

CITY OF PALM SPRINGS  
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES  
September 23, 2009  
Council Chamber, City Hall  
3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way  
Palm Springs, CA 92262

**CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order at 1:35 p.m.

<b>ROLL CALL:</b>	<b>Present This Meeting:</b>	<b>Present to Date:</b>	<b>Absences: FY 2009/2010</b>
Tracy Conrad	X	3	1
Doug Donenfeld	X	4	0
Doug Hudson	X	2	0
Leslie Munger	X	1	1
Bill Scott	X	4	0
Jon Caffery, Vice Chair*	X	3	1
Leo Cohen, Chair	X	4	0

\*Vice Chair Caffery arrived at 1:40 p.m.

**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 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, September 17, 2009.

**ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA:**

The agenda was accepted, as presented.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Chair Cohen opened public comments:

The following persons spoke in favor of Item 2B (Well in the Desert):

-Thomas Van Etten, expressed support for this Commercial zoned location and for the services offered by Well in the Desert.

**Public Comments (cont'd):**

The following persons spoke in favor of Item 2B (Well in the Desert):

-Andy Linsky, Palm Springs, commented on the increasing number of low income and homeless people due to the disastrous economy and on their need for Well of the Desert.

-Melinda Tremaglio, vice president, Well in the Desert, expressed concern with interruption of services for the needy.

-Stuart Lynn, stated that the clientele consists of homeless, working poor, children and seniors who are struggling very hard to make it work in today's society and urged the Commission for more time to work on these issues with the neighborhood.

-Pastor David Pelletier, stated that as a community the needs of the poor in the city should be taken care of.

-Le McClellan, client services director, Well in the Desert, clarified that the county facility at the I-10 is not open and the Well in the Desert's primary object is to provide food and social service assistance.

-Veronica Rubinsky, spoke about events and activities she has attended sponsored by Well in the Desert and feeling completely safe with homeless people.

-Bob Hunt, vice president, Well in the Desert, noted that the current location is closer to residential than the proposed one and clarified that the site at the I-10 will only feed homeless people and not the working poor.

-Andrew Green, stated that the use of the facility consists of social services and feeding the poor; and noted that there is nothing harmful about this facility.

-Maureen Ferriter, spoke about an existing homeless shelter, Nightingale Manor; noting that they can work in neighborhoods especially those providing social services to the community.

-Gayle Hodges, spoke about the extreme financial and emotional hardships she and her family have been through and expressed support for Well in the Desert.

-Vic Gainer, Palm Springs, former board member, Well in the Desert, stated that more working poor have lost their homes and are not necessarily homeless and Well in the Desert is a resource and an alternative to downtown.

-Dr. McKinney, founder, Well in the Desert, stated that 9 different sites were taken to the City before they were approved for the current location and spoke about the irrational hatred towards homeless people.

The following persons spoke in opposition to Item 2B (Well in the Desert):

-Ellen Kelley, owner of adjacent commercial property, expressed concern with the common driveway they share with the subject property and the impact to the established businesses and neighborhood.

-Shirley Hoffman, expressed opposition to the location and not the services provided by Well in the Desert.

-Mark Sykora, spoke in opposition to the location and expressed concern with the economic impact to his home.

**Public Comments (cont'd):**

The following persons spoke in opposition to Item 2B (Well in the Desert):

-Vincent Williams, chair, Sunmor Neighborhood Organization, stated that the board of directors unanimously voted in opposition of the location on Commercial Road and pointed out the adverse impact to the neighbors.

-Penny Wiese, addressed the protection of safety and quality of life, lighting improvement and patrolling of the neighborhood.

-Renee Foster, spoke about a family member who was a homeless person with substance abuse and mental disorder problems; she emphasized that not all homeless people are safe.

-Collin Blant, spoke about his experience working with homeless people in Los Angeles and questioned if there is a better location for this facility.

-Gary Wagner, noted that the economy will improve in the future and this facility will affect the home sales in the neighborhood.

-Douglas Gilbert, read a statement from John Garrett, stating that the many of the existing businesses such as the storage facility, UPS building and car rental yard attract heavy traffic to this area.

-Michael Tabor, is not minimizing the services provided by Well in the Desert but thinks this is the wrong location.

-Phillip Reavis, Palm Springs, expressed concern that this facility will affect property values.

-Robert Carlson, Palm Springs, expressed concern with lack of noticing to the neighborhood.

-Antoine Roldan, stated that this is not the right location because there are children and seniors living in this neighborhood.

-Gary Pepper stated that property values will go down in their neighborhood and the I-10 location is a better place to receive social services.

-Peggy Mel, stated that she has lived 35 years in her house and this is not the appropriate location for this facility.

-Michele Martin, express concern with homeless people walking around in her neighborhood.

-Roy Hutchins, spoke about several incidents that have occurred at the current location and the signs of drug addicts in this area.

-Kevin Hunt, Palm Springs, spoke in opposition to the project.

There being no further appearances public comments was closed.

**1. CONSENT CALENDAR:**

- 1A. Case 3.2743 - A request by Allen Yadgari of Hotel Moderne Redevelopment for a one-year time extension for a previously approved renovation of a 29-unit hotel located at 1910 South Camino Real, Zone R-2, Section 26. (Project Planner: Glenn Mlaker, Assistant Planner)**

M/S/C (Bill Scott/Doug Donenfeld, 7-0) To approve, a one-year time extension from August 8, 2009 to August 7, 2010.

2. OTHER BUSINESS:

**2A Case 3.3374 MAJ - A request by Paul Mahoney and Chris Hermann of Aunt Effie's Gardens to construct a retail garden store with outdoor display located at 2393 North Palm Canyon Drive, Zone C-1, Section 3. (Project Planner: David A. Newell, Associate Planner)**

David A. Newell, Associate Planner, provided background information as outlined in the staff report.

-Paul Mahoney, applicant, (responded to questions from the Commission) provided details on the modular building, the vacant site and their plans to beautify the lot as a temporary use.

M/S/C (Doug Donenfeld/Bill Scott, 7-0) To approve, subject to Conditions of Approval, as amended:

-The project shall be reviewed by the Planning Commission if any one of the following things occurs:

- a. The use has changed.
- b. The property has been abandoned.
- c. Three (3) years after the approval date.

**2B. Case 10.470 DET - An application by Well in the Desert requesting that the Planning Commission determine that an emergency food box distribution, meal service and social services center for poor and homeless people be considered similar to uses permitted in the M-1-P Zone, specifically for the property located at 555 Commercial Road, Section 12. (Project Planner: David A. Newell, Associate Planner)**

David A. Newell, Associate Planner, provided background information as outlined in the staff report dated September 23, 2009.

-Arlene Rosenthal, president, Well in the Desert, provided background information on the food distribution on Indian Canyon Way noting that serves over 2500 people a month. Ms. Rosenthal agreed that the present site is not the appropriate location and provided details of their search for a new site. Ms. Rosenthal addressed loitering, facility rules, traffic, hours of operation and security measures. Ms. Rosenthal addressed questions from the Commission.

Vice Chair Caffery expressed concern with traffic safety issues in this neighborhood.

M/S/C (Vice Chair Caffery/Leslie Munger, 6-1/Bill Scott) To deny without prejudice.

Director Ewing reported that this decision may be appealed to the City Council within 10 days of this action.

**3. PUBLIC HEARINGS: None.**

**4. PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENTS:**

Commissioner Scott requested information on how staff communicates with the ONI on issues that may have an effect on their neighborhood. Director Ewing replied that routine administrative procedures are in place to notify the ONI and a separate and specific outreach was conducted for the Sunmor neighborhood.

Commissioner Conrad requested staff look into the flood light on the top of the Sun Center building. Mr. Robertson responded that that no permit is on file and it has been forwarded to Code Enforcement.

Chair Cohen requested staff look into a traffic safety issue (trees covering the stop sign) at Via Norte and Vista Chino. Chair Cohen requested a study session discussion on the sign ordinance.

4A. Annual Schedule for Planning Commission Representation to the Architectural Advisory Committee Meetings - The Commission signed up for representation to the AAC meetings for the upcoming fiscal year.

**PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

Director Ewing reported that the City Council will meet next week and provided an update on planning items scheduled for that meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further comments the Planning Commission adjourned at 4:27 p.m. to a Study Session on Wednesday, October 7, 2009, at 2:00 p.m., City Hall, Large Conference Room, 3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way.

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Craig A. Ewing, AICP  
Director of Planning Services