

CITY OF PALM SPRINGS
PLANNING COMMISSION STUDY SESSION MINUTES
August 10, 2016 / 11:30 AM
Large Conference Room, City Hall
3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way
Palm Springs, CA 92262

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Calerdine called the meeting to order at 11:35 am.

ROLL CALL: Commissioner Donenfeld, Commissioner Hirschbein, Commissioner Hudson, Commissioner Lowe, Commissioner Middleton, Vice-Chair Weremiuk, Chair Calerdine

Absent This Meeting: None.

Staff Present: Flinn Fagg, Planning Director

REPORT OF POSTING OF AGENDA: The agenda was posted and 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, August 4, 2016.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

DISCUSSION ITEM:

1A. TOPICS FOR THE JOINT CITY COUNCIL / PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING IN SEPTEMBER 2016.

Chair Calerdine opened the meeting and noted the need to prioritize topics for the joint City Council/Planning Commission meeting.

Vice-Chair Weremiuk suggested that it would helpful to prepare a write-up on the topics for City Council members as a way to provide background on the subject matter and its importance.

The Commission identified potential joint meeting discussion items under two groups: "Specific Planning Issues," and "Process Issues." The topics identified under each group were as follows:

Specific Planning Issues:

- Small-lot subdivisions
- PDD (Planned Development District) ordinance
- Gated communities
- Golf course redevelopment
- Environmentally-sensitive areas
- Public benefit requirements – PDD
- Affordable housing
- Extension of Time (EOT) applications
- Sustainability

Process Issues:

- Long-range planning (and long-range planning staff)
- Planning & zoning software
- Role of Architectural Advisory Committee (AAC)

The Commission discussed grouping topics together as a single discussion item, such as the topics of PDD ordinance, small-lot subdivisions, public benefit requirements, and gated communities.

The Commission had the following general comments on the discussion items for the joint meeting:

- Commissioner Middleton discussed sustainability issues, and reported on meetings with the Green Building Subcommittee of the Sustainability Commission. She also commented on using local labor and youth job training as a public benefit for PDD applications, and questioned the number of projects coming in as PDD applications. Commissioner Middleton questioned the standards for small-lot developments; suggested that the Planning Commission should discuss criteria for Extension of Time applications before formulating policy; and suggested that the joint meeting would be a good opportunity to request needed resources.
- Commissioner Weremiuk noted that an ad hoc PDD committee had been formed, and that the committee was discussing improvements to the PDD ordinance. She noted that affordable housing could be considered as a public benefit of PDD projects. In addition, she suggested that the joint meeting could include a discussion of process recommendations, such as software and long-range planning staff, and noted that public policy issues such as golf course redevelopment and environmentally-sensitive areas should be discussed.
- Chair Calderine noted that care should be exercised when discussing the topic of inclusionary zoning.

- Commissioner Hirschbein discussed issues of small-lot development and provision of open space within the project.
- Commissioner Donenfeld suggested that the PDD process should be reserved for unusual developments, and that developers should otherwise adhere to standard zoning; he noted that the bulk of the joint meeting should be spent on discussing the PDD process. He suggested that an urban designer should be added to staff.
- Commissioner Hudson stated that the City should make a commitment to higher density housing and preserving multi-family districts. He suggested that the PDD process should remain a two-step process, and that many current applications do not address the urban context whatsoever.

Chair Calderine suggested that the highest priority items should be:

- PDD ordinance
- Small lot ordinance
- Gated communities
- Public benefit of PDD projects
- Loss of R-2/R-3 districts to small lot development

He also suggested that there should be a focused discussion on staff resources.

The Commission prioritized the issues to be discussed at the joint meeting as follows:

1. Resources (staffing, software, etc.)
2. PDD process/issues
3. Extension of Time applications, criteria
4. AAC process

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further comments the Planning Commission adjourned at 12:49 pm to their regular meeting at 1:30 pm, Wednesday, August 10, 2016, City Hall, Council Chamber, 3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way.

Flinn Fagg, AICP
Director of Planning Services

CITY OF PALM SPRINGS
PLANNING COMMISSION STUDY SESSION MINUTES
September 28, 2016 / 10:00 AM
Large Conference Room, City Hall
3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way
Palm Springs, CA 92262

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Calerdine called the meeting to order at 10:02 am.

ROLL CALL:

Present This Meeting: Commissioner Donenfeld, Commissioner Hirschbein, Commissioner Hudson, Commissioner Lowe, Commissioner Middleton, Vice-Chair Weremiuk, Chair Calerdine

Absent This Meeting: None.

Staff Present: Planning Director Fagg, Deputy City Attorney Daudt

PUBLIC COMMENT:

JIM RUSH, representing the Four Seasons HOA, offered support for the project, and also identified concerns relative to traffic mitigation on Sunrise Parkway, and requested that the developer coordinate construction with the Four Seasons residents who live adjacent to the south property line of the Miralon development.

PAUL HENDRICKSON, representing the San Rafael Neighborhood Organization, requested: a four-way stop and crosswalks be implemented at the intersection of San Rafael and Avenida Caballeros; height restrictions; and elimination of two-story units.

There being no further speakers public comment was closed.

DISCUSSION ITEM:

- 1A. **FREEHOLD COMMUNITIES, LLC, REQUEST TO AMEND THE ARCHITECTURAL STANDARDS, OPEN SPACE AND LANDSCAPING PLANS FOR THE AVALON DEVELOPMENT; A PREVIOUSLY APPROVED PROJECT CONSISTING OF 1,150 RESIDENTIAL UNITS, 18- HOLE GOLF COURSE, CLUBHOUSE, POOL, SPA, TENNIS COURTS, AND A PARK LOCATED ALONG THE NORTH SIDE OF SAN RAFAEL DRIVE, EAST OF NORTH INDIAN CANYON DRIVE, SOUTH OF THE WHITEWATER RIVER AND WEST OF SUNRISE**

WAY, ZONE PDD 290, SECTION 35 (CASE 5.0982-PD 290 / TTM 31848).

RECOMMENDATION: FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSE ONLY; NO ACTION REQUIRED.

Planning Fagg provided a presentation summarizing the history of the project, all approvals to date, the terms of the settlement agreement, and the proposed amendment.

BRAD SHUCKHART, project applicant, gave a brief overview of the history and proposed amendments to the approved planned development.

MARK LINNEY, landscape architect for the project, described the proposed landscape plan for the conversion of the golf course to open space and orchards.

TIM SMALLWOOD, project architect, discussed the proposed architectural guidelines for the single-family residential product, and also reviewed the proposed design of the clubhouse facility with the Planning Commission members.

The Commission had the following comments and concerns about the proposed project:

- HOA management of the orchards and maintenance of the open space;
- Water source and irrigation of the open space;
- Costs of maintaining the orchards and the ability of the residents within the development to pay the monthly HOA fees;
- ADA compliance requirements for the trail system;
- Provision of sidewalks within the development;
- Lot coverage requirements should be included in the architectural standards;
- Solar panels for the residential units should be provided in advance of the forthcoming State mandate;
- Proposed architectural styles are too similar;
- Architectural guidelines should include requirements for shading and addressing climatic conditions;
- Architectural guidelines should be provided for multifamily;
- Affordability of the multifamily product for residents who work within the community;
- Additional limitations of two-story units;
- Architectural guidelines should address privacy of yard spaces (relative to two-story units);

Commissioner Hudson commented that he supports the concept of the groves; he requested that the applicant “beef up” the architectural guidelines to address the desert climate. He noted issues with pedestrian accessibility to the trail system and suggested more access points are necessary.

Commissioner Donenfeld found the project to be innovative and creative. He noted a concern that the architectural design may produce repetitive streetscapes and monotonous buildings; and suggested that the architecture be consistent without being identical. He also supported increased accessibility to the open space amenities, requested that the applicant address the issue of golf carts or NEV, and supports the exclusive easements along the open space.

Commissioner Lowe requested that the applicant provide 3D images of the streetscapes and landscape standards for the front yard areas for consistency.

Vice-Chair Weremiuk supports the repurposing of the golf course, and suggested that the clubhouse needs adequate space for HOA meetings. She requested that the applicant provide a phasing plan for the amenities or install all amenities in Phase I of the development; and also requested that the applicant identify a schedule of when the HOA will assume responsibility of maintenance of the amenities. She stated that pedestrian accessibility to the greenspace is an issue, and suggested a subcommittee review the architectural standards. Vice-Chair Weremiuk commented that the applicant needs to provide some thought as to where the one- and two-story homes would be; supported the concept of shared-use easements; and suggested that lot coverage requirements need to be included in the development standards. She voiced concern with the traffic mitigation measures, and requested that the development be non-gated and open or else provide pedestrian gates. She also noted support of the proposed changes to the residential setback requirements.

Chair Calderine recommended that the five-foot sidewalk be provided on all local streets within the development. He questioned how the trail system will work in terms of a continuous loop and access points, and prefers that the development not have gates. He suggested that the trail system be available to the public, and that there be integration with the City system of trails. He requested that view corridors be provided from Indian Avenue in accordance with the original conditions of approval, and noted a concern with tandem parking on one of the unit plans.

Commissioner Middleton suggested that a traffic signal should be installed on Sunrise Parkway at the Four Seasons entrance, and that a four-way stop be installed at the intersection of San Rafael and Avenida Caballeros. She also encouraged the applicant to commit to employ local youth in training and apprenticeship capacities, and to build the multifamily units as affordable for working families. Commissioner recommended that the use of the homes for vacation rentals be addressed in the CC&R's.

Commissioner Hirschbein also commented on access to the open space areas, and suggested that the applicant provide an exhibit showing the maximum distance from the furthest residence to a trailhead. He reiterated that lot coverage limitations are necessary; a phasing plan for the amenities is important; and is concerned that Sunrise Parkway will become a freeway. He voiced concern that the architectural guidelines would produce a pastiche of modernism, and noted that additional work was needed.

The Commission requested that two subcommittees be formed to review the architectural guidelines and the pedestrian/bicycle/traffic plan for the development. The subcommittees were established as follows:

- Architecture: Hirschbein, Hudson, Weremiuk.
- Pedestrian/Bicycle/Traffic: Calerdine, Middleton, Weremiuk.

As there was no further discussion, the study session was adjourned at 12:50 pm.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further discussion the Planning Commission adjourned to their regular meeting at 1:30 pm, Wednesday, September 28, 2016, City Hall, Council Chamber, 3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way.

Flinn Fagg, AICP
Director of Planning Services

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