

REGULAR MEETING OF THE
CULVER CITY
PLANNING COMMISSION
CULVER CITY, CALIFORNIA

July 24, 2024
7:00 p.m.

Call to Order & Roll Call

Chair Reilman called the regular meeting of the Culver City Planning Commission to order at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers and via Webex.

Present: Andrew Reilman, Chair
Darrel Menthe, Vice Chair
Jackson Brissette, Commissioner
Jennifer Carter, Commissioner
Stephen Jones, Commissioner

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Pledge of Allegiance

Commissioner Jones led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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Public Comment - Items NOT on the Agenda

Chair Reilman invited public comment.

Ruth Martin del Campo, Current Planning Secretary, indicated that an individual had signed up to speak but was not present in Council Chambers or online.

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Receipt of Correspondence

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER CARTER, SECONDED BY VICE CHAIR MENTHE AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION RECEIVE AND FILE CORRESPONDENCE.

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Consent Calendar

Item C-1

Approval of Draft Planning Commission Meeting Minutes of May 8, 2024

MOVED BY VICE CHAIR MENTHE AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER JONES THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION APPROVE THE DRAFT MEETING MINUTES OF MAY 8, 2024.

THE MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: CARTER, JONES, MENTHE
NOES: NONE
ABSTAIN: BRISSETTE, REILMAN

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Order of the Agenda

No changes were made.

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Public Hearings

Item PH-1

PC – Consideration of a Conditional Use Permit Modification (P2021-0135), to allow the relocation and expansion of an existing fueling station, surface parking, and associated project design features and site improvements at 13431-13463 Washington Boulevard (Project)

Gabriela Silva, Associate Planner, provided a summary of the material of record.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding removal of currently vacant existing buildings; previous occupants; and the incoming charging station.

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER JONES, SECONDED BY VICE CHAIR MENTHE AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION OPEN THE PUBLIC HEARING.

Chair Reilman invited public comment.

The following members of the public addressed the Commission:

Julie Anderson, Barghausen Consulting Engineers, provided an overview of the proposed project; discussed zoning and entitlements; outreach; the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); project location; the existing fuel facility; the proposed new project; safety features; sustainability measures; operations; transportation; circulation; the Queue Management Plan; mobility measures; canopy design/signage; she presented renderings of the proposed project; and she indicated that the team accepted all Conditions of Approval.

Eve Rappaport provided background on herself; reported submitting e-comments through Granicus; expressed opposition to locating the facility at the corner of their street; noted that all activity was located on the westside of their property that is in Los Angeles; expressed concern with project management; felt the project was being rubber-stamped; questioned the studies; noted that more capacity resulted in more cars; discussed contradictory statements regarding loading and refueling; fueling stations vs. Starbucks; the Waze app directing drivers onto Walnut as a shortcut; she asked Culver City to work with Los Angeles on master planning traffic in the area and alleviating neighborhood concerns; and she asked about the timeline.

George Stone expressed concern with the proposed changes; discussed the distance from their house to the former Verizon store location; research regarding the safe distance to live from a gas station; proximity of the proposed gas station location to the preschool and the neighborhood; carcinogens; gas that escapes; expensive filtering systems to address vapors; support for expansion of the gas station on Washington; and he expressed concern with light pollution.

Alsoudaniali was called to speak but was not present on Webex or in Council Chambers.

Paula McCreddie expressed concern with decreased access to the neighborhood and concern that indoor air quality in their homes had not been measured; discussed constant vibrations due to the Costco dock; trucks that run 24 hours a day, every day; and increased pollution associated with adding more cars on their street.

Eire Juarez reported that her house was about 150 feet away from the proposed location; discussed current conditions; noise; trucks that run all night; trucks that get stuck on their block; environmental hazards; carcinogens from the gas; lack of a guarantee of safety even with state of the art equipment; lighting; lack of concern for the neighbors; environmental concerns with the two preschools in the area; elderly people in the area; those who bought property before the gas station was there; concern with loss of property value with the impact of the gas station; landscaping; trash; homeless people in the area; and security.

Discussion ensued between Julie Anderson with Barghausen Consulting Engineers, staff, and Commissioners regarding pollution and toxins related to digging up a gas station; the plan for remediation; decommissioning of the fuel station in accordance with state regulations; permits; testing requirements; sampling results; the process; clarification that no access points for the site would be modified; installation of LED lighting; and current lighting conditions.

Further discussion ensued between Amy Lopez with Kittleson and Associates, staff, and Commissioners regarding analysis indicating no increased traffic; displacement of two commercial buildings; queue length; the larger facility with more fueling positions; data indicating shorter queues with the expansion; queueing away from the main parking area; onsite queueing; traffic flow; interaction with traffic for In-N-Out; and the internal intersection.

Additional discussion ensued between Costco Representative Therese Garcia, staff, and Commissioners regarding viability of retail at the site; a similar relocation of a Costco fuel facility in Garden Grove; urban infill; residential; and the intent for a seamless transition between the new and old facilities.

Further discussion ensued between Amy Lopez with Kittleson and Associates, staff, and Commissioners regarding potential traffic increases with the EV facilities; the fact that anyone can park at the location at the current time; the Class 32 exemption; and the outside fuel drop lane.

Additional discussion ensued between staff, Julie Anderson with Barghausen Consulting Engineers, and Commissioners regarding fuel capacity of the existing site; frequency of

refueling; deliveries; the existing condition; nighttime deliveries; Conditions of Approval; the Class 32 Report; the restriction on the amount of fuel dispensed per year; monthly reporting; emissions and fuel levels; clarification that previous rates of fuel dispensed were not up to the limit; generating additional use of gasoline; clarification that the report indicating that no additional gas dispensed yearly means the location would not increase the amount of gallons they are legally allowed to dispense; and permitting requirements.

Further discussion ensued between Costco Regional Administrative Manager Sean Mackin, staff, and Commissioners regarding the need to shut down the gasoline station if the maximum is reached; projected increase to the amount of gas pumped; other stations that have been expanded; the consistent member base; moving the queue into the station area; increased number of trips; and the large increase in the amount of gas dispensed.

Additional discussion ensued between Amy Lopez with Kittleson and Associates, staff, and Commissioners regarding the member-based business model; consistent demand for gas; the linear trip generation analysis; expected average increase for the facility; increases at other Costco gas stations that have been expanded vs. the analysis indicating that trips would be decreased; components of the complete analysis; use of the standard methodology; studying the business vs. using ITE; measuring in a constrained market; data over time; the focus on peak hours; overall increases; average expected increase; various factors in play; increased traffic if the commercial buildings had continued to operate; concern with the methodology being used; concern with further reductions to the numbers that have already been reduced by other factors; concern that the estimates are so different from what is being shown in the tables; driving factors; parking; specific data; and industry standards.

Chair Reilman explained that members of the public who had already provided comments could not be called back up for additional comment.

Discussion ensued between Ramboll Air Quality Consultant Eric Lu, staff, and Commissioners regarding Condition 32; concern with the assertion that doubling the amount of gas pumped is not affecting air quality; the analysis examining changes in emissions; health risks; receptors considered; the less than

significant threshold established by the AQMD (Air Quality Management District); studies indicating that exposure is toxic and it is unsafe to live next to; efforts of Costco to fix queues; the fact that increased capacity leads to increased usage; concern with increased impact on the community; the release of chemicals; legally acceptable levels; allegiance to the neighbors; ground issues; common sense; concern that the project does not meet criteria for Class 32; and use of established guidances and methodology.

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER JONES, SECONDED BY VICE CHAIR MENTHE AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding the expectation that requirements are handled in the correct way by Costco; current conditions; viability of reopening the retail and getting it back up and running; confidence in the Southern California AQMD standards; requirements and regulations; confidence in the data being presented; untapped demand among members; studies on benzyne; increased cancer risk for gas station workers; recommendations that residents not live within 300 feet of a gas station dispensing facility; concern with plans to move the gas station closer to residences; the exemption; continued concern with the traffic study; other sites that expanded their gas stations by 25% and experienced big increases in usage; and the proposed doubling of capacity and projecting a decrease.

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER BRISSETTE AND SECONDED BY VICE CHAIR MENTHE THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION: ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 2024-P007 ADOPTING A CLASS 32 CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION PURSUANT TO CEQA AND APPROVING CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT MODIFICATION, P2021-0135-CUP/M, FOR A FUELING STATION RELOCATION AND EXPANSION PROJECT, WITH SPECIFIED PROJECT DESIGN FEATURES, SUBJECT TO THE CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL.

THE MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: BRISSETTE, MENTHE, REILMAN
NOES: CARTER, JONES

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Item PH-2

Consideration of a Tentative Parcel Map No. 84280 to Construct a Detached Two-Unit Residential Condominium Development at 3556 Helms Avenue (Project)

Narek Mkrtoumian, Planning Technician, provided a summary of the material of record and read the following condition into the record to ensure SB compliance as appropriate: "If a residential unit is proposed to be demolished, or if a residential unit was demolished within the past five years, the applicant shall submit an application for a replacement unit determination as required by the Housing Crisis of 2019 as amended by SB8 and AB1218 California Government Section 66300 along with any required replacement unit determination fee. The applicant shall submit the application for a replacement unit determination prior to submitting an application for a building permit. If the replacement unit determination demonstrates that any residential unit is a protected unit, the applicant shall comply with all requirements of Government Code Section 66300 prior to issuance of building permit."

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding clarification that the condition would be added as a condition number; clarification that the item is coming before the Planning Commission due to the Tentative Parcel Map; the ability to consider the map, not the design; and clarification that proposed revisions to the zoning code would streamline the process to administrative approval.

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER JONES, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER CARTER AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION OPEN THE PUBLIC HEARING.

Chair Reilman invited public comment.

The following member of the public addressed the Commission:

Ruth Martin del Campo, Current Planning Secretary, indicated Alsoudaniali had signed up to speak but was not present in Council Chambers or online.

Salvador Carbajal, Architect, provided a presentation on the exterior and interior design of the project; discussed materials; the roof deck; and proposed floor plans.

Discussion ensued between Salvador Carbajal, staff, and Commissioners regarding plans to build the project on spec; concern that someone could come in and build a completely different plan; and solar panel placement.

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER JONES, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BRISSETTE AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding future ministerial approval of such projects; other similar projects proposed; appreciation for accommodating more than one family rather than having a McMansion; pricing; appreciation for the details; and the Tentative Parcel Map.

MOVED BY VICE CHAIR MENTHE, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BRISSETTE AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION:

1) ADOPT A CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION PURSUANT TO CEQA SECTION 15303, CLASS 3, NEW CONSTRUCTION OF SMALL STRUCTURES, AND CEQA SECTION 15315, CLASS 15, MINOR LAND DIVISION, FINDING THAT THERE ARE NO POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE IMPACTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT, AND;

2) APPROVE TENTATIVE PARCEL MAP NO. 84280, P2024-0072-TPM, SUBJECT TO THE CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL AS STATED IN RESOLUTION NO. 2024-P008.

Chair Reilman noted that the motion included the condition as read at the beginning of the item.

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Action Items

Item A-1

PC - (1) Discussion of Draft Written Report to City Council Regarding Planning Commission's Accomplishments and Proposed Activity/Upcoming Agenda Items for the Next Six Months; (2) Authorize Transmittal to City Council

Emily Stadnicki, Current Planning Manager, provided a summary of the material of record.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding status of the TDM (Transit Demand Management) ordinance; other departments involved; coordination with other jurisdictions; and physical space constraints with the 79-unit project that is partially in Los Angeles and partially in Culver City.

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER JONES, SECONDED BY VICE CHAIR MENTHE AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION AUTHORIZE TRANSMITTAL OF THE WORK PLAN REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL.

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Item A-2

PC - Selection of Committee Members

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding meeting frequency; work involved; the ability to appeal a Director's read of the code; the Board of Zoning Adjustment; identification of ambiguities in the code; codification; and lack of meetings in the past year.

MOVED BY CHAIR REILMAN, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BRISSETTE AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION DESIGNATE VICE CHAIR MENTHE AND COMMISSIONER JONES TO SERVE AS THE BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT APPOINTEES.

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Public Comment - Items NOT on the Agenda (Continued)

Chair Reilman invited public comment.

Ruth Martin del Campo, Current Planning Secretary, reported that no additional requests to speak had been received.

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Items from Planning Commissioners/Staff

Christina Burrows, Deputy City Attorney, clarified that Commissioners who did not attend the previous meeting are still allowed to vote on those meeting minutes.

July 24, 2024

Emily Stadnicki, Current Planning Manager, congratulated Chair Reilman and Vice Chair Menthe; welcomed Commissioner Brissette; reported that the Planning Commission would review and make recommendations to the revised General Plan and the zoning code update at the next meeting; discussed review of the update at the August 26 City Council meeting; and materials available to the public online.

Chair Reilman indicated that he would be unable to attend the August 14, 2024, meeting in person but would participate remotely.

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Adjournment

There being no further business, at 8:58 p.m., the Culver City Planning Commission adjourned to a regular meeting to be held on August 14, 2024.

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RUTH MARTIN DEL CAMPO
SECRETARY of the CULVER CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

APPROVED _____

ANDREW REILMAN
CHAIR of the CULVER CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
Culver City, California

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that, on the date below written, these minutes were filed in the Office of the City Clerk, Culver City, California and constitute the Official Minutes of said meeting.

Jeremy Bocchino
CITY CLERK

Date