



PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

May 20, 2004

West Hollywood Park Auditorium, 647 N. San Vicente Boulevard, West Hollywood, California 90069

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Altschul called the meeting of the Planning Commission to order at 6:38 P.M.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Steve Smith led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL:

Commissioners Present: Altschul, Bartolo, D'Amico, DeLuccio, Guardarrama, Hamaker and Thompson.

Commissioners Absent: None.

Staff Present: John Chase, Urban Designer, David DeGrazia, Assistant Planner, Deborah Murphy, Contract Planner, Christi Hogin, Assistant City Attorney; Susan Healy Keene, Planning Manager and David Gillig, Commission Secretary.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

ACTION: Approve the Planning Commission Agenda of Thursday, May 20, 2004 as presented. **Motion by Commissioner DeLuccio, seconded by Vice-Chair Hamaker and unanimously carried.**

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

ACTION: Approve the Planning Commission Minutes of Thursday, August 21, 2003 as presented. **Motion by Vice-Chair Hamaker, seconded by Commissioner Thompson and unanimously carried.**

Commissioner DeLuccio made a correction to the May 6, 2004 minutes. He stated Item 10.B. Page 5, incorrectly notes Chair Altschul as voting "AYE" on this item. Chair Altschul should be noted as "ABSTAINED", since he recused himself from this particular item.

ACTION: Approve the Planning Commission Minutes of 1) Thursday, May 6, 2003 as amended. **Motion by Vice-Chair Hamaker, seconded by Commissioner Thompson and unanimously carried.**

6. PUBLIC COMMENT:

ROSLYN KRAUSE, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke in support of saving the property at 1343 North Laurel Avenue, West Hollywood, California.

DAN SILVER, WEST HOLLYWOOD, commented on the Conditions of Approvals which are issued to restaurants.

SUZANNE BADOWI, WEST HOLLYWOOD, commented on the continued nuisance of the [implied] noise from the bar at the Sunset Marquis Hotel (Whisky Bar) and asked the Commission to look into the possible violation(s) of their Conditional Use Permit.

JOHN CALLARI, WEST HOLLYWOOD, commented on Games, a restaurant on Melrose Avenue and the [implied] violation(s) of their Conditional Use Permit.

7. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS:

Vice-Chair Hamaker announced for the record she is a member of the West Hollywood Community Housing Corporation and does recuse herself when items are brought before the Planning Commission.

8. CONSENT CALENDAR. None.

9. COMMISSION CONSIDERATION. None.

10. PUBLIC HEARINGS.

A. 912-914 San Vicente Boulevard.

Demolition Permit 2003-031, Development Permit 2003-024, Tentative Tract Map 2003-011: Request to demolish a single-family residence and a four-unit apartment building, both on the same lot, and construct a four-story, five-unit condominium building located at 912-914 San Vicente Boulevard, West Hollywood, California.

ACTION: 1) continue to Thursday, July 1, 2004. **Motion carried by consensus of the Commission.**

B. 894-902 West Knoll Drive.

Demolition Permit 2003-023, Development Permit 2003-017, Tentative Tract Map 2004-002: Request to construct a six-unit condominium building in the courtyard style and demolish eight (8) residential units on two (2) lots located at 894-902 West Knoll Drive, West Hollywood, California.

ACTION: 1) continue to Thursday, June 3, 2004. **Motion carried by consensus of the Commission.**

- C. 8305 Sunset Boulevard. Administrative Permit 2003-042, Billboard Permit 2003-016, Development Permit 2003-016.** Proposal containing approximately 13,000 square feet of retail and restaurant with outdoor dining fronting Sunset Boulevard, with approximately 192 parking stalls in an integrated four story parking structure and a billboard incorporated into the south elevation located at 8305 Sunset Boulevard, West Hollywood, California.

ACTION: 1) continue to Thursday, June 3, 2004. **Motion carried by consensus of the Commission.**

Chair Altschul requested the following (Item 15.), moved out of order and heard at this time. **Motion carried by consensus of the Commission.**

15. ITEMS FROM STAFF.

Tom Benedetti, Code Compliance Manager, commented on the issues surrounding "Game" a restaurant located at 9010 Melrose Avenue, West Hollywood, California. He confirmed that there are ongoing violations at the restaurant and the operation is more a "sports bar" than a restaurant. Enforcement strategy is in place and will be proceeding appropriately in the future.

Susan Healy Keene, Planning Manager, stated this item will be brought forward for discussion at the next Planning Commission meeting on Thursday, June 3, 2004.

A. Calculation of Sunset Millennium West Parcel Outdoor Dining Area.

Susan Healy Keene, Planning Manager, presented an explanation how the amount of outdoor dining was calculated on the West Parcel of the Sunset Millennium project (including the approval of Norman's Restaurant).

She detailed how the 1,500 square foot limitation is related to the amount of parking available and how other outdoor dining establishments are allowed 250 square feet of outdoor dining without providing additional parking, but, that additional parking is provided for the additional outdoor dining. She also referenced the Development Agreement, which allows for minor adjustments and changes with approval of the City Manager and/or City Attorney.

She presented the approved minutes of the Planning Commission meeting of October 16, 2003; which shows approval of Norman's outdoor dining area and parking and Exhibit G from the staff report, which explains how more than 1,500 square feet could be approved.

B. Update on Sunset Marquis Whiskey Bar Issues.

Tom Benedetti, Code Compliance Manager, confirmed and verified the various noise complaints at the Sunset Marquis Hotel and stated he is confident the hotel is moving forward in attempting to correct the current problems.

He reiterated that no action is needed from the Planning Commission at this time. Code Compliance will continue to monitor the situation and allow the business to correct the violations.

Chair Altschul raised concerns that representatives from the Sunset Marquis Hotel have not met with the neighbors or the Park Wellington Homeowners Association as stated earlier.

Tom Benedetti, Code Compliance Manager, stated he has spoken with management from the Sunset Marquis Hotel and they have extended an offer to meet, but there appears to be some type of process the Park Wellington Homeowners Association requires in order to sit down and confer.

Chair Altschul requested that staff take the initiative to facilitate and arrange a meeting between the Park Wellington Homeowners Association and the Sunset Marquis Hotel management within the next thirty (30) days.

Rod Gruyendyke, General Manager of the Sunset Marquis Hotel, stated for the record he had met with Empire West on Sunday, May 16, 2004 at the Sunset Marquis Hotel. He indicated he has also met with the neighbors at 1131 Alta Loma.

He has spoken to the manager of the Park Wellington and offered the hotel facilities for their next Homeowners Association meeting. However, Park Wellington representatives indicated it is against the by-laws of the Homeowners Association to have a meeting off the premises and visitors and/or guests are not allowed in the actual board meetings (Homeowners Association meetings). He reiterated he has made himself available for correspondence and meeting at any time with this group in the next fifteen (15) or thirty (30) day period and will work with staff to accomplish this.

11. STUDY SESSION.

A. Mixed-Use Overlay Zone.

Chair Altschul appointed Commissioner Bartolo and Commissioner D'Amico to a sub-committee on mixed-use development with the authority to work with staff on this topic. **Motion carried by consensus of the Commission.**

Susan Healy Keene, Planning Manager, presented a brief history of mixed-use development; which includes commercial (retail/restaurant) and adding on top, office and residential use. She stated this was a City Council directive on August 18, 2003, directing the Community Development Department to establish a project team and assemble a mixed-use task force to review the Zoning Ordinance relative to mixed-use development in the City of West Hollywood. She also referenced the City's Vision 20/20 Plan.

Deborah Murphy, Contract Planner, John Chase, Urban Designer and David DeGrazia, Assistant Planner presented the staff report integrated with slides and graphics.

The mixed-use overlay zone topics included discussion and detailed explanation of the following:

1. Height Bonuses and Increased Floor Area Ratios;

- Is more height acceptable in order to achieve the goal of providing mixed-use housing? If so, how high?
- What are potential impacts that should be analyzed?
- What locations in the City are appropriate for height bonuses?
- Are there specific areas that should not receive height bonuses?

2. Reduced Parking Requirements;

- Should parking requirements be reduced for all mixed-use projects?
- Should certain uses within mixed-use projects not receive parking requirement reductions
- Can parking requirements be further reduced for small project sites located near public parking facilities?
- Should existing parking suffice for adaptive reuse of a building even if less than the current parking requirement?

3. Reduced Loading Area Requirements;

- Should one-site loading area requirements be reduced or eliminated as part of an incentive for mixed-use projects?

4. Permit Residential-Only Projects in Strategic Areas;

- Should properties in marginal commercial areas be allowed to have residential-only projects?

5. Reduced Residential Open-Space Requirements;

- Should open space requirements be reduced or eliminated as an incentive for mixed-use projects? If so, what open space requirements should be changed?

6. Flexibility with Affordable Housing Requirements;

- Should the design requirements for affordable/senior units be the same as for market rate units? If not, what differences are acceptable?
- For a project that meets the state required bonuses for affordable/senior housing should they also be allowed to utilize mixed-use bonuses?

7. Reduced Residential Storage Requirements;

- Should residential storage requirements be eliminated or reduced as further encouragement for the development of residential units as part of mixed-use projects?

8. Percent Residential Required;

- Should a certain percentage of residential square footage be required for mixed-use projects? If so, what should this percentage be?

9. Percent Pedestrian Oriented Uses Required;

- Shall design standards be created to ensure that the ground floor commercial portions of mixed-use projects maintain a pedestrian orientation? If so, what should these standards be?

10. Hybrid Sites That Include Both Residentially Zoned and Commercially Zoned Lots:

- Under what circumstances should mixed-use projects be allowed to extend into residentially zoned properties?

Vice-Chair Hamaker questioned if other cities have the characteristically "shallow" lots like the City of West Hollywood.

Commissioner DeLuccio questioned and suggested that the City of San Jose, California (might) be included in future presentations on their mixed-use neighborhoods.

Chair Altschul opened the Study Session to Public Speakers:

MARK LEHMAN, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke in support of this item. He commented on the positive amenities of a mixed-use building and what it can offer to a neighborhood(s).

EDWARD LEVIN, WEST HOLLYWOOD, has concerns regarding this item. He suggested buildings whose height exceeds four (4)-stories, need an additional 3-4 feet of maximum height. Also, the minimum ground floor height for commercial space should be left to the market place. He would also like to see more outdoor dining encouraged with the parking requirements changed to 3.5 per 1,000 (regardless of the size of the establishment) unchanged. He strongly supports the modification to the inclusionary housing [requirements].

ACTION: Close the Study Session to Public Speakers. **Motion carried by consensus of the Commission.**

Commissioner Bartolo had concerns regarding height and noted when you go beyond the four-story height, construction (and costs) change, due to the fact buildings can longer be built with a wood frame. She briefly commented on parking and the [possible] creation of parking podiums.

Commissioner Thompson affirmed that he supports mixed-use. He also supports an overhaul and the creation of increased incentives so developers will take on more mixed-use projects.

Commissioner DeLuccio commended staff on the presentation of this mixed-use study session. He would like to see a chapter written specifically for mixed-use in the West Hollywood Zoning Code. He praised the preservation of the residential neighborhoods and how the mixed-use was built around the low density neighborhoods.

Commissioner D'Amico had concerns with the possibility of long stretches of five-story buildings and suggested [possible] areas of depressed levels of height and/or density. He stated the [future] success of mixed-use in West Hollywood would be the inclusion of how affordable housing would fit in with all the competing factors.

Commissioner Guardarrama acknowledged mixed use is the future of the City of West Hollywood. He supports the residential-only use [option] in commercial zones, and would like to see this included in the final ordinance.

Vice-Chair Hamaker commented briefly on the relationship of the width of the street to the height of the building(s) allowed. She also commented on the perceived fear and possible “loss of character” to the City of West Hollywood. She questioned staff regarding how many developments have taken place on Santa Monica Boulevard between La Brea Avenue and Doheny Drive.

John Chase, Urban Designer responded the recent West Hollywood Gateway project and the Ramada Hotel project (were the two largest single projects).

Chair Altschul stated residential projects in commercial zones would be a “sensational look”, but raised concerns with the future revenue stream. He indicated there is a limited amount of square footage in the City of West Hollywood to generate sales taxes in order to support the city’s vital services. He commented briefly on parking requirements. He commended staff on the excellent job done on the mixed-use study session and **motioned for staff to create a Mixed-Use Ordinance, which will be brought back before the Planning Commission and reviewed in August, 2004.**

ACTION: 1) Create a Mixed-Use Ordinance; and 2) bring back for review at a Planning Commission meeting in August, 2004. **Motion carried by consensus of the Commission.**

12. **NEW BUSINESS.** None

13. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS.** None.

14. **EXCLUDED CONSENT CALENDAR.** None.

15. **ITEMS FROM STAFF.**

A. Calculation of Sunset Millennium West Parcel Outdoor Dining Area.

This item was moved and heard after Item 10.C. **Motion carried by consensus of the Commission.**

B. Update on Sunset Marquis Whiskey Bar Issues.

This item was moved and heard after Item 10.C. **Motion carried by consensus of the Commission.**

16. **PUBLIC COMMENT.** None.

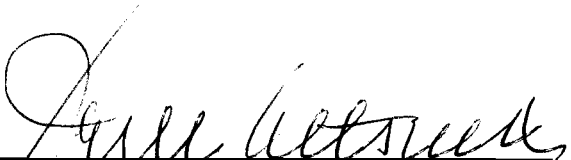
17. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS:

Chair Altschul informed the Planning Commission meeting on Thursday, June 17, 2004 will be held at Plummer Park Community Center, Rooms 5 and 6, located at 7377 Santa Monica Boulevard, West Hollywood, California.

Vice-Chair Hamaker stated Best Buy® will be opening on Friday, May 21, 2004 at the West Hollywood Gateway.

- 18. ADJOURNMENT:** The Planning Commission adjourned at 8:10 P.M. to the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Planning Commission, which will be on Thursday, June 3, 2004 at 6:30 P.M. at West Hollywood Park Auditorium, 647 N. San Vicente Boulevard, West Hollywood, California. **Motion carried by consensus of the Commission.**

APPROVED BY A MOTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION ON THIS 3RD DAY OF JUNE, 2004.



CHAIRPERSON

ATTEST:



Community Development Director