY-FIVE (25) FEET TO 4'-6" FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW CARPORTS AT THE PALMS CONDOMINIUM COMPLEX LOCATED AT 3155 EAST RAMON ROAD, ZONE R-3 (CASE 6.544 VAR). (GM)

Associate Planner Mlaker presented the proposed request for a reduction in setbacks as outlined in the staff report.

Chair Klatchko opened the public hearing:

RONNIE THOMPSON, chair, Carport Committee, was available for questions from the Commission.

DEAN SHORRS, owner, spoke in support of staff's recommendations and urged approval.

KEVIN JOHNSON, long-range planning committee, said they have been dreaming of having carports for all of their owners for years.

There being no further appearances the public hearing was closed.

ACTION: Approve with conditions subject to:

- Return to the AAC for review of the carport design.

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

AYES: Commissioner Calerdine, Commissioner Donenfeld, Commissioner Lowe, Commissioner Middleton, Commissioner Weremiuk, Vice-Chair Roberts, Chair Klatchko

2D. AIC CAPITAL, LLC FOR A TENTATIVE PARCEL MAP (TPM) TO SUBDIVIDE A 0.46-ACRE PARCEL INTO TWO PARCELS AND A VARIANCE APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF THE RESULTANT LOTS TO BE SMALLER THAN THE MINIMUM

LOT SIZE FOR THE ZONES IN WHICH THEY ARE LOCATED AT 2732 NORTH CARDILLO ROAD; ZONE R-1-C / RGA-6, (CASE TPM 36958 AND 6.545 VAR). (KL)

Associate Planner Lyon provided an overview of the proposed project.

Chair Klatchko opened the public hearing:

MARVIN ROOS, MSA Consulting, provided background history of the property and requested approval.

There being no further appearances the public hearing was closed.

Commissioner Calerdine requested clarification with regard to the curb and gutter.

ACTION: Approve Case TPM 36958 and 6.545 VAR, subject to Conditions.

Motion: Commissioner Middleton, seconded by Commissioner Donenfeld and unanimously carried on a roll call vote.

AYES: Commissioner Calerdine, Commissioner Donenfeld, Commissioner Lowe, Commissioner Middleton, Commissioner Weremiuk, Vice-Chair Roberts, Chair Klatchko

A recess was taken at 2:46 pm.

The meeting reconvened at 2:52 pm.

2E. APPLICATION BY THE CITY OF PALM SPRINGS TO UPDATE AND AMEND THE MUSEUM MARKET PLAZA SPECIFIC PLAN TO REFLECT PREVIOUS APPROVALS AND MODIFICATIONS, INCLUDING CHANGES TO PERMITTED USES FOR CERTAIN BLOCKS WITHIN THE DEVELOPMENT, CHANGES TO THE MAXIMUM PERMITTED HEIGHT FOR CERTAIN BLOCKS WITHIN THE DEVELOPMENT, REDUCTIONS IN THE OVERALL DEVELOPABLE SQUARE FOOTAGE AND PERMITTED NUMBER OF UNITS, AND OTHER VARIOUS ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES AND CORRECTIONS (CASE NO. 5.1204 SP A-1). (FF)

Planning Director Fagg provided background information as outlined in the staff report and introduced the City's consultant to describe the traffic study and environmental documents.

Nicole Criste, Terra Nova Planning, provided an overview on the EIR addendum and traffic study update.

Director Fagg summarized the changes to the Museum Market Plaza Specific Plan as outlined in the staff report. Mr. Fagg described the changes relative to the setbacks, massing and parking structure.

The Commission commented and/or requested clarification on:

- Marking the future buildings as "potential future development" and identify the blocks to differentiate each one.
- This project came before the Commission because it conformed to the General Plan.
- Reduction in sidewalk width.
- Concern that the parking structure does not include the museum and event traffic.
- Concern that setbacks allow for more height.
- Additional time is needed to review the changes.
- Additional parking requirements.
- The possibility of preserving the view of Andreas to add a second view corridor.
- Alternative to setback requirements.
- Update on Town & Country property.
- Provision for transfer of building square footage.
- Mitigation measures will be applied in future projects.
- Permitted uses.

Chair Klatchko opened the public hearing:

DAVID ZIPPEL, read into the record a statement by Doug Hudson regarding his opposition to the Downtown project.

MICHAEL JOHNSTON, questioned the residential units that will be provided, hotel drop-off and access to parking.

PAULA AUBURN, expressed concern with the height and narrow corridors; she urged the Commission to take a step back and move forward in an intelligent manner.

TRAE DANIEL, suggested a study on El Paseo and The River be done relative to free parking; concern with the flow of traffic and urged a long-range vision for downtown.

JOY BROWN-MEREDITH, is not opposed to the project; however, questioned how the average citizen is supposed to understand the project when the Commission is confused.

FRANK TYSEN, requested the changes be broken down section by section and urged this process be delayed until the new Council is seated.

AFTAB DADA, representing PS Resorts, spoke in support of the proposed luxury hotel in downtown.

ROBERT BRUGEMAN, said this development is urgently needed downtown and urged approval.

EMILY HEMPHILL, legal consul for Wessman Development, addressed public testimony with respect to the overall development of this project.

There being no further appearances the public hearing was closed.

Commissioner Middleton expressed concern with the sidewalks and traffic flow. However, she noted that the density is less than what was originally proposed and the project has improved and needs to move forward through the completion of the project.

Commissioner Roberts said what is before them are changes that have been approved and will make a motion to continue to allow staff to address their questions.

Commissioner Weremiuk requested going line-by-line on the changes that have been made.

Commissioner Calerdine commented that this is the appropriate density for this site and this is not the time to make major changes to the plan.

Commissioner Donenfeld noted that many businesses in downtown are outdated and room must be made for the future. He does not feel this project can be done economically with little density and stands firm that this project must go forward.

ACTION: Continue to a date certain of November 12, 2015.

Motion: Vice-Chair Roberts, seconded by Commissioner Weremiuk and unanimously carried on a roll call vote.

AYES: Commissioner Calerdine, Commissioner Donenfeld, Commissioner Lowe, Commissioner Middleton, Commissioner Weremiuk, Vice-Chair Roberts, Chair Klatchko

A recess was taken at 4:38 pm.

The meeting reconvened at 4:50 pm.

2F. PALM SPRINGS PROMENADE, LLC FOR A MAJOR ARCHITECTURAL APPLICATION TO CONSTRUCT A 6-STORY, 112,862-SQ. FT. RESORT HOTEL CONSISTING OF 142-ROOMS, MEETING SPACE, RESTAURANTS, SPA AND FITNESS CENTER ON BLOCK "B-1" OF THE DOWNTOWN PALM SPRINGS

PROJECT LOCATED AT THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF BELARDO ROAD AND MAIN STREET, ZONE CBD (CASE 3.3908 MAJ). (DN)

Associate Planner Newell presented the proposed hotel on Block B-1 of the Downtown Development project.

The Commission commented and/or asked technical questions in reference to:

- Is the drop-off space on Main Street adequate?
- Further discussion on the AAC's recommendations and concerns.

Chair Klatchko opened the public hearing:

CHRIS PARDO, project designer, described the project using a PowerPoint presentation and mass model. He provided further details relative to the hotel parking, shade study, site section elevations, eye-level height study from the park, cross-sections of the entire development, pedestrian paseo, overall view of public spaces and material textures.

FRANK TYSEN, said an economic study should be done and questioned if more hotel rooms are needed.

MICHAEL JOHNSTON, spoke in support of the high quality hotel; courtyard is very appropriate but suggested more balcony space to attract more clientele.

There being no further appearances the public hearing was closed.

Vice-Chair Roberts suggested breaking up some of the tall massing in the center of the development towards the north side. He is struggling approving another hotel and does not see the residential units that would keep it vibrant.

Commissioner Calderine questioned why only a certain amount of rooms have balconies. The applicant responded that it is driven by the hotel operator.

Commissioner Middleton said that one of the most critical parts is how this building looks from the park and noted that the first floor looks pretty dull in comparison to the rest of the building. She suggested making the façade more attractive including the windows on the north and south side of the building.

Chair Klatchko expressed concern with the flow of traffic from the hotel and how the ground floor will encourage pedestrian activity towards the park.

ACTION: Continue to a date certain of November 12, 2015.

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

AYES: Commissioner Calerdine, Commissioner Donenfeld, Commissioner Lowe, Commissioner Middleton, Commissioner Weremiuk, Vice-Chair Roberts, Chair Klatchko

PLANNING COMMISSION REPORTS, REQUESTS AND COMMENTS: None.

PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT: None.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further comments the Planning Commission at 5:42 pm adjourned to 9:00 am, Thursday, November 12, 2015, City Hall, Council Chamber, 3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way.

Flinn Fagg, AICP
Director of Planning Services