

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

November 8, 2023
7:00 p.m.

Call to Order & Roll Call

Chair Jones called the regular meeting of the Culver City Planning Commission to order at 7:08 p.m. in Council Chambers and via Webex.

Present: Stephen Jones, Chair
Andrew Reilman, Vice Chair
Nancy Barba, Commissioner*
Jennifer Carter, Commissioner
Darrel Menthe, Commissioner

Commissioner Barba arrived at 7:12 p.m.

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Pledge of Allegiance

Vice Chair Reilman led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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Public Comment - Items NOT on the Agenda

Chair Jones invited public comment.

The following member of the public addressed the Commission:

Gary Spinrad was called to speak but did not respond.

Judi Sherman asked that the Planning Commission carefully review the General Plan when it is presented in 2024; expressed concern with the present density designation of 100 units per acre assigned to the south side of Slauson in Fox Hills; wanted to see the designation lowered to 65 units per acre; discussed upcoming developments; potential office

sites; the high likelihood of having 1100 units on the south side of Slauson; the reality of the numbers; the October 19, meeting; costs to study a deliberately created problem; getting people out of their cars; the need for flexibility with reaching housing goals; equitable distribution of housing; maximization of developer profit with a high density designation; the ability of the Commission to make recommendations to the City Council that can change the present 100 units per acre designation; and approval of the Land Use Element of the General Plan.

Commissioner Barba joined the meeting.

Chair Jones received clarification regarding opportunities for the public to make comment on the General Plan.

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Receipt of Correspondence

Ruth Martin del Campo, Administrative Clerk, reported that one email had been received for Items Not on the Agenda, and one had been received for Item PH-1.

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

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Consent Calendar

Item C-1

PC - Approval of Draft Planning Commission Meeting Minutes of September 27, 2023

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER MENTHE, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BARBA AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION APPROVE THE DRAFT PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES FOR SEPTEMBER 27, 2023 AS WRITTEN.

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Order of the Agenda

No changes were made.

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Public Hearing Items

Item PH-1

PC - Consideration of a Conditional Use Permit to establish a Child Daycare/Private School Use with an Outdoor Play Area in the Commercial Regional Business Park (CRB) Zone and Regional Center General Plan Designation located at 5840 Uplander Way

William Kavadas, Assistant Planner, provided a summary of the material of record; he noted a modification to Condition 12 to reference the 2022 Building Code rather than the 2019 Building Code; and a change to Condition 59 to indicate that the total number of parking spaces is 36.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding clarification that Applicant is not proposing any access way to the adjacent Fox Hills Park from the property; in lieu costs; loss of taxable income related to the displacement of an existing commercial office use; parking turnover rates; and effective usage of space.

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

Chair Jones invited public comment.

The following members of the public addressed the Commission:

Shaneel Poonja, Applicant Representative, provided background on herself and on the school; discussed language immersion; academics; acceptance rates into Culver City schools; capacity; expanding access to the unique programming; proposed programming; operations; drop off and pick up; outdoor play; activities; classes and workshops; parent tours; proposed plans; and current school programs.

Discussion ensued between the applicant, staff, and Commissioners regarding access to Fox Hills Park; safety and security; state pre-school licenses; adding another high quality pre-school in the area; offsetting business tax

revenue for the City; anticipated revenue from tuition; a prior influx of private school requests in Industrial General Zones at a time when City revenue was decreasing; Conditions of Approval on a Conditional Use Permit (CUP); non-profit schools; impacts to City revenue for the proposed use vs. a business use; competing housing needs; concern with foregoing potential revenue for the City; minimal contributions from non-profit schools; costs to the City to administer the contributions; code required findings for a CUP; CUP purview; findings made in the staff report; ensuring that the change of use is done properly and there is no financial detriment to the City; providing bilingual opportunities; parents willing to pay for quality early child care education; ensuring that parents do not have to drive to Los Angeles for quality education; and clarification that the school is for profit.

Mary Carp provided background on herself; discussed the drop off and pick up program; quality of the school; and she indicated that her daughter had attended the current school and subsequently gotten into El Marino.

Meghan Phillips echoed comments made by the previous speaker; provided background on herself; indicated that her daughters had attended the applicant's current school in Culver City and now attend El Marino; discussed parking; applicant responsibility; smart policies created for drop off and pickup; the need for more preschools in the City; and she felt that the school would be an asset to the City and a great use of the space.

Andrew Flores expressed appreciation for attention to safety and security; felt student and staff safety should be a priority; expressed support for the project but disappointment in the absence of School Safety Design Standards in the staff report, the CUP ordinance conditions, or the consultant attachments; discussed the American Institute of Architects (AIA) School Design Safety Resources; and he indicated that he would appreciate the incorporation of School Safety Design.

Jack Walter reported being a stakeholder in the area but the remainder of his comments could not be heard due to sound issues.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding a suggestion to include more bike parking for staff; the fact that the project met all requirements; appreciation to staff for their work; appreciation that a pre-school would be coming to the area; the potential for issues with the neighbors; Mobility and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures; special conditions of building and safety; standard Conditions of Approval; standard Building Code items; the code compliance review; requiring photography before construction is done; adding flexibility to Condition 68 regarding hours of operation; and a suggestion to strike Condition 67 regarding staggered drop off and pick up.

Jack Walter was called to speak again but could not be heard.

Shaneel Poonja, Applicant Representative, indicated willingness to delete the Condition regarding staggered drop off and pick up.

Responding to inquiry, Suleman Poonja, Applicant, indicated that the current system was working well to minimize traffic; discussed parent volunteers; the intent to have a security guard at the gate who might help with traffic direction; and requirements of the Mobility Plan.

Additional discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding the staggered schedule as part of the Mobility Plan; ensuring compliance; support for keeping the Condition; placing the responsibility on the owner to keep traffic controlled; the current situation at the school vs. at other schools; aspirational conditions of approval; divergence over time; documents that provide actual practice; willingness of the owner to adhere to a staggered drop off and pick up plan; and agreement to modify Condition 68 to indicate that "The use shall operate between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m." with the rest of the language in the Condition removed.

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

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

1. ADOPT A CLASS 32 CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION FOR THIS PROJECT, PURSUANT TO CEQA SECTION 15332 - IN-FILL DEVELOPMENT

PROJECTS, FINDING THERE ARE NO POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE IMPACTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT, AND,

2. APPROVE CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT, P2023-0102-CUP, SUBJECT TO THE CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL AS STATED IN RESOLUTION NO. 2023-P006 WITH MODIFICATIONS AS DISCUSSED.

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Public Comment - Items NOT on the Agenda (Continued)

Chair Jones invited public comment.

Ruth Martin del Campo, Administrative Clerk, indicated that a request to speak had been received, but the person had not joined the meeting.

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Items from Planning Commissioners/Staff

Commissioner Menthe reported attending the General Plan public meeting at La Ballona and he encouraged people to attend the upcoming meeting noting the importance of seeing the maps blown up to a larger size.

Mark Muenzer, Planning and Development Director, reported that a Current Planning Manager had been hired and would attend future Planning Commission meeting; noted that a staff member had been added to the Advance Planning Team; indicated that the fourth and final General Plan Open House would be held virtually on November 15 with the public comment period open until November 30, 2023; he discussed next steps; City Council review of the Reimagining Public Safety Element that was added during the General Plan process; City Council direction as to whether the item would be included in the process; availability of the staff report and the draft Element on the City website; upcoming agenda items in 2024; he noted that no further meetings were scheduled in 2023; and he thanked Commissioners for their work.

Vice Chair Reilman proposed that the Commission have a workshop regarding Conditions of Approval.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding Commission participation in the process and research into when the last time the Conditions were reviewed and updated.

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Adjournment

There being no further business, at 8:19 p.m., the Culver City Planning Commission adjourned.

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RUTH MARTIN DEL CAMPO
SECRETARY of the CULVER CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

APPROVED _____

STEPHEN JONES
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