

CITY OF SAN DIMAS PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Wednesday, September 5, 2007 at 7:00 p.m.
245 East Bonita Avenue, Council Chambers

Present

Chairman James Schoonover
Commissioner David Bratt
Commissioner John Davis
Commissioner Stephen Ensberg
Commissioner M. Yunus Rahi
Planning Manager Craig Hensley

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Schoonover called the regular meeting of the Planning Commission to order at 7:05 p.m. and Commissioner Bratt led the flag salute.

CONSENT CALENDAR

1. Approval of Minutes: August 15, 2007

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

PUBLIC HEARINGS

2. **CONSIDERATION OF CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT 07-03; DPRB CASE NO. 07-16** – A request to expand the use of the existing church facility by: removing existing buildings directly to the west of the sanctuary; constructing a 7,728 square foot gymnasium; and reconstructing the parking area for the facility located on approximately 1.25 acres of land in the SF-7500 zone at 1404-1430 West Gladstone Street. The project has been determined categorically exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as it qualifies as a Class 32 exemption under CEQA Guidelines Section 15332 In-Fill Development Projects. (APN 8383-001-030)

Staff report presented by *Planning Manager Craig Hensley*, who stated the church has been at this location since 1958, prior to incorporation, and is in the SF-7500 zone. In 1980 they received a Conditional Use Permit for temporary classrooms, and in 1984 a CUP for a daycare center and school on site, which is currently not operating and is not included in the new CUP. He stated the proposed gym is 7,700 sq. ft. and will be located to the west of the main sanctuary building. Occupancy is determined by parking for church facilities; the proposal is for 42 spaces, which will set maximum occupancy at 126 people. He stated that the church has worked out a reciprocal parking agreement with Bonita Unified School District for use of the

school parking outside of school hours, but since that agreement could cease in the future, staff did not allow those spaces to be used in the calculation for occupancy.

He stated the new gym facility should not increase intensity of the traffic to the site, and it will probably be reduced with the discontinuation of the daycare and school facility. He discussed the design of the building and changes made by the applicant in response to comments by the DPRB. The project received DPRB approval on August 9, 2007. Staff feels the building is creatively designed and blends with existing buildings on the property, is adequately set back and landscaped from neighboring properties, and recommends approval of CUP 07-03.

Commissioner Ensberg inquired about the federal regulation to allow the operation of religious facilities. He asked if the gym facility was owned and operated by the church or by a separate entity.

Manager Hensley stated the church is allowed to operate in that location under federal law, but adding a gymnasium or other facilities is discretionary. He stated the applicant would be better able to answer the question on ownership.

Commissioner Davis asked if the using the site for a daycare facility will expire with this new permit, and how is occupancy enforced.

Manager Hensley stated continuing daycare was not part of this application, thus will not be allowed with the adoption of the new CUP. If a complaint is received regarding occupancy, then either the church would need to either change what it is doing operationally or look at amending the CUP. Historically the City has not received any complaints regarding parking at this location.

Commissioner Bratt stated the conditions say no more than one major event can be held at any given time, yet the schedule the applicant submitted shows services on Sunday in the in sanctuary and food distribution in the gymnasium, which seems contrary to Condition No. 11.

Commissioner Ensberg stated the food distribution may be fellowship after services, but even if it is a pantry distribution, usually you do not have a lot of people going in and out.

Manager Hensley stated it is up the applicant to monitor the uses, but if there is a problem with the uses, he felt there were ways to rectify that through the proposed CUP.

Commissioner Bratt inquired about the August 9th DPRB minutes where the applicant was required to widen Gladstone Street. He did not see a condition in the resolution that addressed that.

Manager Hensley stated that is a condition of the DPRB, not the Conditional Use Permit. Even if the item is approved by the Commission tonight, there is still a requirement to go back to DPRB for final approval of the design.

Commissioner Rahi stated the schedule submitted by the applicant shows an AA meeting on Saturday, and inquired if there would be an issue with the occupancy.

Manager Hensley stated the applicant will be on their honor to abide by the occupancy limit.

Chairman Schoonover opened the meeting for public hearing. Addressing the Commission were:

Pastor Freddy Martin, Valley Christian Center, stated the architect for the project was available if the Commission had questions about the design. In response to concerns raised by the Commission, the attendance at the AA meeting is six people and the food program feeds 25 people a week from the children's hunger fund. He stated the gymnasium will be owned and operated by the church and the intent is to provide choices for at-risk youth in the surrounding communities. Their congregation is small and he does not see it growing much larger.

Chairman Schoonover inquired about the youth recreation programs listed on the schedule.

Pastor Martin stated they provide a mentoring program to keep youth busy during the high-crime period.

Commissioner Ensberg asked which communities would be served by their program and would they need to hire recreational staff.

Pastor Martin stated they serve youth from San Dimas, La Verne, Glendora and Covina. As to staff, they will utilize volunteers, though they may need to hire staff as well, as the facility cannot be left unattended.

Alfonso Garcia, 2100 Saturn St., Monterey Park, stated he was the architect for the project and would be happy to answer any questions the Commission may have. He felt it was a good project and hoped they would support it.

Pete Williams, 622 N. Darwood Avenue, stated 90% of the parking lot backs up to his driveway. He was unhappy that the church had never contacted him to let him know what they wanted to do with the facility, and stated he had to come to the hearing tonight to find out. He stated there are already parking problems in the neighborhood when the baseball leagues are in season. He wanted to know if there are going to be activities scheduled every night because the parking lot is only eight feet from his house. He also had questions about the size of the kitchen and how many people they would be feeding from there, and if any existing buildings were going to be removed to allow additional parking.

Manager Hensley stated the architect could confirm the dimensions but thought the kitchen area was very small. There is a current demolition permit for all the buildings other than the sanctuary. The parking will be generally where it is now with the addition of a new parking area near Gladstone where there used to be grass. The plan also requires an 8-10 foot landscape setback from Mr. Williams' wall to the first parking space.

Commissioner Davis asked about the use of the facility in the evenings and if there is a specific time when all activities need to stop.

Manager Hensley stated the current schedule indicates the building will be used four nights a week past 6:00 p.m. This schedule has been provided by the applicant but they are not bound to this only. As to having a set stopping time, that has not been required for any other church in town.

Jack Rose, 601 N. Darwood, wanted to reiterate the parking problems in the area when the softball teams take over the area and was concerned what would happen if the church held activities at the same time.

Commissioner Davis asked the applicant if he would be opposed to adding a condition stating all activities must cease at 9:00 p.m.

Pastor Martin stated they would be concerned. While it is not their intent to conduct activities late into the night, if they are conducting a league event, it may be 9:30 p.m. before they can clear everyone from the facility and parking lot after cleaning up. He would not argue if a condition were placed on them, but he did not see a need to do so.

Manager Hensley stated Condition No. 8 requires that the parking lot lighting shut off at 10:00 p.m. He stated if the Commission felt it was necessary to set a time limit on activities, perhaps it could be concurrent with the parking lot lighting limitation.

There being no further comments, the public hearing was closed.

Commissioner Davis felt the gymnasium would have less impact on the surrounding residents than if the daycare were started up again. He thought they should set a time limitation for activities, possibly concurrent with the lights-out limit.

Chairman Schoonover didn't think there would be a problem with late-night activities, and if there are complaints, they can bring the CUP back for review. Since they have not set limitations on any of the other churches in town, he did not want to start with this one.

Commissioner Bratt asked if there were time limitations on any other church.

Manager Hensley did not remember any being placed in the 17 years he has been with the City, but he would have to check the files to be a hundred percent certain. If the Commission wanted a time limit set, staff would recommend bringing the item back. Research would need to be done to ensure they were not violating the religious land use act.

Commissioner Ensberg stated he was not in favor of setting any restrictions right now because historically there have been no problems with this church. He felt the applicant was trying to put together a nice facility for the community, and if there is a problem in the future, they have the means to have it come back for review.

RESOLUTION PC-1361

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF SAN DIMAS APPROVING CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT 07-03, A REQUEST BY VALLEY CHRISTIAN CHURCH TO REVISE THE EXISTING CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT AND ADD A NEW GYMNASIUM BUILDING AND A NEW PARKING AREA ON THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 1404 WEST GLADSTONE STREET (APN 8383-001-030)

MOTION: Moved by Ensberg, seconded by Bratt to approve Resolution No. PC-1361.

Commissioner Davis stated he did not understand why the Commission is not addressing the issues that could arise from the addition of the gymnasium use now, as the applicant may not be the operator of the facility in the future.

Commissioner Rahi stated the current schedule does not show the gym being used past 8:30 p.m., and wondered if it is the intention of the application to use the facility past that time.

Motion carried 4-1 (Davis, no).

ORAL COMMUNICATION

3. Planning Manager

Manager Hensley stated the City Council has scheduled a joint meeting with the Commission on Saturday, September 15 from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. to discuss housing issues.

4. Members of the Audience

No communications were made.

5. Planning Commission

No communications were made.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Moved by Ensberg, seconded by Davis to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously, 5-0. The meeting adjourned at 8:11 p.m. to the regular Planning Commission meeting scheduled for September 19, 2007 at 7:00 p.m.

James Schoonover, Chairman
San Dimas Planning Commission

ATTEST:

Craig Hensley
Planning Manager

Approved: October 3, 2007