

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES  
APRIL 27, 2022  
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 5:32 pm.

**ROLL CALL:**

Present: Aylaian, Ervin, Hirschbein, Miller, Moruzzi, Chair Weremiuk

Excused Absence: Vice Chair Roberts

Staff Present: Assistant Planning Director Newell, Attorney Priest, Administrative Coordinator Hintz, Engineering Associate Minjares

**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, April 21, 2022, and posted on the City's website as required by established policies and procedures.

**ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA:**

Miller, seconded by Hirschbein to accept the agenda, as presented.

AYES: AYLAIAN, ERVIN, HIRSCHBEIN, MILLER, MORUZZI, WEREMIUK

ABSENT: ROBERTS

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Chair Weremiuk opened public comments.

ERIC HIGUCHI, owner/applicant, Item 4A, thanked staff for their hard work in processing their application and indicated the development team is available for questions from the Commission.

**1. CONSENT CALENDAR:**

**1A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: JANUARY 26, 2022**

Moruzzi, seconded by Miller to approve minutes as part of the Consent Calendar.

AYES: AYLAIAN, ERVIN, MILLER, MORUZZI, WEREMIUK  
ABSENT: ROBERTS  
ABSTAINED: HIRSCHBEIN

**2. PUBLIC HEARINGS: NONE**

**3. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: NONE**

**4. NEW BUSINESS:**

**4A. ERIC HIGUCHI, FOR A MAJOR DEVELOPMENT PERMIT TO CONSTRUCT A 65,284-SQUARE FOOT SELF-STORAGE FACILITY ON A 4.20-ACRE UNDEVELOPED PARCEL LOCATED AT 900 NORTH FARRELL DRIVE (CASE NO. 3.4313 MAJ). (AP)**

Assistant Planning Director Newell presented the proposed self-storage facility as outlined in the staff report. Mr. Newell noted in addition to the conditions of approval staff is recommending two additional landscape revisions and improvements.

Commissioner Miller said he would like to ensure the monument sign on the corner of Farrell Drive and Computer Drive will not create visibility issues by blocking traffic going southbound on Farrell Drive. Assistant Director Newell responded that the city could evaluate this concern under the sign program review once submitted that application is submitted by the applicant.

Commissioner Aylaian requested clarification on the verbiage for Findings #4, #5 and #8; and would like to see the language strengthened for these Findings. Ms. Aylaian agreed with staff's assessment of the wall on Farrell Drive as being monotonous and thinks it needs to be addressed whether it be with undulation in the wall, pilasters, decorative elements and tying in the trees to screen the RVs.

Chair Weremiuk questioned if rooftop solar or purchasing solar generated from carbon-free sources could be mandated on this project. (Assistant Planning Director Newell responded that at this time, they do not have an ordinance that mandates installation of solar panels.) Ms. Weremiuk questioned the height of the RVs. (The applicant responded the RV height is between 10 ft. to 14 ft. high.) Ms. Weremiuk questioned if grading could be lowered where RVs are proposed for storage. (Mr. Minjares responded there is no reason grading couldn't be lowered; however, from an operational and hydrological standpoint it could result in a potential problem and create an internal moat with water buildup.)

Chair Weremiuk pointed-out that several of the proposed trees in her community (Palo Verde and African Sumac species) are having trouble and dying. She requested alternate trees be considered.

Commissioner Hirschbein thinks it's the Commission's responsibility to identify issues regarding specific plant types and the monotonous wall and forward their concerns to the ARC for their review.

Commissioner Miller wondered why there are no palm trees on the site plan. He noticed there are a number of palm trees to the east toward the airport and thinks without any palm trees the site would look strange. He recommended the California fan and native washingtonia filifera palm trees.

The Commission discussed adding palm trees to the site. Commissioner Miller said he prefers not to plant the hedge on the outside of the wall because of the parkway. The addition of palm trees will be more attractive than a hedge against a wall. Mr. Newell recommended alternating the hedge with raised planters or similar elements.

Attorney Priest stated that staff will revise Findings #4, #5 and #8 to reflect more details in the findings of conformance with applicable standards based on comments from Commissioner Aylaian.

Weremiuk, seconded by Miller to recommend the Architectural Review Committee make any changes they deem necessary to the building and approve subject to the following changes:

1. Install additional planting materials in the perimeter planting bed along North Farrell Drive to ensure adequate screening of the RVs from the public right-of-way. The plant materials and installation shall be satisfactory to the Riverside County Airport Land Use Commission and Palm Springs International Airport requirements.
2. Enhance perimeter wall design along Farrell Drive, such as alternating recesses, raised planters and/or other similar enhancements. The proposed wall along Farrell Drive should undulate along the street with a hedge alternating on both sides to provide a continuous screen of the RV parking areas. Said hedge shall be planted to grow to, and be maintained at, a height of 14 feet.

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

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

- Landscape improvements along Sunrise Way (former Frontier Building);
- Pad elevations on residential development on Belardo and South Palm Canyon;
- Status of Orchid Tree (demolition).

**PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

- City Council reviewed the Fuego Nightclub appeal and was continued to their next meeting.

- Planning Commissioner training will be held during the month of August in Rancho Cucamonga.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

The Planning Commission adjourned at 6:34 pm to 5:30 pm, Wednesday, May 11, 2022, 3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way.



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David Newell, AICP  
Assistant Director of Planning