

REGULAR MEETING OF THE
PLANNING COMMISSION
CULVER CITY, CA

April 26, 2006
7:00 p.m.
Mike Balkman Council Chambers

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

ADVISORY PRESENT: Thomas Gorham, Deputy Community Development Director
Joseph Montoya, Associate Planner
Max Paetzold, Consulting Traffic Engineer
Joe Susca, Redevelopment Project Manager
David McCarthy, City Attorney

•
CALL TO ORDER

Chair Thomas called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Thomas Gorham.

Roll Call: Chair Thomas, Vice Chair Muranaka, Commissioner Rockwell, Commissioner Tiggs.

•
PUBLIC HEARING

Scott Malsin (newly elected to City Council)

- Wanted to thank the commission and City staff for their support during the last five years and their commitment to bettering the community.

PH-1. Certificate of Appropriateness, HPCA P-2006041, for an Exterior Rehabilitation and Alteration to the Washington Boulevard and West Alley facades at the Helms Bakery Complex at 8703-8761 Washington Boulevard in the Industrial General (IG) Zone.

Thomas Gorham gave a brief summary of the project.

Vice Chair Muranaka moved and Commissioner Tiggs seconded the motion to file the Affidavit of Mailing and Posting of Notices.

PUBLIC HEARING

Julie Oaks (Architects for Helms Bakery)

- Has been the architects for the property for twenty years.
- Wants to keep the structure part of the change but yet preserve the signature of Culver City of Culver City.
- Plans to lower the windows by one pane to allow visibility from the street and make it more pedestrian friendly.

Motion to close the public hearing was moved by Commissioner Rockwell and seconded by Commissioner Tiggs.

Vice Chair Muranaka

- Inquired whether the code requires the City to adopt findings in connection with the Certificate of Appropriateness.
- There are no findings included in the Resolution.
- Inquired whether the Negative Declaration should be adopted as well as the Certificate.

Thomas Gorham

The Code does not have specific findings; believes it is based on the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation which is Attachment 6. The Negative Declaration is included in the Resolution.

Dave McCarthy

Not required, but can be included if the commission deems necessary.

Commissioner Tiggs

- Are the Standards referenced in the Municipal Code because there is no reference to the CFR?
- Does not believe they are the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.

Thomas Gorham

The CFR is referenced in the Municipal Code.

Vice Chair Muranaka

- Third recital – line 18 'was submitted by Wally Marks III private property owner'; delete 'private property owner.'
- Next Recital should read: 'Whereas on March 14th the Cultural Affairs Committee unanimously recommended the Planning Commission approve the Certificate of Appropriateness'.
- Next page should read: "Whereas the Planning Commission determined that the proposed scope of work would not detrimentally change..."

Commissioner Rockwell moved to adopt Resolution 2006-P011 Certificate of Appropriateness HPCA-P2006-041 as amended; motion was seconded by Vice Chair Muranaka.

Vote was 4-0.

PH-4 Conditional Use Permit CUP P-2006-008; and Site Plan Review SPR P-2006-009 to allow the expansion of an existing self-storage facility at 8512 National Boulevard in the General Industrial Zone (IG).

Commissioner Tiggs moved, Commissioner Rockwell seconded the Motion to approve mailing and posting of notices.

Nancy Tahvili gave a brief summary of the project.

Commissioner Tiggs

- Questioned what structures would be demolished, if the General Industrial Zone permits a four-story building and the location of the staging for the construction.

Thomas Gorham

The one three-story structure and a portion of the lower one-story buildings to the east.

James Goodman (James Goodman Architecture)

- Introduced himself and Neil Hattenburg (Public Storage); construction staging will be on the current site.

Vice Chair Muranaka motioned, seconded by Commissioner Rockwell to close the public hearing.

Commissioner Tiggs moved to approve Conditional Use Permit CUP P-2006-008 subject to the conditions of approval as stated in Resolution 2006-P010 and Site Plan Review SPR P-2006-009 subject to the conditions of approval as stated in Resolution 2006-P010. Motion was seconded by Vice Chair Muranaka.

Vote 4-0.

PH-3 General Plan Amendment, GPA P-2006018; Zone Change, ZC P-2006022; Comprehensive Plan, CP P-2006024; and Tentative Tract Map TTM P-2006020 for a commercial and residential mixed use development project at the northwest and northeast corners of Washington Boulevard and Centinela Avenue intersection in the General Commercial (CG), Medium Density Multiple Family Residential (RMD), Single Family Residential (R1), Commercial Setback Overlay (CZ), and Redevelopment Project Area Overlay (RP) Zones.

Motion to receive and file the affidavit of mailing and posting of notices was moved by Commissioner Rockwell, seconded by Vice Chair Muranaka.

Joseph Montoya gave a summary of the project.

Chair Thomas

- Drawings did not contain landscaping or engineering plans.

- Questioned City Attorney on legality of proceeding without those items.
- Looks more like a Site Plan Review than a General Plan.

Joseph Montoya

Plans were review by a registered architect and engineer. The submission of detailed plans would occur further down the line after Commission approval. The basic components are either provided in the Plan or are contained in the Conditions of Approval.

Thomas Gorham

Some of the items in question can be addressed prior to the issuance of any building permits.

Commissioner Rockwell

- The traffic study states that there were no actual traffic counts made.
- Questioned the criteria used to decide whether or not manual traffic loading will be used and when an actual count will be conducted.
- Inquired what criteria are used to make the decision on the traffic counts.

Max Paetzold

- *Traffic counts – used the standard ITE manual to estimate trips.*
- *Did a survey of counts at multiple sites.*
- *Underutilization and vacancy of the site were determining factors for not using the traffic counts.*
- *50 trips during the peak hour is of less significance than 50 to 100 trips.*

Ben Besley (Olsen Company) – Applicant

- Gave a brief account of development activities.

PUBLIC HEARING

Joseph Resendo (Herbert Street Neighborhood Association) -

- Has been involved with the project since the inception.
- Came before the Council and Redevelopment several times regarding quality of life issues related to traffic, parking, noise, policing, graffiti and congestion.
- Urged the Commission to make necessary improvements and concessions
- Supports the raised median.
- Requested to meet with the City Engineer before the median is constructed.
- Requested to be notified by Project Manager regarding changes in the proposed occupancy.
- There will be a significant impact to the neighborhood regarding noise levels during the construction.
- Requested less hours of construction on a daily basis, no staging and the issuance of twenty-four hour resident-parking-only permits.

Steven Eyrse

- Resides on Colonial Avenue.
- Concerned about the current ambiance of the neighborhood being destroyed.

- Apartments account for sixteen parking spaces on the street and the other 42 by other residents of the street; proposed apartment building would require at least 120 additional spaces.

Evan Caplicki

- Resident of Wasach Avenue.
- Supports the project 110%.
- Concerned about traffic concerns not being addressed regarding the use of the neighborhood as 'cut-through' streets and the excessive speed of some of the vehicles.

Salvatore Grammatico

- Resides on Marshall Drive.
- Community activist for several years; making a left turn on Washington onto Centinela requires vehicles to wait through two lights.
- Supports postponement of the project until traffic study can be conducted.
- Supports the placement of left turn signals at that intersection

Pat Duncan (Culver Triangle Neighborhood Association)

- Resides on Colonial Avenue
- Presented petition signed by neighborhood regarding parking concerns
- Supports permit parking for residents

Doris Green (Herbert Street Homeowners Association)

- Concerned about the pending development in regard to construction noise and staging.
- Also concerned about the littering by construction crews and parking.
- Supports 24-hour permit parking for residents.

Diane Black

- Resides on Colonial Avenue.
- Stated that the commission works for the public.
- Project will deeply impact the traffic and way of life in the neighborhood.

Judi Cassell (Herbert Street Homeowners Association)

- Concerned about traffic in regard to the narrowness of the alley with garages opening out into the alley, the debris and potholes in the alley and the auto body shop.
- Insisted that when new residents exit to the right onto Washington Boulevard and enter from Washington Boulevard.

Amy Santos (Herbert Street Homeowners Association)

- Resides on Herbert Street.
- Concerned with parking problems, littering by construction crew from the Grandview project and the deterioration of the air quality.

Gordon Gardner (Herbert Street Homeowners Association)

- Parking concerns.
- Concerned about pedestrian traffic.

Susan Geagan

- Concerned about the traffic and the parking impacts that will be associated with the Washington Centinela Redevelopment project.
- Believes the continued increase on Colonial, Wasach and Boise in traffic impacts the quality of life on a daily basis.”
- Traffic study needs to be conducted.

Joseph Matthews (Realtor)

- Resident of Chase Avenue.
- Supports development in the neighborhood, but is concerned about the cut-through traffic traveling at excessive speeds. Favors speed bumps.

Peter Wallin (Representing S.J. Woo, LLC – Shopping Center Property Owner)

- Submitted letter outlining reasons a traffic study should be conducted.
- Elaborated on problems caused by the configuration of the alley associated with the additional vehicles that will utilize the subterranean parking structure.
- Feels developer is trying to cut corners.

Michael Downey

- Resident of Colonial Avenue.
- Concern is regarding the demolition process of construction.
- Favors separating the residential neighborhood from the new development after construction.

Billy Rios

- Business owner in project area.
- Concerned about parking; patients use alley parking which is not allowed.
- Requested parking meters in front of the business.

Linda Castillo

- Herbert Street resident.
- Concerned about driveway being located in the virtually in the front yard area.
- Traffic congestion is an issue.

Motion to close the public hearing was moved by Commissioner Tiggs, seconded by Commissioner Rockwell.

Commissioner Tiggs

- Feels traffic impact study is necessary.

Vice Chair Muranaka

- Does not feel the comprehensive plan submitted is in fact a comprehensive plan as called for under the Municipal Code.
- City Council should reconsider and provide staff with some guidance regarding the “no traffic study for projects resulting in fewer than 50 trips” policy adopted in 1987; the policy is outdated, conditions have changed significantly since 1987.
- Project may exacerbate already existing traffic problems.
- Cannot approve project in its current state.

Commissioner Rockwell

- Agrees with Commissioner Muranaka in regard to the project exacerbating the already existing problems.
- Traffic impact report is inadequate.
- Cannot approve project in its current state.

Chair Thomas

- Project needs to be more comprehensive.
- May want to consider measures to mitigate the existing and projected problems.
- Asked staff to meet with applicant and bring a traffic study back to the commission containing all of the required elements relative to a comprehensive plan.

Ben Besley (Applicant)

- Need to do additional signage, lighting, engineering and landscaping work.
- The traffic analysis performed was not intended to evaluate the intersection of Washington/Centinela; the intent was to evaluate the net impact of the project.
- Net traffic from permit to permit results in a reduction of traffic; questioned if a full traffic analysis is warranted.
- Parking is according to the code.

Thomas Gorham

Recommends continuance of the project to another date, that traffic study be conducted and have a complete Comprehensive Plan to present to the commission at that time, to receive and file correspondence.

Vice Chair Muranaka

Moved to continue the project to another date, that traffic study be conducted and have a completed Comprehensive Plan to present to the commission at that time, to receive and file all correspondence. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Tiggs. **Vote 4-0.**

Thomas Gorham

Staff will re-notice when the date is decided.

PH-4 Tentative Parcel Map, TPM P-2006029, to subdivide the property at 9300 Culver Boulevard for the realignment of Washington Boulevard and Street Name Change, SNC P-2006030, in the Commercial Downtown (CD) Zone

Motion to receive and file the Affidavit of Mailing and posting of Notices was moved by Commissioner Muranaka, seconded by Commissioner Rockwell.

Joseph Montoya gave a summary of the project.

Daniel Rafalian (Property Owner/Downtown Culver City)

- Owner of property at Washington/Main.
- Concerns include proposed loading zone – why will public property be used to loading/unload and why the public has to fund it.
- Project will create a bad presence for any future development.
- City should seek an alternative for loading/unloading at Trader Joe's or limit the loading/unloading to off-peak hours.
- Trash bin locations have not been identified.
- Traffic stack-up on Ince Boulevard.
- Parcel 2 should be utilized for Town Plaza and not for valet parking or loading for the Culver Studios.

Jorge Macias (Trader Joe's)

- Concerned about the loading area for Trader Joe's not providing enough room to safely receive deliveries after the traffic has been re-routed.
- Traffic light crossing for senior citizens does not provide enough time for them to safely cross.

Hal Katersky (Rush Pacific LLC Principal/Chairman of the Board for Culver Studios)

- Supports the project; feels it will be pedestrian friendly.
- Closing Washington Boulevard would provide a quieter atmosphere for outdoor dining.
- Project has been endorsed by the Downtown Business Association.

Motion to close the public hearing was moved by Commissioner Rockwell, seconded by Commissioner Tiggs.

Commissioner Rockwell

- Not convinced that the current traffic plan is adequate.
- Concerned about optimization of traffic signals. Will it be monitored?
- What are the alternatives to removing the parking on the north side?
- Inquired as to whether the loading/unloading for Trader Joe's could be accomplished from within the parking structure.
- Inquired about the new construction planned by the Culver Studios.

Max Paetzold

- *Subsequent to the first peak hour and for seven days traffic flowed well. Optimization will be monitored.*
- *The choices are moving the sidewalk north.*
- *The height of the parking structure would not accommodate larger vehicles required during loading/unloading.*

Joseph Montoya

The planned office building project for The Culver Studios has to be redesigned. There is a set of approved plans for that building. The lot configuration has to be revised.

Vice Chair Muranaka

- Inquired about the loss of parking for the Culver Hotel and whether the City has an obligation to provide parking for the hotel.
- Regarding the public right-of-way, inquired whether there will be a separate action for vacating the street.

Joseph Montoya

The City is not mandated to provide parking for the Culver Hotel. The loading drop off zone will still remain in place on Culver Boulevard.

When the project goes to the City Council, the Council will be looking at that issue. In reviewing the lot configuration, on the south property line in front of The Culver Studios, there is three-foot parcel of land that is used as part of the public sidewalk. The City wants to make sure if that is to remain part of the sidewalk that the lot line is readjusted.

Max Paetzold

A vacation of the property may not be on the horizon; there are utilities underground and issues of ownership; there may be an irrevocable easement associated with this project.

Commissioner Tiggs

- Inquired if the major theme of the project is to gain more land for the Town Plaza.
- Inquired about the access to The Culver Studios gate.
- Inquired as to whether staff is comfortable with the pocket that is proposed for Trader Joe's for the loading/unloading in regard to safety and its length.

Thomas Gorham

That was the main reason for the city to bring the project forward and to enhance the visibility of Parcel B, having direct connection to the Town Plaza area.

Joseph Montoya

The circulation pattern has been redesigned serving the westerly gate and the driveway on the east side, which are not included in this project.

Max Paetzold

The pocket is long enough for a reasonable sized tractor trailer plus another vehicle.

Chair Thomas

- Relative to the parking on the north side of Culver Boulevard, inquired about extending the parking later into the evening and during the day when there is less demand.
- Regarding the parking at the Culver Hotel, whether the City is or is not required to provide parking, the Culver Hotel is not only a landmark, but is also located in the center of the downtown project area, the City should provide parking for the hotel guests; guests will be less likely to park at Watseka and carry luggage to the hotel. Would like to hear a

plan for providing parking for the Culver Hotel. (i.e. Town Plaza turnaround area for short term parking)

Joe Susca (Redevelopment Project Manager)

There is another parking structure for use by the hotel guests. The city would provide a drop off and pickup location to eliminate the need to carry luggage to the hotel. The hotel owners do not oppose the elimination of the parking area.

Regarding the Trader Joe's receiving area- may be used by the Japanese restaurant also. Metered parking on the north side of Culver is a result of traffic volume requiring a third lane.

Resolution

Joseph Montoya

Please refer to the resolution marked "Revised".

Chair Thomas

Before the project is finalized, the matter should be revisited regarding the issues of concerns.

Motion to Adopt Negative Declaration based on the Initial Study, approve 66158 TPM P-2006-029, approve and recommend approval to the City Council Street Name Change SMP P2006-030 subject to the Conditions of Approval stated in the Resolution was moved by Vice Chair Muranaka and seconded by Commissioner Tiggs. **Vote 4-0.**

Secretary's Report.

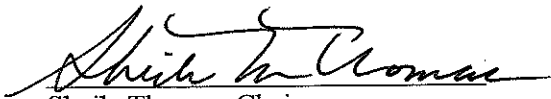
Motion to approve moved by Vice Chair Muranaka, seconded by Commissioner Tiggs.

Thomas Gorham

Announced upcoming Specific Plan Workshop, Study Session and a summary of upcoming Commission meetings.

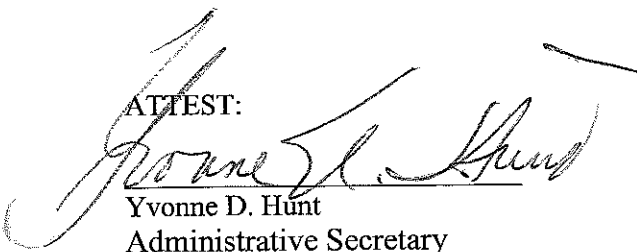
Motion to adjourn to the next Commission meeting on May 24, 2006 was moved by Commissioner Rockwell, seconded by Commissioner Tiggs.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:40 p.m.



Sheila Thomas, Chairperson
PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY OF CULVER CITY

ATTEST:



Yvonne D. Hunt

Administrative Secretary