

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES  
CITY OF PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA  
March 27, 2019  
Council Chamber, City Hall  
3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way, Palm Springs, California

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Chair Woods called the meeting to order at 1:30 pm.

**ROLL CALL:**

Present: Donenfeld, Garner, Hirschbein, Hudson, Vice Chair Moruzzi, Chair Woods

Excused: Song

Staff Present: Planning Director Fagg, Attorney Priest, Administrative Coordinator Hintz, Engineering Associate Minjares, Associate Planner Mlaker

**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 5:00 pm on Thursday, March 21, 2019.

**ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA:**

Donenfeld, seconded by Moruzzi to accept the agenda as presented.

AYES: Donenfeld, Garner, Hirschbein, Hudson, Moruzzi, Woods

ABSENT: Song

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** None.

**1. CONSENT CALENDAR:**

**1A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: MARCH 13, 2019**

Moruzzi, seconded by Garner to approve minutes as amended.

AYES: Donenfeld, Garner, Hirschbein, Hudson, Moruzzi

ABSENT: Song

ABSTAIN: Woods

**2. PUBLIC HEARING:**

Chair Woods noted a business-related conflict of interest and would not be participating in the discussion and vote on this project. He left the Council Chamber at 1:34 pm.

**2A. KOAR PALM SPRINGS, LLC, FOR A PRELIMINARY PLANNED DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT APPLICATION (PDD 389); A TENTATIVE TRACT MAP (TTM 37602); A MAJOR ARCHITECTURAL APPLICATION (3.4105 MAJ); AND ADOPTION OF AN ADDENDUM TO A PREVIOUSLY APPROVED MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A 95-UNIT, THREE (3) STORY CONDOMINIUM BUILDING AND A 4,990-SQUARE FOOT RETAIL STRUCTURE LOCATED AT 1122 EAST TAHQUITZ CANYON WAY, ZONE REO, SECTION 14.**

Associate Planner Mlaker presented the proposed 95-unit, three (3) story condominium building, retail structure and pet services as outlined in the staff report.

JESUS HERRERA CORTEZ, Environmental Planner, CEQA Addendum, said that after reviewing the components of the project it was determined that the prior environmental review and updated supplemental portion are in conformance to the most current CEQA guidelines.

LOREN OSTROW, owner, Koar International, on the board of LGBT since '93 and has known for many years that there would be an issue affecting the LGBT community as they age. He said this project has a lot of open space and amenities and provided details on the pet store (commercial) and requested the condition for the bus shelter and turn out on Tahquitz Canyon be removed.

MARK PRIOR, said he knows the applicant and spoke well of him. He spoke in favor of the project.

DAVID BRINKMAN, said as the LGBT community ages they will become more vulnerable and they deserve a place where they will be cared for and respected.

BARRY JONES, executive assistant to Mike Thompson, CEO, The Center, read a letter into the record, said the Living Out project aligns with and complements the mission of the LGBT Community Center. He said this type of residential environment is missing from the current Palm Springs housing stock.

DALE MCGHEE, said as an elderly LGBT, he has interest in this project. He expressed concern that the parking appears to be some distance from the units and wonders how convenient it would be for the elderly. He requested consideration to be given to this issue.

KEVIN BAST, spoke in support of the project. He said they take care of people in their homes- some gay, some straight. He said that socializing is extremely important to a person's well-being and encouraged approval of this project.

ROB WRIGHT, said he's aware of the discrimination of elderly same sex couples. He's pleased that they have selected this city and urged approval of this project.

BILL SHAW, urged approval of this project.

There being no further speakers the public hearing was closed.

Commissioner Donenfeld said this is very needed in this community. He thinks Palm Springs should be the example for this demographic. He said that the design is quite lovely and in keeping with Palm Springs and spoke in favor of this project.

Commissioner Hudson thinks the changes that have been made to the project especially to the vehicular circulation is superior to what was shown before. He said that adding more landscaping to the residential wings will be a better scheme. He thinks the architecture is quite wonderful and does speak to Palm Springs. He thinks the Corten steel panels need more work to ensure that some of the characteristics of Corten Steel do not affect the building which could be achieved by sealing the panels or using powder coated steel panels. He thinks the landscaping and exterior amenities are unbelievable and will be a selling point for this project. He encouraged more details be added to the landscape design at the public amenity plaza such as shading, seating areas, drinking fountain and a discrete signage indicating it's open to the public.

Commissioner Garner agrees that it's a wonderful project. She understands that there's not a lot of use for the bus stop right now. She thinks as the community changes and as we become more environmentally friendly in our city and in our country bus stops are going to be vital and increasing in the amount of use. She thinks putting in the bus shelter and turn out would be great; noting that there have been more tours and traffic on Tahquitz Canyon and providing these types of resources is going to be important. She said they need to think long-term when considering bus stops and putting these in place as they move forward instead of waiting until there is a need. Because by the time there is a need they are already doing a disservice to a number of people.

Commissioner Hirschbein said that he is not so sure there is a need for a turn out because a bus stopping on Tahquitz at the present curb is not very disruptive to traffic. He said that Tahquitz is never going to be a major thoroughfare unlike Ramon Road. He does agree that a bus shelter would be appropriate and does not impinge on the site plan. He agrees with Commissioner Hudson's comments about the added amenities at the dog park and spoke in favor of the project.

Hirschbein, seconded by Hudson to approve with changes:

1. Revise ENG. CONDITION #9: The applicant shall provide a bus shelter on Tahquitz Canyon Way and incorporate the vocabulary of the commercial building; and delete the requirement for a bus turn out.

2. Revise PLN CONDITION #10: Public Benefit: The applicant shall provide more shading, benches or seating area, drinking fountain and discrete signage identifying it as a public plaza.

AYES: Donenfeld, Garner, Hirschbein, Hudson, Moruzzi  
ABSENT: Song  
ABSTAIN: Woods

3. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

4. NEW BUSINESS: None.

**PLANNING COMMISSION REPORTS, REQUESTS AND COMMENTS:**

**CITY COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT:**

**PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

**ADJOURNMENT:** The Planning Commission adjourned at 2:59 pm to a Special Meeting at 3:00 pm, Wednesday, March 27, 2019, City Hall, Council Chamber, 3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way.

  
Flinn Fagg, AICP  
Director of Planning Services