

CITY OF SAN DIMAS PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Wednesday, May 3, 2006 at 7:00 p.m.
245 East Bonita Avenue, Council Chambers

Present

Chairman Emmett Badar
Commissioner David Bratt
Commissioner Stephen Ensberg
Commissioner Yunus Rahi
Commissioner Jim Schoonover
Planning Manager Craig Hensley
Associate Planner Laura Lockett
Assistant Planner Michael Concepcion
City Attorney Ken Brown

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Badar called the regular meeting of the Planning Commission to order at 7:03 p.m. and Commissioner Bratt led the flag salute.

CONSENT CALENDAR

1. Approval of Minutes for April 19, 2006.

MOTION: Moved by Schoonover, seconded by Bratt to approve the Consent Calendar. Motion carried unanimously, 5-0.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

2. **CONSIDERATION OF TENTATIVE TRACT MAP 06-01; CONDITIONAL USE PERMITS 05-04, 06-02 AND 06-03; DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW BOARD CASE NOS. 06-24, 06-25 AND 06-26** – The proposed project includes:
 - Demolition of existing “Flavor House” buildings;
 - Condominium map to subdivide property for separate ownership;
 - Street design revisions for San Dimas Ave.
 - Conditional Use Permit for development of a mixed use project with:
 - Seven live-work units, a residential unit with ground level office/commercial space;

- 55 townhouses and condos ranging from one to three bedrooms;
- 48 loft units; and
- a 10,000 square foot commercial/office building.
- Off-site and shared parking for commercial/office building.
- *The entire development project consists of 110 residential units and approximately 14,500 square feet of commercial/office.*

Staff report was presented by **Planning Manager Craig Hensley**. He stated this item was related to the action the Commission took in late 2005 when the zoning was changed to allow for downtown mixed use on this property. The City has been working with William Fox Homes to develop this 5.29 acre property for 110 condos, seven live/work units and 9,600 sq. ft. of commercial office space. Of the 14 units facing San Dimas Avenue, seven of them will be the live/work units, and one of the Conditional Use Permits being heard tonight was to govern the uses related to them.

The commercial building will be located on the south end of the project along San Dimas Avenue and the uses allowed will be commercial, office or restaurant. The building is designed to have an approach to San Dimas Avenue. The extension of Commercial Street to the east will be a private street. He explained the site plan and location of the condominium buildings and added there will be 30-40 public parking spaces on San Dimas Avenue.

He stated in regards to the live/work units, the residential portion will range from 1,540 sq. ft. to 2,074 sq. ft., and the work portion will range from 520 sq. ft. to one at 1,069 sq. ft., but the majority of the spaces are in the mid-500 range. This will accommodate a moderate office or retail space. One of the suggested conditions is to limit the hours of operation for the non-residential portion from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. The Commission can modify this condition if they feel it is necessary. Staff is also suggesting that they limit medical office use as it requires a higher number of parking spaces. There is also a condition which requires a maintenance program for these units because of the proposed canvas awnings. It is also proposed that the southern live/work building will have a clock tower and there will be a condition that requires the clock to be maintained in working order.

Overall a traditional downtown design is proposed. The Development Plan Review Board has reviewed this proposal and discussed several items associated with it, but overall seemed pleased with the project. There was a concentrated effort between the developer, their architect, City staff and an architectural design consultant to produce a quality project. He stated the live/work units have been designed to be three-story in the back and two-story at street level with a building height of 36 feet at the street. The balance of the project is considered the high-density residential portion and consists of three basic product types. The standard condominium units range in size from 722 sq. ft. to 1,721 sq. ft. with the buildings being 37 feet in height. The podium units are 782 sq. ft. to 2,280 sq. ft. with the building ranging 35-38 feet in height with the parapet. The loft units are 874 sq. ft. to 1,683 sq. ft. with a building height of 53 feet.

Manager Hensley explained the traffic circulation of the various buildings. Part of the DDA between the developer and the Redevelopment Agency calls for 31 feet along San

Dimas Avenue to be dedicated to allow for an additional lane and added parking with a small median between the drive lanes and the parking area. He pointed out there will be a plaza area with landscaping along the loft building with landscaping above the subterranean parking. There will be courtyards and a mostly pedestrian mall with limited emergency access in the project, along with a 2,900 sq. ft. recreation room located at the back of the loft building.

The final Conditional Use Permit is for the commercial/office building for parking. Based on the size of the building of 9,537 useable square feet, they would need 48 parking spaces to meet code. There are 43 spaces provided on-site, and the proposal is to allow five spaces of off-site parking in the center of the project. There is a condition which would require the owner of the commercial building to have an agreement with the Homeowner's Association to have access, and that the HOA could not prohibit access to that parking. It will be in the CC&R's that residents are not to use the parking spaces along San Dimas Avenue for their personal vehicles. In addition to those five spaces, there is a request for shared parking to address the possibility of there being two different uses in the building, such as office and a small restaurant.

The Tentative Tract Map is to subdivide the project into ten different lots; one for parking, one for each building, and one that would cover the 2.27 acres of common space. Staff is recommending the Commission take action on the Environmental Negative Declaration and the numerous mitigation measures proposed. The applicant has prepared a significant amount of documentation on the environmental aspects of the project, along with a detailed traffic impact analysis. A traffic signal warrant study was conducted and it was determined that the intersection of Commercial Street and San Dimas Avenue did not meet warrants for a traffic signal.

Manager Hensley stated staff is proposing some revisions to the conditions based on discussion held at the DPRB. For CUP 05-04, staff would like to add Condition Number 14 that would state, "Parking space allotment shall be addressed through a parking management plan that shall be submitted and approved by the Director of Community Development prior to the issuance of building permits." For CUP 06-02, staff would like to revise Condition Number 10 to say, "Parking space allotment shall be addressed through a parking management plan that shall be submitted and approved by the Director of Community Development prior to the issuance of building permits." He covered the parking space allotment for each type of unit and how it was designed to ensure that guest parking spaces would remain available and not get filled by residents with multiple vehicles.

He stated staff would like to eliminate Condition Number 10 of the Public Works Conditions passed out this evening because it duplicates Condition Number 15 found on page 24 relative to the Gold Line. He stated staff is recommending the Commission recommend the City Council approve Tentative Tract Map 06-01; Conditional Use Permits 05-04, 06-02 and 06-03; and DPRB Case Nos. 06-24, 06-25 and 06-26, and adoption of the Mitigated Negative Declaration.

Commissioner Rahi asked if the commercial building was completely separated from the live/work units in terms of access.

Manager Hensley stated there was pedestrian access, but no vehicular access.

Commissioner Rahi asked about the shortage of parking for this building and how were they going to prohibit residents from parking along San Dimas Avenue.

Manager Hensley stated if the building was all office, it would need 48 spaces; if it were all retail, it would only need 43 spaces, but since they think the majority of space will be office use then they are five spaces short. He stated there is no overnight street parking allowed without a permit so that will prohibit residential parking on San Dimas Avenue during the night, but that it might be difficult to enforce during the day.

Commissioner Rahi suggested they might want to look at setting a time limit for daytime street parking.

Chairman Badar stated he didn't think they had timed parking anywhere else in the city. **Manager Hensley** stated there are a few spots, and of course if the Commission felt this was needed, they could make that recommendation to the City Council. That same comment came up at the DPRB meeting.

Commissioner Rahi asked if the Traffic Committee had reviewed the design for the street parking.

Manager Hensley stated they had and the Council approved the idea of one lane with angled parking with a median separating this area from street traffic. There was a member of the public who asked the Council to reconsider. That plan did not go back to the Traffic Committee but to the City Engineer who has devised a new plan. Both plans will go back to Council to determine which they would like to have, but the only difference is in regards to the width of the median. The first plan had an approximately six foot wide median that would accommodate minor landscaping; the new plan recommends a median approximately 1-1/2 foot wide median of hardscape. The DPRB will also review these two plans.

Commissioner Ensberg asked if any portion of the project will help the City meet their affordability requirements.

Manager Hensley stated they need to provide 15% of the project as affordable, in this case that would be 15 units, but all of the units did not have to be on-site. Part of the DDA states that the Redevelopment Agency will provide assistance to make ten units on-site affordable for moderate income families. In addition, the Agency will be providing low and very-low units off-site in the form of rental subsidies.

Commissioner Ensberg asked if there has been any community opposition expressed towards this project.

Manager Hensley stated no.

Commissioner Rahi expressed concerns regarding the four parking spaces at the rear of the project and felt it would increase walkability if those spaces were removed. He also expressed concerns regarding the design of the parking area along San Dimas Avenue and thought the southern portion's exit was too close to Commercial Street. He felt the exit should be centered more and would like to have that reviewed.

Commissioners Bratt and Rahi expressed concerns about the design of the angled parking spaces along Commercial Street and the distance people would have to travel to make the turnaround and felt that should be designed differently.

Chairman Badar asked if there will be a sound wall on the north side along the railroad tracks.

Manager Hensley stated that was an issue that came up at DPRB. The acoustical analysis doesn't require a sound wall. There will be a retaining wall and at its highest point it is fourteen feet tall, but the majority of the wall will be much less. The DPRB discussed whether it should be a solid wall or some type of landscaped fence. They will be bringing that back to DPRB. If the Commission has a specific opinion, staff can forward that to them. Along the Mini-Storage area there will be an eight to nine foot wall to provide security and screening.

Chairman Badar expressed concern that unless there is some type of barrier, people will be trying to cross the railroad tracks to cut across to Albertson's.

Manager Hensley stated there will be some type of fence. The easement referred to in the report would only be used if there is a Gold Line platform in that area and they would have to provide some type of parking over there; otherwise, the intent is to have some type of separation.

Chairman Badar asked once residents move in would the HOA be allowed to adjust the site plan to install a community pool.

Manager Hensley stated it is possible but it would require a revision to the CUP and a public hearing before the Commission for approval.

Commissioner Bratt asked if a Gold Line station were to be built to the east, would it require access through this project.

Manager Hensley stated with the way the project is designed, if that were to happen then vehicular access would probably come in from Arrow Highway or Walnut. Any vehicular access through the project would need HOA approval.

Commissioner Bratt asked for clarification on the live/work units and their occupancy.

Manager Hensley stated typically the person who lives above will operate a business in the unit below, but they weren't sure if that would work in San Dimas. What they are trying to do is create a visual extension of the downtown and the building is designed to look that way. One of the worst things you can have happen in a downtown building is

to have vacant storefronts. If they require the building owner to run a business, what if someone wants to retire or the business they operate is not successful and they have to close. They didn't want to set up a situation where you force someone to move or continue to have a vacancy. Staff felt it was better to let the market work it out and let those spaces be rented out to a viable business.

Commissioner Bratt was concerned about the wording on page 5 dealing with access for the Gold Line station. He also asked if any thought had been given to having a different set of assessments for the different types of housing units.

Manager Hensley stated they could amend that to indicate access was for pedestrian use, not vehicular. As to the CC&R's, he felt they would be complex because of the different maintenance levels required between the different types of buildings, so it is possible there will be different levels of assessment depending on where you live.

Commissioner Bratt asked if the subterranean parking would have some type of drainage or pumping system to prevent flooding in heavy rains.

Manager Hensley stated there is currently an inlet for a storm drain that is above the level of the parking garage. The storm drain will be reconfigured and will have a gravity drain from the subterranean parking. They will also have a back-up system installed. The live/work parking is also below grade and will have a similar system installed.

Commissioner Schoonover asked if the affordable units will be spread throughout the project and will all the buildings have elevators.

Manager Hensley stated there will be four affordable units in the townhome buildings, four in the podium buildings and two in the lofts. The loft building and the podium buildings will be the only buildings with elevators, and the architect could better explain about accessibility for the other buildings.

Commissioner Schoonover asked if the parcel across the street develops and it is determined at that time that Commercial Street will require a traffic signal, will this developer be required to give funds towards a signal, or just the person across the street, or just the City.

Manager Hensley stated it is most likely the City would bear the cost. They have had discussions with the owner of the property across the street and when this project went to the Traffic Committee, City staff was aware of what might be developed. Even with that in mind, they still feel the intersection will not require a signal. He stated there could be a need in the future but the Public Works department has not brought it up as an issue.

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Chairman Badar recessed the meeting at 8:40 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 8:45 p.m. with all Commissioners present.

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Chairman Badar asked the applicant to address the Commission.

Ron Nester, Nester & Gaffney Architecture, 305 W. 4th Street, Santa Ana stated he was here representing the applicant. He felt this project would be a welcome addition to the existing historical buildings in the downtown and they have presented an interesting array of buildings that capture an early 20th century feel. They have used a warm color palette combined with brick and ledge stone, and the window openings are similar to the downtown with narrow yet large openings. They have modified the plans a little bit to accentuate the entrance to the project. In regards to the questions on handicap accessibility, the project is fully compliant with Title 24 Multi-Family Housing requirements. If they have an elevator in a building, all of the units must be handicap accessible. The four center buildings which are the at-grade buildings are three-story but do not have elevators. Title 24 does not require an elevator, only that 10% of the units need to be handicap compliant; therefore, two out of the twenty-four units have first floors that are handicap compliant. In the live/work units, the living area is not required to be handicapped compliant but the street-level work area is. The commercial building is ADA compliant throughout the building.

Chairman Badar asked if he has had an opportunity to read the conditions, along with the revised conditions presented tonight, and if he had any problems with them.

Ron Nester stated they did not have any concerns about the conditions.

Commissioner Rahi asked if it would be possible to relocate the four parking spaces in the rear of the complex to make that area more open.

Ron Nester agreed that aesthetically they would like to remove those spaces from that location, but the reality is that the code requires them to have a certain number of parking spaces and the site is very tight. The project is only one space over the required number of parking spaces so they can't remove them and there is no where to relocate them to.

Commissioner Ensberg asked what population they envisioned being served by the 48 one-bedroom apartments.

Ron Nester stated primarily young professionals, singles and couples. They are spacious units with lofts so portions of them have a double-height space.

Chairman Badar asked what the cost would be for the loft units.

Greg Martin, William Fox Homes, 3333 E. Concourse, Ontario, stated they range in size quite a bit; the 1,700 sq. ft. plus units will be over \$500,000 and the smaller units will be from \$350,000 and up.

Commissioner Bratt asked if there were units on top of the at-grade townhomes.

Ron Nester stated the buildings are designed to have a two-story townhome at the grade level, and above them would be a one-story flat. All will have street level

entrances but the upper floors will have a door to a stairwell that takes them up to their unit.

Commissioner Bratt felt that the size of the 800 sq. ft. two-bedroom units in the podium buildings were smaller than anyone would want to live in.

Ron Nester stated that as a frame of reference they are working on a large project in Irvine where the studio apartments are 550 sq. ft. and 800 sq. ft. is typical for the two-bedroom models.

Commissioner Ensberg asked when they expected to break ground.

Greg Martin stated there are still a number of steps to go through but they hope to break ground at the end of summer or in the early fall.

Chairman Badar stated there are a lot of small condos and flats being built in downtown Los Angeles that are priced from \$800,000 to \$900,000 which are selling rapidly. He felt that people would be looking for housing in the \$350,000 range.

Chairman Badar opened the meeting for public hearing. There being no response the public hearing was closed.

Chairman Badar stated in the recommendation it suggests the Commission continue the public hearing to the next meeting.

Manager Hensley stated that because of the complicated nature of the issue, he wanted to give the Commissioners an opportunity to discuss or modify the conditions if necessary. He felt the public hearing setting was the appropriate process to follow.

MOTION: Moved by Ensberg, seconded by Bratt to continue the public hearing to the next meeting and direct staff to bring back resolutions of approval.

Commissioner Bratt expressed concerns about the density of the project even though it seemed like a well laid out plan.

Commissioner Ensberg asked if the density was addressed when this item was heard last fall.

Commissioner Bratt stated it came before the Commission to amend the General Plan to increase the density, and he had objections to it at that time as well.

Chairman Badar stated this item went to the City Council and the concerns about density were expressed; however, the Council approved the change for higher density.

Commissioner Rahi stated asked if the design issues he spoke about earlier could be addressed at the next meeting.

Commissioner Schoonover stated he did not see a condition regarding limiting medical offices, or one about a sign program.

Manager Hensley stated the sign program will be developed through DPRB.

Chairman Badar stated he had concerns about the parking issue and felt it would be like the Albertson's project where they tried to put a lot of spaces into a small area which makes it difficult to maneuver through. He felt the same thing might happen here. He did not have a problem with the angled parking inside the project. His only concern was the access along the railroad tracks and he wouldn't be opposed to seeing a taller barrier there to keep kids from trying jump the fence.

Motion carried 4-1 (Bratt voted no).

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

3. Director of Community Development

Manager Hensley stated there won't be any public hearing items scheduled for June 21st as the City's computer system will be down for upgrades the week before.

4. Members of the Audience

No communications were made.

5. Planning Commission

Chairman Badar and Commissioner Schoonover both indicated they would be out of town for the July 19th meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Moved by Ensberg, seconded by Bratt to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously, 5-0. The meeting adjourned at 9:13 p.m. to the regular Planning Commission meeting scheduled for May 17, 2006 at 7:00 p.m.

Emmett Badar, Chairman
San Dimas Planning Commission

ATTEST:

Craig Hensley
Planning Manager

Approved: