

PLANNING COMMISSION STUDY SESSION MINUTES
CITY OF PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
January 13, 2021
3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way, Palm Springs, California

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Weremiuk called the meeting to order 4:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Hirschbein, Lewin, Song, Vice Chair Moruzzi, Chair Weremiuk

EXCUSED: Ervin

STAFF PRESENT: Planning Director Fagg, Assistant Planning Director Newell, Attorney Priest, Secretary Bruggemans, Engineering Associate Rick Minjares, Associate Planner Kikuchi, Principal Planner Robertson

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

DISCUSSION:

- 1. INTRODUCTION OF MAJOR ARCHITECTURAL AND VARIANCE APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED BY RIOS FOR A PROPOSED MIXED-USE PROJECT WHICH INCLUDES TWENTY-FIVE (25) SINGLE AND TWO (2)-STORY APARTMENT UNITS AND COMMERCIAL SPACES ON AN UNDEVELOPED 2.40-ACRE SITE LOCATED AT THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF NORTH PALM CANYON DRIVE AND WEST CHINO DRIVE, 575 NORTH PALM CANYON DRIVE, ZONE CBD & ZONE R-2, SECTION 10 (CASE 3.4191 MAJ & CASE 6.560 VAR). (NK)**

Director Fagg introduced the project and alerted the Commission against making statements as to which way they will vote; only fact-finding questions are appropriate.

Associate Planner Kikuchi narrated a PowerPoint presentation with details of the proposed project.

Director Fagg discussed ways for resolving the level of density related to the project.

Discussion followed regarding the Riverside County flood control plan for the adjacent parcel, whether the area could be landscaped, the overall lot coverage of the two parcels, combined, whether the open space includes the drive aisle, potential issues with setback requirements with an NCC zoning designation, Fire Department requirements relative to a drive aisle and exit onto Palm Canyon, the need for two entry and exit points and providing access for emergency vehicles.

BRIAN ADAMS, developer, clarified their intention is not to have residents enter/exit off North Palm Canyon but will be an emergency vehicle entry/exit only.

Discussion continued regarding the location of the Riverside County flood control parcel and the reason for minimum density requirements in the General Plan.

MARK RIOS, applicant, thanked the Commission for considering the project and narrated a PowerPoint presentation with details of the proposed project and spoke about reinforcing a pedestrian community.

Commissioner Hirschbein noted there is more parking than required and asked whether the developer would consider eliminating some parking spaces and adding areas for public uses.

MARK RIOS reported they have considered including pocket parks and stated additional parking was provided in order to not impact the Old Las Palmas community.

Discussion followed regarding the urban form of the Chicken Ranch Restaurant, enhancing the area on the corner along Chino Drive, matching the scale and form of the restaurant, creating a "gateway moment", enhancing treatment of the Palm Canyon edge and increasing access to commercial features.

Commissioner Song commented on the possibility of removing parking to enhance the corner and address the street urban design along Palm Canyon and Chino Drive; and consider adding a gate on West Chino Drive.

Commissioner Lewin spoke about the importance of Chino Drive; and would like to see more ideas for the corner of Chino Drive and Palm Canyon. He thinks the street along Chino Drive does not seem balanced and suggested the possibility of re-orienting the project, outward, to embrace the surrounding area.

Vice Chair Moruzzi requested clarification of the 219 feet relative to a rear setback.

Chair Weremiuk voiced concerns regarding adding doors and activating the street for pedestrians; and suggested adding other entry/exit points. Ms. Weremiuk recommended adding shade for pedestrians along the street.

PETER MAHLER spoke about the importance of the site and noted their goal is to create a luxury residential community.

ADJOURNMENT:

The Planning Commission Study Session adjourned at 5:51 p.m. to their regular meeting at 6:00 pm on Wednesday, January 13, 2021.



David Newell, AICP
Assistant Director of Planning