

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
July 14, 2021
CITY OF PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way, Palm Springs, California
(Meeting held via Zoom)

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Weremiuk called the meeting to order at 5:31 pm.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Aylaian, Ervin, Hirschbein, Song, Vice Chair Moruzzi, Chair Weremiuk

Excused Absence: Roberts

Staff Present: Development Services Director Fagg, Assistant Planning Director Newell, Attorney Priest, Administrative Coordinator Hintz, Engineering Principal Planner Robertson, Director of Special Program Compliance Goedhart

REPORT OF POSTING OF AGENDA: The agenda was available for public access at the City Hall exterior bulletin board (west side of Council Chamber) by 6:00 pm on Thursday, July 8, 2021 and posted on the City's website as required by established policies and procedures.

ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA:

Hirschbein, seconded by Song to accept the Agenda, as amended. (Item 1 has been tabled.)

AYES: AYLAIAN, ERVIN, HIRSCHBEIN, SONG, MORUZZI, WEREMIUK
ABSENT: ROBERTS

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

LOREN OSTROW, applicant for Item 5A, Living Out, submitting plans for major conformance to the previously approved PDD. The project meets many of the General Plan's goals of returning multi-family development, creating substantial minimum open-space and introducing small scale retail without creating strip centers. They are requesting one amendment to add gates to the residential parking area, as detailed in the correspondence.

1. **ELECTION OF OFFICERS:**
 - 1A. **ELECTION OF CHAIR**
 - 1B. **ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR**

Tabled.

2. **CONSENT CALENDAR:**

- 2A. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES: APRIL 28, 2021, JUNE 9, 2021 AND JUNE 23, 2021**

Hirschbein, seconded by Moruzzi to approve minutes with minor correction to the June 9th minutes.

June 9, 2021 Minutes:

Commissioner Ervin and Vice Chair Moruzzi abstained on minutes.

AYES: ERVIN, HIRSCHBEIN, SONG, MORUZZI, WEREMIUK
ABSENT: ROBERTS
ABSTAIN: AYLAIAN

3. **PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

- 3A. **SOCANNA CORPORATION, FOR A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT (CUP) APPLICATION FOR A TYPE 1A CANNABIS CULTIVATION FACILITY WITHIN AN EXISTING 4,777-SQUARE FOOT BUILDING LOCATED AT 19021 NEWHALL STREET, ZONE M-2 AND WITHIN THE CANNABIS OVERLAY ZONE, SECTION 15 (CASE 5.1519-CUP). (ER)**

Principal Planner Robertson presented the proposed cannabis facility as outlined in the staff report.

JAY TAKACS, odor control consultant, stated this plan is in conformity with the old mitigation requirements for odor control and described the new odor control plan to bring to compliance.

VERONICA GOEDHART, director of special compliance, addressed questions pertaining from Commission pertaining to odor control.

NICOLE CRISTE, environmental consultant, stated the City has standards for odor control in which the applicant has complied with. Ms. Criste clarified there are no natural environmental impacts because the site is fully developed.

Chair Weremiuk opened the public hearing:

DENNIS HURVITZ, Desert Engineers, addressed questions from Commission pertaining to equipment on the roof, facility information, sealed rooms (box-in-a-box) and odor mitigation practices.

There being no further speakers the public hearing was closed.

Chair Weremiuk asked the applicant if she is willing to bring this project to the current odor control standards. (Megan Wong, facility operator, responded yes.)

Commission Song made a motion of approval with added conditions.

The Commission discussed added conditions pertaining to odor control standards and box-in-a-box construction.

Song, seconded by Hirschbein to approve with added conditions.

1. Amend PLN 14- Planning staff shall conduct inspections of landscape maintenance, Odor Control system and building conditions at three (3) months, six (6) months and then after the bi-annual basis by City staff.
2. The Odor Control Plan shall be amended to the current 2020 standards and shall be reviewed by the City's Odor Control Consultant for compliance.
3. Dilution equipment shall be included in the Odor Control plan to prevent odor exfiltration from the facility.
4. A new box-in-a-box walls against existing exterior walls shall be required to be constructed in the facility.

AYES: AYLAIAN, ERVIN, HIRSCHBEIN, SONG, MORUZZI, WEREMIUK
ABSENT: ROBERTS

A recess was taken at 6:36 pm. Meeting resumed at 6:42 pm.

4. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: NONE

5. NEW BUSINESS:

- 5A. KOAR PALM SPRINGS, LLC (DBA: LIVING OUT) FOR A FINAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN RELATED TO A PLANNED DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT FOR A 122-UNIT APARTMENT COMPLEX LOCATED AT 1122 EAST TAHQUITZ CANYON WAY, ZONE REO, SECTION 14 (CASE 5.1449 PDD 389). (GM)**

Assistant Planning Director Newell presented the proposed final development plan as outlined in the staff report.

LOREN OSTROW, applicant, responded to questions from the Commission pertaining to the ARC's review of landscape, pool and carports. He explained there will be shade trees along the Tahquitz frontage (dog park side), bus stop has been added by bus company; and pointed-out that gated request is for parking area only not the entire development. Mr. Ostrow said they will provide dog water bowls (operational issue) and by adding larger size trees in the parking area instead of increasing quantity of smaller trees.

PAUL ALANIS, project architect, described the increased landscape area (larger trees) that will create better shading. He explained they don't object to providing water fountains in the dog park; however, they think water bowls for owners to fill are more efficient. Mr. Alanis described the parking design, carport height reduction and shading for pool area.

Palm trees along Tahquitz:

Commissioner Hirschbein thinks it's too much detail for Planning Commission to evaluate the details of landscape plan and suggested a limited review by ARC.

Chair Weremiuk prefers further review by subcommittee that includes a landscape member of the ARC.

Commissioner Song pointed-out there are no shade trees along Tahquitz and does not meet the condition.

Public plaza, including shade trees, drinking fountains & seating:

Chair Weremiuk noted a safety concern with shared drinking bowls in dog park instead of drinking fountain. (The applicant does not have a problem providing drinking fountain.)

Commissioners Hirschbein Song and Chair Weremiuk agreed the trees in public plaza are appropriate.

Gated parking:

Commissioner Hirschbein thinks there's a need to control vehicular access to the private parking area not the entire development. He is not opposed to having a mechanical arm gate activated with card key.

Commissioner Ervin likes the way the traffic flows in the city and is not in support of gating the property in the parking area. He suggested placing "No Parking" signs with penalties/fines that could be imposed.

Commissioner Song agreed with Commissioner Aylaian and if the Commission thinks there needs to be a gate control program for residents, she thinks what the applicant has done on Hermosa is the right approach that allows an entry way, landscape island with sufficient room for vehicular turn-around (good transitional design between private and public). Ms. Song thinks the same approach could be used on Tahquitz with guest parking which could be set-back further given the crosswalk nearby. Ms. Song overall is in agreement that this project should not be gated. If gates do come in, the gate's design

should be looked at in composition to the building and more comprehensive plan for pedestrian access. In reference to the carport design, a double row is 40 feet of carport and would like to see varying heights to reduce massiveness.

Vice Chair Moruzzi said in general he's not in favor of gates particularly on the main road. He mentioned the new Cody Place has gates in the interior to separate the retail from residential. He's seen how it works; however, he doesn't like the concept of blocking a residential area. He thinks no parking signs may possibly work.

Chair Weremiuk asked staff if the separation from residential to commercial could be done in a landscape buffer (low-hedge material) with a vehicular entry gate at entrance. (Staff responded this could be a possible solution- review landscape material for barrier as well as pedestrian access plan in subcommittee meeting.)

Commissioner Ervin was not favor of the landscape buffer; he thinks it would limit vehicles and is still a gate.

Commissioner Hirschbein sees this as a parking garage and does not have any issues with limiting vehicular access. He is in support of a mechanical arm gate.

Vice Chair Moruzzi and Commissioner Ervin spoke in support of a mechanical arm gate.

Commissioner Song spoke in support of the landscape buffer in place of gates and further review of carport design.

Song, seconded by Weremiuk to approve the Final Development Plan, subject to final approval by subcommittee review (Hirschbein, Weremiuk and three (3) ARC members) as follows:

1. Gate design in keeping with project at vehicle access points only- no gates in parking area;
2. 4'-5' landscape buffer around the resident parking;
3. Review shade trees along Tahquitz for appropriateness and placement;
4. Three dual drinking fountains with human and canine accessibility- one in public plaza area and two in dog park;
5. Modify carport design to be in keeping with preliminary review;
6. Bus stop shelter to be confirmed at property; if none in place bus shelter shall be installed.

Items 1, 2, 3 and 5 to be reviewed by subcommittee.

AYES: AYLAIAN, HIRSCHBEIN, SONG, MORUZZI, WEREMIUK
NOES: ERVIN
ABSENT: ROBERTS

6B. DISCUSSION OF APPOINTMENTS OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMITTEE (ARC) MEMBERS.

Director Fagg provided a brief overview on the appointments of Architectural Review Committee members and given the new architectural review process staff is recommending re-appointment of existing members.

Chair Weremiuk concurred with staff on re-appointing the existing members given the recent changes to the architectural review process.

Commissioners Hirschbein and Song commented that there are many qualified applicants and encouraged new candidates to re-apply next year when two terms are set to expire.

No action taken.

6. DISCUSSION:

6A. CITY OF PALM SPRINGS GENERAL PLAN UPDATE – INTRODUCTION OF DRAFT HOUSING ELEMENT.

Assistant Director Newell provided background information and an overview of the Housing Element and Land Use Plan. Mr. Newell said as a reminder, this is a limited update focusing primarily on the land-use, housing, circulation and safety elements; and part of that includes the vision and priority statements. He stated they have been doing additional outreach for each of the priority statements over the last six months. There are several requirements in State law that must be included in the Housing Element that address the housing supply and quality of housing affordability. We can inventory our current housing and look at the quantity and quality. Mr. Newell described the interactive map and as part of the community workshops they are asking the public to provide their input. They have received good input from the neighborhoods as to what the obstacles have been for accessing quality and affordable housing. He described the review process timelines, population, housing units and occupancy rate.

Commissioner Hirschbein noted that City Council has directed staff to look at parking requirements in higher density developments and thinks it should be considered as well.

Commissioner Song concurred on the parking requirements. She thinks .75 per unit discourages three-bedroom apartments and if they are going to have large family apartments built, they need it to look at those parking requirements. She thinks the goals and priorities are missing a whole section on trailer parks because they have turned out to be our largest source of affordable housing. There are no goals towards improving them so they can be maintained. She thinks they should be looking at requirements for percentages that explore all the various options to be able to generate some additional affordable housing. She would like us to go through the Goals and Policies on a page-by-page.

Commissioner Aylaian said rental housing including apartments is the key to providing housing that is affordable. She thinks it's important to find ways to encourage or to stimulate development of apartments because there are a lot of folks just starting out- a lot of people are going to school and are ready to meet with owners of apartments.

Chair Weremiuk commented when people read it, it is very well written. She thinks it's a good document and would like to page by page on the Goals and Policies.

Commissioner Ervin said he attended three of the workshops and thinks staff did a great job. He noticed that there were not too many people in attendance possibly because of COVID19 or people might not be interested and encouraged more outreach. He noted a resident from Desert Highlands referenced the homebuyer's assistance program in the 2007 General Plan and urged this be added to provide different opportunities for housing in our city.

No action taken.

PLANNING COMMISSION REPORTS, REQUESTS AND COMMENTS:

- Upcoming Sustainability Commission meeting will be held to discuss solar and water usage for commercial use specifically with cannabis.
- Update on demolition for Tova Hotel property and Dream Hotel.

PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

- City Council has called up two Planning Commission action items: Kings Garden and Canyon View for the July 22nd meeting.

ADJOURNMENT: The Planning Commission adjourned at 9:37 pm to a Special Meeting at 5:30 pm, Wednesday, July 21, 2021, 3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way.



David Newell, AICP
Assistant Director of Planning