

Planning Commission Minutes For August 18, 2004, meeting

Commissioners present: Chair Gene Touchet; Vice Chair Doug Diekmann;
Commissioners Stan Barnes and Bill Feist

Commissioner with excused absence: Sonja Marchand (Feist/Barnes moved/second with unanimous approval to excuse)

Staff present: Interim Senior Planner Bud Kopp; Associate Planner Rich Malacoff;
Deputy City Attorney Michael Shirey

Minutes

Staff reported that minutes of Aug. 4, 2004, meeting will be submitted for approval at the next Planning Commission meeting.

Public Hearings

Conditional Use Permit 04-005 CV Collision Center for 9,019 sq. ft. building

Malacoff presented the staff report. He said the Knox Box and fire conditions of approval will be revised and included in the resolution.

Touchet discussed landscaping requirements for the project.

Barnes asked whether the parking stalls shown on the site plan represent the actual stalls to be striped in the parking lot. Malacoff said the site plan was more for schematic purposes and that there is enough space on site to meet parking requirements.

It was moved/seconded Diekmann/Barnes and carried 4-0-1 absent with noted resolution revisions.

Conditional Use Permit 04-006 CV Collision Center for auto storage facility on vacant lot south of Collision Center building

Malacoff presented the staff report. He said the applicant has agreed to resolve two issues: the project must be set back from the fence by 13 feet and enhanced landscaping must be planted along the project wall. Malacoff also informed the Commission that the project's proposed parking lot will not be paved but will have an aggregate surface with a "soil binder" that will be reviewed annually by the City Engineering Division.

Feist expressed concern over the aggregate parking lot and asked how long it would remain that way. Malacoff said the city will maintain control over the parking lot pursuant to project conditions.

Project applicant Don Stewart of Rancho Mirage informed Feist that the aggregate material will be temporary and that he will eventually pave the parking lot when he constructs a building on the site.

It was moved/seconded Diekmann/Feist and carried 4-0-1 absent to approve Conditional Use Permit 04-006.

Conditional Use Permit 04-009 for 6,000 sq. ft. drive thru west of I-HOP in the Food for Less Shopping Center

Kopp presented the report, saying that the Conditional Use Permit is for the project's proposed drive-thru.

Diekmann questioned the painting of the project. Kopp responded that the commercial center is currently being painted and renovated and that the drive-thru will be painted to match the center.

Jerry LaLondberg of Cathedral City asked what the proposed drive-thru will be. Kopp said it is potentially a coffee shop but he does not know the brand at this time.

Barnes asked if there will be outdoor seating, and, if so, where it will be.

Applicant Mike Lieberman said there will be outdoor café style seating located on the parking lot side.

It was M/S Diekmann/Barnes and carried 4-0-1 absent to approve Conditional Use Permit 04-009.

Environmental Assessment 04-004 for Sheraton Palm Canyon Hotel

Kopp presented the staff report and said the proposed action is to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the 300-room hotel project. He also distributed a revised resolution. Kopp said the MND was being recommended now so the funding could be secured for the project. The MND incorporated environmental mitigation measures from the city's General Plan and also contains additional specific mitigation requirements, such as shade/shadow, lighting, geology/soils and noise. Kopp said he received comments from the Fire Department which have been incorporated into the MND as Response to Comments.

Feist said he understands that the actual hotel project will come before the Commission, but he wondered if the project will feature a restaurant on the upper floors to take

advantage of the commanding views. Kopp said the issue can be addressed at design review.

Feist asked what the standard is for shadow effects. Kopp said that generally the threshold for determining the impact of a shadow is two hours and added this will also be addressed at design review.

Touchet said that throughout the MND, the developer is only “encouraged” to mitigate potential impacts. Kopp said this language is just semantics and if there is a significant environmental impact, then the impact must be mitigated.

It was M/S Feist/Diekmann and carried 4-0-1 absent. to adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration and approve Environmental Assessment 04-004 with the revised resolution submitted to the Commission.

Commissioners’ comments

Touchet updated the Commission on the status of the Inclusionary Housing Draft Ordinance; mentioned that all Commissioners should have received copies of the Rio Vista Specific Plan; asked if Target has the correct amount of roof screening (to be reviewed by staff); and complimented Kopp and Malacoff for doing an excellent job, particularly considering that they are new to the city.

Feist said he believes there should be more tower elements to downtown projects to grab people’s attention and that there should be a pedestrian bridge over East Palm Canyon Drive in the downtown. Kopp said Tri-Millennium Properties, the downtown master developer, will be submitting Phase 2 plans soon and that staff will review for tower elements