

REGULAR MEETING OF THE
PLANNING COMMISSION
CULVER CITY, CA

June 14, 2006
7:00 p.m.
Mike Balkman Council Chambers

MEMBERS PRESENT: Sheila Thomas, Chair
Maureen Muranaka, Vice Chair
David Rockwell, Commissioner

ABSENT: Marcus Tiggs, Commissioner

ADVISORY PRESENT: Thomas Gorham, Deputy Community Development Director
Sherry Jordan, Senior Planner
Paul Samaras, Associate Planner
David McCarthy, Deputy City Attorney

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CALL TO ORDER

Chair Thomas called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Thomas Gorham.
Roll Call

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PH-1 Home Occupation Permit Revocation – 11815 Atlantic Avenue

Sherry Jordan stated that staff received a request to continue the item to allow Stephanie Schatz to seek new legal representation.

David McCarthy explained the legal justification of referring this item to a Hearing Office and the process of doing so. The Hearing Officer would not rule on the item, but rather make a recommendation to the Planning Commission.

Motion to refer the item to a Hearing Officer was moved by Commissioner Rockwell, seconded by Vice Chair Muranaka. Vote 3-0.

Motion to receive and file the additional correspondence was moved by Vice Chair Muranaka, seconded by Commissioner Rockwell. Vote 3-0.

Sherry Jordan stated that staff would re-notice the item when the date for the hearing is decided.

PH-2 Site Plan Review, SPR P2006010, and Tentative Tract Map, TTM P2006011, to Allow the Renovation and Conversion of a Seven Unit Apartment Complex into Condominiums at 3910 Girard Avenue in the Medium Density Multiple-Family Residential (RMD) Zone.

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Motion to receive and file the Affidavit of Mailing of Notices was moved by Vice Chair Muranaka, seconded by Commissioner Rockwell. Vote 3-0.

Paul Samaras gave a brief summary of the project.

Vice Chair Muranaka

- Inquired about guest parking.

Paul Samaras.

The site does not warrant guest parking due to the fact that there will be no additional living space provided.

Howard Lichtman (Applicant)

- Representing owner Joel Gassman.
- Project is 7-unit apartment complex conversion to condominiums.
- The open space requirement is 100 sq. ft. per unit.
- Two units have more square footage than the requirement; five units exceed the requirement.
- Five balconies will be added to meet the requirement.

Motion to close the public hearing was moved by Vice Chair Muranaka, seconded by Commissioner Rockwell.

Resolution

Vice Chair Muranaka

- Page 6 – Condition #19: there is a reference to the CC&R's, but no provision for the City having the opportunity to review the CC&R's; inquired about the reason.
- Supports the findings contained in the resolution.

Paul Samaras stated that the condition can be revised to reflect that provision and the review of the condo plan.

Motion to adopt a Class 1 Categorical Exemption pursuant to CEQA Section 15301, approved SPR P2006010, subject to the Conditions of Approval as stated in Resolution 2006-P014 and recommend approval by the City Council of TTM P2006011 was moved by Vice Chair Muranaka, seconded by Commissioner Rockwell.

PH-3 Site Plan Review, SPR P2006036, and Tentative Parcel Map TPM P2006037 to Allow the Demolition of a Single-Family Residence and the Construction of Four Condominium Dwelling Units at 4025 Wade Street in the Low Density Multiple-Family Residential (RLD) Zone.

Paul Samaras gave a brief summary of the project.

PUBLIC HEARING

Robert Ahdoot (representing applicant)

- Requesting no variances for the project.
- Condominiums proposed are townhomes.
- Property has been vacant for several months.

Motion to close the public hearing was moved by Commissioner Rockwell, seconded by Vice Chair Muranaka.

Vice Chair Muranaka

- Was not aware of the amnesty units on the property.
- Color board sheds new light as the plans were too stark.
- Inquired about landscaping plans for the project.
- Supports adding articulation to the building.

Paul Samaras stated that there are landscaping plans that will be provided to the Commission.

BREAK (Commissioners reviewing the landscaping plans)

Chair Thomas

- Questioned the cornice line as to whether it is a painted object or if there is a projection.
- Concerned about the starkness of the building and the absence of articulation.
- Three dimensional articulation would be beneficial to the overall appearance of the project.

Nathan Ahdoot (applicant)

- Building is designed to have a modern appearance.
- Would consider articulation.

Thomas Gorham

Drafted Conditions of Approval includes additional articulation on all four sides of the building, subject to review by the Planning Manager during the plan check.

Chair Thomas

- Requested that color enhancement be added to the conditions of approval and that could take the place of three dimensional enhancements if staff approved.
- Staff will need to review how the condition that was recently added to the Code that landscape plans have to be prepared by a licensed landscape architect would apply even though the site was previously single family. The fact that it is going to be a multiple family dwelling, does the Code condition apply?
- The drawing submitted has "turf" in areas that are traditionally too small to be irrigated for turf or mowed.

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- The Wade Street elevation has smaller windows on the first floor; the street elevation on this type of project would normally have the larger windows.

Thomas Gorham

The landscape provisions of the Code apply to the project.

Nathan Ahdoot

- A full-time gardener has maintained the landscaping during the vacant period.
- Will adjust the width of the windows.

Vice Chair Muranaka

- There is an inconsistency in the Tentative Parcel Map and the Site Plan Review regarding the width of the driveway.
- A corrected Tentative Map should be provided to the City Council.
- The four dwelling units should appear as four lots, and the common area appear as Parcel 1, making it the fifth lot.
- Lots do not need a legal description, but common space should be identified as such.

Paul Samaras.

The Tentative Parcel Map was not updated to reflect the width of the driveway as 15 feet, making it inconsistent with the site plan review.

Commissioner Rockwell

- Page A9 – the elevations are 90 degrees off.
- Concerned about traffic.
- Spoke to one of the residents who indicated there was a problem with rats and was concerned about the rats scattering during demolition.
- Agreed with the starkness of the building.

Paul Samaras.

A condition can be added to require vector control prior to the issuance of a demolition permit.

Vice Chair Muranaka

- Questioned if the Commission has the authority to approve the Tentative Parcel Map; Commission only recommends approval.

Paul Samaras

The Commission only recommends approval of Tract Maps, but it's authorized to approve Parcel Maps.

Resolution

Thomas Gorham

The three conditions that staff would recommend are: architectural detailing after Condition #22, vector control inspection be done prior to demolition, and review of the CC&R and condo plans.

Vice Chair Muranaka

- Supports the findings.

Motion to adopt the Class 32 Categorical Exemption, approve the Site Plan Review subject to the Conditions as stated in the Resolution and approve the Tentative Parcel Map. Moved by Commissioner Rockwell, seconded by Vice Chair Muranaka. Vote 3-0.

Motion to approve the Secretary's Report was moved by Vice Chair Muranaka, seconded by Commissioner Rockwell. Vote 3-0.

Motion to approve the minutes of April 26, 2006 was moved by Commissioner Rockwell, seconded by Vice Chair Muranaka.

Thomas Gorham presented items from staff. The Washington/National Specific Plan Workshop will be held on July 15, 2006. There are two new Planning Commission members: Andrew Weissman and John Kuechle (who was present and introduced himself).

Staff needs more direction on what the Commission is requiring regarding mixed use. The original intention was to accommodate and develop the larger redevelopment projects which was the impetus for developing the mixed use projects with higher density on big lots and also in the beginning of the mixed use ordinance, it was agreed not to allow development to apply for lots with less than 10,000 feet, but found projects were coming in with smaller lots for mixed use and appeared to be very good projects, so the adjustment was made to accommodate lots of 5,000 or more.

Chair Thomas

- The density for mixed use was anticipated to be one that would occur on lots that lack sufficient depth or size to support a sufficient number of units. To support a development of higher densities the goal would be to have mixed use be an approvable use only on lots that have a limit in terms of their size and would never be applied to a project as the one coming before the Commission.

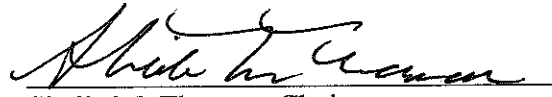
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- The language should indicate the limitations; density should not be applied to any project where there is a commercial zone.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:30 to the meeting of June 28, 2006.



Yvonne D. Hunt
Administrative Secretary



Sheila M. Thomas, Chairperson
PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY OF CULVER City of Culver City