

MINUTES  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
1 CIVIC CENTER DRIVE  
SAN MARCOS, CALIFORNIA  
MONDAY, MAY 17, 2010 - 6:30 PM

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CALL TO ORDER

At 6:34 p.m. Chairman Kildoo called the meeting to order.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Jacoby led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

ROLL CALL

The Secretary called the roll:

PRESENT: COMMISSIONERS: Jacoby, Kildoo, Maas, Minnery, Norris,  
Schaible, Wedge

ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS: Kritzer-Jabara, Nelson

ALTERNATE COMMISSIONERS IN AUDIENCE: None.

Also present were: Planning Division Director, Jerry Backoff; Planning Secretary, Lisa Kiss; City Attorney, Helen Peak; Deputy City Attorney, Jim Lough; City Engineer, Mike Edwards; Principal Planner, Garth Koller

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES, 4/5/10

Action:

COMMISSIONER MAAS MOVED TO APPROVE CONSENT CALENDAR AS PRESENTED; SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER SCHAIBLE, (WITH CLARIFICATION THAT HIS DRAWING WAS A WATER TANK NOT A SILO), AND CARRIED BY A UNANIMOUS VOTE.

2. ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS –

Peak: Announced that Morton Park is no longer employed by their firm. She indicated that she cannot attend Planning Commission hearings because in the event a case is appealed to City Council, she would be precluded from

advising the Council. Introduced Morton's replacement, Jim Lough. Jim currently serves in Lemon Grove. He has also worked for Fresno, Imperial Beach and Solano Beach. He comes with a wealth of public agency experience. Serves as special counsel for many cities, representing Vista in prevailing wage case. Well known in appellant circle.

Lough: Commented he is pleased to be here.

## **2. WORKSHOP / PRESENTATION – “Richmar Specific Plan”**

Backoff: Introduced Principal Planner, Garth Koller, who will be presenting the City's Richmar Specific Plan. The environmental document has been given to Commissioner's for review. Notices were sent to surrounding property owners. City had a good turnout at previous workshop.

Koller: There will be a General Plan Amendment, Rezone, the Specific Plan under the Heart of the City will require an Amendment, and the new Richmar Specific Plan. NegDec has been posted and going through public review. It's available at the Counter and on City website. Project area and vicinity map shown. PowerPoint presentation shown. Discussed surrounding land uses. Two projects are already approved within area: Westlake Village – a mixed-use project with 106 units, 6,140 s.f. retail along Autumn Drive, Autumn Terrace - approved with 103 units, 7,500 s.f. retail, (both projects approved with a Density Bonus), Parkview – a potential mixed-use, not processed yet and SagePoint – existing 40 units. Current land use designations shown and discussed. Proposed Richmar SP indicates primarily mixed-use concept, coupled with civic designation (Fire Station & Senior Center), town center and mixed-use/open space to the east. Discussed Land Use Comparison: Current vs. Proposed. Proposed will have up to 571 dwelling units, mixed-use 28.9 acres, reduction in Commercial ~1.92 acres. Discussed circulation. One primary goal is to encourage a friendly pedestrian area. Incorporates diagonal parking, wider sidewalks. Discussed alley-way and future use. New Tiger Way provides additional access from San Marcos Blvd. to Mission Avenue. Discussed future extension of bridge (over north branch of San Marcos Creek) to Woodward. Building footprint (Area 8, 9, 10, 11) possibilities shown under a Form-based code approval. Three-story vertical element across Mission Rd., retail on ground, residential on 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> floor. Townhouses behind Mission Road, along Richmar Ave. The VFW is considering rebuilding at the Firebird Lane location. Possibility of a 43-unit senior housing complex. Discussed pedestrian circulation. 10' urban trail would run along Pico Avenue. 8' wide sidewalks w/angled parking, 21' pedestrian paseo along Mission Road allowing outdoor dining, water features, etc. Conceptual architecture shown.

Schaible: Commented that he likes it.

Wedge: Asked what a flat is?

Koller: One story occupied residential unit. Townhouse is two-story.

Kildoo: Inquired why a 3-story makes sense there?

Koller: To establish a vertical element. Parking is available.

Kildoo: Asked why they're not going higher?

Koller: Limited by parking.

Koller: Intent was not to maximum residential or retail. Some areas may be reduced in size.

Backoff: Staff was concerned about character of neighborhood. To go beyond 3-story would require structured parking.

Kildoo: Asked when this would occur?

Backoff: Open to the market. Some owners looking to assemble. They can develop their own property and stay as long as they like. City has talked with VFW and corner market.

Kildoo: Complimented staff for taking a blighted area and improving it.

Backoff: Paseo del Oro was first project in the area. Intent is to continue that approach. Architects BP looked at and validated number of units, layout and architecture.

Kildoo: Asked for comments from the public.

Unidentified man in audience: Asked about timeline?

Backoff: Environmental document is out for public review. City is also putting final touches on the Specific Plan. Hearings anticipated this summer.

Kildoo: Maybe late July or August.

2nd man in audience: Asked if the public would be able to see the Specific Plan document prior?

Backoff: Yes.

Kildoo: Yes, that's a legal requirement. It has to go public.

1<sup>st</sup> man: Asked if they should contact Garth for further input?

Koller: Yes, suggested a phone call.

### 3. PRESENTATION – “General Plan Update Process”

Backoff: Recently, a joint City Council / Planning Commission meeting was held to review the General Plan Update process. PowerPoint presentation shown. City Council established a General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC), made up of stakeholders in the community: Chamber, School District, Palomar, CSUSM, Real Estate industry and residents in each neighborhood. There are 13 regular and 9 alternates. Council selected Glen Winn as chairman and Rod Jones as Vice Chair. Role of GPAC is to assist project team, listen to community ideas, evaluate alternative approaches, make recommendations, attend GPAC meetings and public workshops. Conducted workshops (series of three) at four off-site neighborhood locations. Guiding themes were established. Land Use Alternatives throughout city. The General Plan is an expression of community's view of the future, a “blueprint” to achieve community's vision. It deals with long-range planning, over 20-25 years. Last comprehensive update was in 1987. GP's today discuss sustainability and greenhouse gas emission. Discussed new environmental regulations, AB32 and SB375. New development and design regulations. Plan to address traffic and growth. General Plan topics/elements include: Land Use, Housing (City's was extended to 2013), Circulation (Mobility), Conservation/Open Space, Noise, Safety, Parks & Recreation. The Council wanted an open, transparent process, engaging the public. Public participation includes: GPAC, telephone survey w/ statistically valid results, public workshops, direct mailing of public notices (over 8,000 so far), newsletters (website), San Marcos 360 (City-wide to all residents), Youth program, GP phone line (Ext. PLAN) and interactive website ([www.ourcityyourfuture.org](http://www.ourcityyourfuture.org)).

Kildoo: Suggested use of two street fairs.

Backoff: This Spring, the General Plan update was showcased at the street fair. There are poster boards in the Lobby area at the Counter. PowerPoints from GPAC meetings are also posted on website. Discussed new terms in this update: Green buildings, Form-based codes, smart growth, infill development, mixed-use, etc. Focus Area's shown: Blue - transit corridors, Purple - Consideration areas, Green - property owner initiated requests for possible zoning changes. Developing alternative land uses for these areas. Specific Plan and Consideration Areas shown. Results of survey shown: City ranked much higher than County and State. The consultant advised City that the rankings were much higher than normal. Most liked was the natural surroundings, hills, lakes and small community feel. Changes suggested were none, or traffic. Opinion of growth: Most favor moderate growth (67%). Discussed Guiding Themes: A walkable “downtown,” strong employment base, connecting people to places, an education and academic hub, a city with choices, sustaining environmental quality, building a greener community, a healthy and safe community and continuing our agricultural heritage.

Wedge: Inquired about agricultural tourism?

Kildoo: Winery's have tasting rooms.

Wedge: Does City have a winery?

Kildoo: On Mulberry. Tasting room is on Mission at T&H Meats.

Backoff: Discussed project schedule. Plan & EIR is Summer/Fall 2010, Public review and adoption is Spring/Summer 2011. Business community has shown concerns over Industrial/Light-Industrial areas, whether they can continue operating, etc. Because of their concerns, GPAC made recommendation to engage a sub-committee to work with the business community and allow them to talk to staff.

Wedge: Hope Susan Wait is not concerned about losing Industrial because she stood up there at another meeting saying she has an air pollution permit that could affect people. After hearing that, I don't want any more Industrial.

Backoff: Staff received an e-mail from her asking for more workshops because she wasn't able to attend others.

Wedge: It was during Palomar Station. You had to have been there to understand my comments.

Backoff: Council doesn't want the process to go too fast. They'd like an opportunity to address all issues. It's okay if the schedule slips. Discussed future meetings and workshops. The June & July workshops may be rescheduled so staff can hear the business community concerns. City would like everyone to have their input.

Schaible: Inquired if mixed-use is working? Is there statistical evidence?

Backoff: It's open to market pressures and acceptance. Working with SANDAG. Other cities are looking at going this way. It has worked in the larger communities. Because of the City's location, with Sprinter and future shuttles, ridership will increase and mixed-use will come around. Economy is not the best now. Traditional retail will not work along Mission Road / Richmar area.

Schaible: When Steve Bieri came before Commission regarding converting the chicken ranch to CSUSM, there was talk of a research park across the street, the University and technology working together. Asked if City is pursuing research-type uses?

Backoff: It's one of the Guiding Themes, to build off our educational hub. Want to tie into University. Analysis will be done in terms of what the mix should be. The Fenton project could tie into that.

Wedge: Asked how workshops went in Twin Oaks?

Backoff: All went well. They had input like all areas. There wasn't anything that Staff wasn't expecting. We didn't hear no growth.

Maas: Was it generally favorable?

Backoff: Just getting into Land Use discussions. More questions and some concerns over Business Park and Industrial. Trying to educate people and clarify misunderstandings.

Kildoo: Criteria that business often use before they locate headquarters or facilities is whether their workers can find housing, if there's a good balance, low and mid-income. The person who ultimately decides is the CEO who's looking for the nice house. With Twin Oaks area, close distance to Olivenhein, etc., there is potential to attract high-end business here. Stated he is on another City's GP process which is being done differently. The San Marcos process is well thought out and designed to get input from citizens. Complimented staff on guiding the GPAC.

Backoff: The public notices created more interest and phone calls with questions, so there was a greater turnout at the last series of workshops.

Kildoo: Thanked staff for presentations. It's important for Commissioner's to be knowledgeable about what is going on.

#### PLANNING DIRECTOR COMMENTS

Backoff: University District Specific Plan was awarded the San Diego section Outstanding Planning Award for Neighborhood Planning.

Kildoo: Received a request to write a letter to submit for a State award.

Backoff: If project wins first place, there's only 4-5 days to submit for State award. Also received a similar award in Orange County, Best Planning outside OC. That one's not eligible for State. Updated Commission on AT&T cell antennae workshop. Applicant was asked for analysis of alternate sites. At that meeting, advised applicant that nothing precludes an alternate site. Told them Commission made good decision to continue hearing. Staff feels there is a solution out there. Will remove from June calendar (tabled). Fulton Road also looking at alternative sites.

Backoff: In July, Scott Hanson will give update on Emergency Preparedness. City will participate in Golden Guardian EOC exercise tomorrow.

Kildoo: Inquired about any future training?

Backoff: League meeting in Carlsbad later in year. Will depend on budget. Have submitted University District SP to be one of the sessions.

Kildoo: Asked for dates and website information even if City is unable to pay.

#### PLANNING COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS

Wedge: Commented that people are parking in their reserved spots and she had to park on the second floor.

Backoff: Will see if RPS can do anything about it.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:05 p.m. Commissioner Kildoo adjourned the meeting.

  
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Steve Kildoo, Chairperson  
SAN MARCOS PLANNING COMMISSION

ATTEST:

  
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Lisa Kiss, Secretary  
SAN MARCOS PLANNING COMMISSION