

CITY OF PALM SPRINGS
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
June 28, 2017
Palm Springs Convention Center
Primrose C, 277 N. Avenida Caballeros
Palm Springs, California 92262

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Calerdine called the meeting to order at 1:32 pm.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Donenfeld, Hirschbein, Hudson, Lowe, Middleton*, Vice Chair
Weremiuk, Chair Calerdine

Absent: None.

Staff Present: Director of Planning Services Fagg, Deputy City Attorney Daudt,
Planning Administrative Coordinator Hintz, Associate Planner
Newell, Principal Planner Robertson

*Arrived at 3:23 pm.

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, June 22, 2017.

ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA:

The agenda was accepted, as presented.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Chair Calerdine opened public comments:

FRANK TYSEN, spoke about staff providing more options to the Commission on projects that come for their review.

JIM CROSS, representing Best Signs, said that representatives (future tenants) have traveled a long distance and are available to provide clarification pertaining on Items 3D and 3E. He noted that the future tenants are global brands who have invested much time and money and requested the Commission work with them.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

1A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: MAY 10, 2017 AND MAY 24, 2017

Minutes of May 10, 2017:

Vice Chair Weremiuk requested the minutes of May 10, 2017, be continued for further review.

ACTION: Continue.

MOTION: Vice Chair Weremiuk, seconded by Chair Calerdine, and carried on a 6-1-0 on a roll call vote.

AYES: Donenfeld, Hirschbein, Hudson, Lowe, Vice Chair Weremiuk, Chair Calerdine

ABSENT: Middleton

Minutes of May 24, 2017:

ACTION: Approve, with changes. (Noting Chair Calerdine's abstention on discussion pertaining to Item 2A.)

MOTION: Vice Chair Weremiuk, seconded by Chair Calerdine, and carried on a 5-1-1 roll call vote.

AYES: Donenfeld, Hirschbein, Lowe, Vice Chair Weremiuk, Chair Calerdine

ABSENT: Middleton

ABSTAIN: Hudson

2. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

- 2A. WOODBRIDGE PACIFIC GROUP, ON BEHALF OF RREF II DC CAMERON, LLC, FOR AN AMENDMENT TO ALLOW MINOR CHANGES TO DESIGN, COLOR, MATERIALS, REDUCTION OF MASSING AND HEIGHTS IN CERTAIN UNITS TO THE PREVIOUSLY APPROVED FINAL PDD PLANS FOR THE CAMERON DEVELOPMENT LOCATED AT 850-990 SOUTH PALM CANYON DRIVE (CASE 5.1056-PDD 314). (ER)**

Principal Planner Robertson provided an overview of the proposed minor amendments as outlined in the staff report.

Chair Calerdine opened the public hearing:

TODD CUNNINGHAM, Woodbridge Pacific Group, president, explained that they have been retained by the ownership of the new Cameron project to manage and develop this project. He said the approved colors are dark green and mustard which are outdated; they are bringing slab tile and other materials to lighten up the color palette and make it more consistent with the current architecture trends. Mr. Cunningham said there are no height changes and massing is very minimal with the predominant change in color. He provided a breakdown of costs they have spent for infrastructure and major improvements for this project.

BILL POST, spoke about how happy he is that Woodbridge Pacific is involved with the Cameron project and the next segment of the trail on the south side of the creek.

JUDY DEERTRACK, said her major concern is on process. She thinks staff should be providing the Commission with a wide range of options instead of limiting their choices; which in turn drives the Commission to a conclusion that does not concur with what the public had decided for this area.

FRANK TYSEN, on behalf of Advocates for Better Community Development, said he's very concerned with this PDD; it has waived the open space, setbacks, heights and parking. He thinks it's time to take a look at this whole project and try to fit it in.

TODD CUNNINGHAM, said he did not hear testimony in terms of what's before the Commission. He said the last approval for the project was in 2015; and noted the owner's substantial reliance on the approvals to invest 1.8 million dollars into this project so far.

Comments:

Vice Chair Weremiuk said she concurs with staff that there has been substantial investment made on this project and they've relied on it. She thinks all of the work that has been made is an improvement on the project and this is what is before their review.

Commissioner Lowe made a motion of approval.

Commissioner Donenfeld thinks this project has been improved; the architecture is cleaner and the colors are much better. Mr. Donenfeld addressed public testimony; noting stating that this Commission is very aware of the fact that they need to pay more attention to the General Plan and the process. Having said that, this is a project that has been in the works - it's a terrible eyesore that has been standing vacant for a long time in a very prominent place. He pointed-out that all of the entitlements have been secured and believes there has been significant compliance with work that has already been done.

ACTION: Approve as submitted.

MOTION: Lowe, seconded by Hudson, and carried 6-0-1 on a roll call vote.

AYES: Donenfeld, Hirschbein, Hudson, Lowe, Vice Chair Weremiuk, Chair Calerdine
ABSENT: Middleton

A recess was taken at 2:25 pm. The meeting resumed at 2:36 pm.

3. NEW BUSINESS:

3A. GEORGE YOUSSEF, OWNER, REQUESTS A MAJOR ARCHITECTURAL APPROVAL TO CONSTRUCT A ONE-STORY 4-UNIT APARTMENT BUILDING ON AN UNDEVELOPED 11,400-SQUARE-FOOT PARCEL LOCATED AT 549 EL PLACER, ZONE R-2 (CASE 3.4011-MAJ). (ER)

Principal Planner Robertson provided an overview of the proposed apartment building as outlined in the staff report.

Comments:

Vice Chair Weremiuk said she likes the fact that it's an apartment building and the structure fits well into the neighborhood. However, she's concerned that the architectural design is minimal.

Commissioner Hudson thinks the building is simple and would rather err on the side of simplicity instead of too much. He thinks the building type is wonderful and said it's nice to see apartments being built especially in this neighborhood.

Commissioner Lowe concurred with Commissioner Hudson and is glad to see additional apartments built in Palm Springs since there's a shortage. He likes the simplicity of the architectural design.

ACTION: Approve as recommended by the AAC subject to Conditions.

MOTION: Donenfeld, seconded by Lowe, and carried on a 6-0-1 roll call vote.

AYES: Donenfeld, Hirschbein, Hudson, Lowe, Vice Chair Weremiuk, Chair Calerdine
ABSENT: Middleton

3B. PALM SPRINGS SAFE ACCESS INC. REQUEST FOR A MAJOR ARCHITECTURAL APPROVAL TO INSTALL A 36,000-SQUARE FOOT PREFABRICATED GREENHOUSE FOR A MEDICAL CANNABIS CULTIVATION FACILITY AND A 1,440-SQUARE FOOT MODULAR OFFICE BUILDING LOCATED AT THE WEST SIDE OF MELISSA LANE AND SOUTH OF 16TH AVENUE, ZONE E-1 (CASE 3.4013-MAJ). (ER)

Principal Planner Robertson provided an overview on the proposed medical cannabis cultivation facility as outlined in the staff report.

Commissioner Donenfeld verified if State and County requirements apply for this type of growth facility. (It is the applicant's responsibility to secure all the required State and County approvals.)

Staff provided details on the proposed natural landscape (no trees, shrubs or groundcover).

ROBERT VAN ROO, applicant, explained that the proposed modular office building is for temporary use and will be replaced by a permanent structure.

Comments:

Vice Chair Weremiuk said she is delighted to see this going in and spoke in favor of the proposed cultivation facility. She questioned if the length of time was sufficient to build the permanent structure and she does not see any reason to require the use of boulders as part of the landscape design.

ACTION: Approve with changes:

- Allow two (2) years to build permanent structure.
- Eliminate the requirement for boulders.

MOTION: Vice Chair Weremiuk, seconded by Lowe, and carried on a 6-0-1 roll call vote.

AYES: Donenfeld, Hirschbein, Hudson, Lowe, Vice Chair Weremiuk, Chair Calerdine

ABSENT: Middleton

3C. SECOY ARCHITECTS TO ESTABLISH A SIGN PROGRAM FOR KAPTUR PLAZA; A MULTI-TENANT COMMERCIAL COMPLEX LOCATED AT 600, 650, 700 AND 750 EAST TAHQUITZ CANYON WAY, ZONE REO (CASE SP 17-005, HSPB 97 CLASS 1 HISTORIC SITE). (DN)

Associate Planner Newell presented the proposed sign program as outlined in the staff report.

SUSAN SECOY-JENSEN, applicant, said they have been working closely with Hugh Kaptur on the project; she noted that he came up with the overall geometry of the signage. She indicated that the current building numbers are inconsistent and would like the buildings clearly identified.

SCOTT TIMBERLAKE, property owner, said he's trying to be very sensitive with the architecture of the building. Mr. Timberlake said these buildings are so mismarked and this has been an issue for the fire department and post office. He did not want to create a scale that is inconsistent with the building and described the future tenants and proposed signage.

ACTION: Approve, subject to Conditions.

MOTION: Donenfeld, seconded by Lowe, and carried 6-0-1 on a roll call vote.

AYES: Donenfeld, Hirschbein, Hudson, Lowe, Vice Chair Weremiuk, Chair Calderine

ABSENT: Middleton

A recess was taken at 3:21 pm. The meeting resumed at 3:31 pm.

3D. BEST SIGNS INC. ON BEHALF OF DTPS B-2, LLC TO ESTABLISH A SIGN PROGRAM THAT DEFINES SIGNAGE CRITERIA FOR TENANTS WITHIN THE TWO-STORY BUILDING LOCATED ON BLOCK B OF THE DOWNTOWN PALM SPRINGS SPECIFIC PLAN, 175 NORTH PALM CANYON DRIVE, ZONE CBD (CASE SP 17-002). (DN)

Associate Planner Newell provided an overview of the proposed sign program as outlined in the staff report.

JIM CROSS, representing Best Signs, stated that all the tenants submitted what they wanted for their building space. He commented that the AAC recommended on the "free people" south elevation only one sign be allowed and was agreed upon. Mr. Cross noted that Block B is pretty straightforward and unlike the architecture on Block C is significantly different; the only thing that does change is the space within the sign panel (which allows them to have their personality and character within that space).

Vice-Chair Weremiuk asked the applicant if they were comfortable with staff's recommendations. Mr. Cross said he agrees to reduce the height from 12 sq. ft. to 9 sq. ft. He noted that the AAC recommended that all the blade signs be consistent in the design and return the blade bracket or hanging mechanism to the Planning Department - they are in agreement.

Commissioner Hirschbein is generally in favor of the sign program; however, he requested changes as follows: 1.) the 75% width of the architectural pop-out and not the width of the entire storefront; 2.) eliminate the ability to use a cabinet sign - individuals letters look much better.

ACTION: Approve with changes:

PLN 1. Conditions Imposed by Planning Commission. Prior to issuance of any sign permits, the applicant shall incorporate the following conditions and resubmit three copies of the revised sign program to the Planning Department:

1. Tenant signage as shown in the elevations.
2. Future tenants shall be required to return to the AAC and Planning Commission for review. This requirement may be waived and signage may be approved by staff, if the sign is restricted to no more than 16" in letter height and meets other criteria of the Downtown Sign Ordinance, Section 93.20.09(A)(2)(b)(ii).
3. Blade Sign design to return to staff for final review:
 - a. Size to be 24" x 36" in sizes
 - b. Bottom of sign to be uniform above the sidewalk – specific height dimension to be approved by the Director of Planning Services.
4. There shall be no duplication of primary identification signs above awnings on the east and west elevations. The south and north elevations may have duplicate signs, if the tenant occupies both spaces that are framed with the architectural pop-outs.
5. Signs shall not extend more than 75% of the width of the architectural pop-out on which they are installed.
6. Cabinet signs are prohibited.

MOTION: Vice Chair Weremiuk, seconded by Donenfeld, and unanimously carried on a 7-0-0 roll call vote.

AYES: Donenfeld, Hirschbein, Hudson, Lowe, Middleton, Vice Chair Weremiuk, Chair Calderine

3E. BEST SIGNS INC. ON BEHALF OF DTSP C-15, LLC TO ESTABLISH A SIGN PROGRAM THAT DEFINES SIGNAGE CRITERIA FOR TENANTS WITHIN THE ONE- AND TWO-STORY BUILDING LOCATED ON BLOCK C OF THE DOWNTOWN PALM SPRINGS SPECIFIC PLAN, 111 NORTH PALM CANYON DRIVE, ZONE CBD (CASE SP 17-003). (DN)

Associate Planner Newell presented the proposed sign program as outlined in the staff report. Mr. Newell reviewed the Architectural Advisory Committee's and staff's recommendations.

Comments:

Commissioner Hirschbein noted that this sign program is different from Block B, which has a lot of architectural consistency whereas this one is more like Palm Canyon where

each storefront has different character. He thinks Tommy Bahama is asking for too much and prefers having one illuminated sign facing the tree at the corner and two blade signs. He also thinks H & M is requesting too much with three signs on the Palm Canyon facade plus all the signs on the windows. Mr. Hirschbein does not want cabinet signs and would like to see the halo-lit signs. He thinks the channel letter signs (given the height of the H&M sign) will have too much front-lit Plexiglas especially on a main street.

Commissioner Donenfeld thinks Mr. Hirschbein has made some good points and agrees with the lighting. He said with respect to the Tommy Bahama signs since they have two operations (retail & restaurant) he thinks the three signs are appropriate.

PAUL DUELLO, architect for H&M, pointed-out that H&M's brand is typically a small sign that identifies each entrance and two blade signs (in this case has been reduced to one blade sign). He stated that H&M does not have a corporate brand halo sign for the larger logos. He noted that given the scale of the east elevation for the two-story façade they feel the sizes proposed are proportionate to the overall scale.

JIM CROSS, representing Best Signs, explained the difference between halo sign and channel letters.

Planning Director Fagg (responding to Commission question) said his preference would be the halo letters; however, more importantly what he would like to see is consistency in the type of letters and colors among the signs on the building.

ACTION: Approve with the following changes.

Block C Sign Program–

1. East elevation - Sign #6 ("H&M" blade sign) shall be same size as approved blade sign size (no larger than 24"x36").
2. ("Tommy Bahama" wall signs approved as presented; no change necessary per condition no. 11 below).
3. No duplicate (Primary Main) signs allowed for tenants on the same frontage.
4. West elevation – there shall be no duplicate signs on the brick façade portion of the building (signs #18 and #19 in Master Sign Plan).
5. "H&M" wall signs - sign #23 shall match sign #4 in size.
6. Sign mounting details shall match architecture.
7. Square footage to be consistent with sizes shown except secondary (blade) signs.
8. Blade Sign design to return to staff for final review:
 - a. Size shall be limited to 24" x 36" maximum.
 - b. Bottom of sign to be uniform above the sidewalk – specific height dimension to be approved by the Director of Planning Services
 - c. Sign mounting details to match architecture.
9. Cabinet signs are prohibited.

10. Channel letter main signs to be halo-illumination only (no front lit letters).
11. "Tommy Bahama" permitted three signs as presented in Sign Plan.

MOTION: Hirschbein, seconded by Vice Chair Weremiuk, and unanimously carried on a 7-0-0 roll call vote.

AYES: Donenfeld, Hirschbein, Hudson, Lowe, Middleton, Vice Chair Weremiuk, Chair Calerdine

4. OTHER BUSINESS:

4A. ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

A. ELECTION OF CHAIR

ACTION: Appoint Kathy Weremiuk to serve as Chair.

MOTION: Commissioner Donenfeld, seconded by Commissioner Hirschbein and unanimously carried on a roll call vote.

AYES: Donenfeld, Hirschbein, Hudson, Lowe, Middleton, Vice Chair Weremiuk, Chair Calerdine

B. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

ACTION: Appoint Lyn Calerdine to serve as Vice Chair.

MOTION: Commissioner Donenfeld, seconded by Commissioner Hirschbein and unanimously carried on a roll call vote.

AYES: Donenfeld, Hirschbein, Hudson, Lowe, Middleton, Vice Chair Weremiuk, Chair Calerdine

PLANNING COMMISSION REPORTS, REQUESTS AND COMMENTS:

- City Council agenda/video formatting.
- Planning Commissioner conference in July sponsored by the Inland Chapter - APA
- Status of perimeter wall for Well in the Desert.
- Status of subcommittee meetings (Dream Hotel and Downtown Landscape project.)

PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

- Architectural Advisory Committee vacancies.

ADJOURNMENT:

The Planning Commission adjourned at 4:47 pm to 1:30 pm, Wednesday, July 12, 2017, *Palm Springs Convention Center, Primrose C, 277 N. Avenida Caballeros Palm Springs, California.*



Flinn Fagg, AICP
Director of Planning Services