



MINUTES
SPECIAL JOINT MEETING OF
CITY COUNCIL/PLANNING COMMISSION
SATURDAY, JANUARY 12, 2008, 8:00 A.M.
SENIOR CITIZENS/COMMUNITY CENTER
201 E. BONITA AVE.

PRESENT:

COUNCIL:

Mayor Curtis W. Morris
Mayor Pro Tem Jeff Templeman
Councilmember Emmett Badar
Councilmember Denis Bertone

PLANNING COMMISSION:

Jim Schoonover, Chair
David Bratt
Stephen Ensberg
M. Yunus Rahi
John Davis

City Manager Blaine Michaelis
City Clerk Ina Rios
Assistant City Manager of Community Development Larry Stevens
Assistant City Manager Ken Duran
Director of Development Services Dan Coleman
Director of Public Works Krishna Patel
Director of Parks and Recreation Theresa Bruns

ABSENT:

Councilmember John Ebner
City Attorney J. Kenneth Brown

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Morris called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m.

Mayor Morris inquired what days are best to hold joint meetings, at a minimum of four (4) hours, for discussion of items of interest to the Planning Commission and City Council. He said Commissioner John Davis has suggested including the Planning Commissioners in the Tree Ordinance process.

2. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

(For anyone wishing to address the City Council or Planning Commission on an item on the agenda. Under the provisions of the Brown Act, the legislative body is prohibited from taking or engaging in discussion on any item not appearing on the posted agenda. Speakers are limited to three minutes or as may be determined by the Mayor.)

- a. Members of the Audience

There were no comments.

3. OTHER MATTERS

- a. Training regarding council and commissioner responsibilities and meeting management.

In light of recent challenges at public meetings, City Manager Michaelis reminded management, the City Council, and Commissioners that as decision makers, it is their responsibility to prepare unbiased staff reports, conduct fair hearings and orderly meetings, and disclose information gathered to help with a decision.

Councilmembers and Commissioners agreed that people have a right to express their opinions; however, the challenge is how far to let them go. All agreed that time limits are appropriate.

City Manager Michaelis stated that cities have adopted a code of conduct and suggested adopting standards for the City of San Dimas meetings.

Assistant City Manager Stevens suggested the opponents be permitted to comment; the proponent be allowed to rebut, and the public hearing be closed and no further comments be permitted.

In response to Commissioner Ensberg, Mr. Stevens stated that before the City Council makes a final decision on an appeal, the City Council is careful from a procedural point of view to send back an item to the Planning Commission for comment if new information has been received during the Council's denovo review.

Discussion continued on Oral Communications on the agenda; contacting the Joint Powers Insurance Authority before adding comments to a claim rejection; whether or not to video-tape Planning Commission meetings; confirming findings and direction to staff; and City travel and conference attendance requirements.

- b. Update on City projects of interest to the Council and Commission – status and issues.

Costco:

Assistant City Manager Stevens reported that the Costco building, paved parking lot, street improvements, and gas station are substantially complete; and substantial street work will start next week and continue over the next three months. He said Costco entered into an agreement with a developer for pad sites and he expects an application to come in early Spring for development of the Gladstone pad. Costco projects an early May opening date. Costco indicated they would hold the Lone Hill pad for approximately one year to assess parking needs.

Mr. Stevens replied to questions that nothing has been approved on the pads. He said the pad development was primarily to set parameters for the Environmental Impact report. Mr. Stevens said staff is trying to encourage Costco to come up with more than one restaurant use. He said a building permit was issued for the gas station; and graphics for the art corner have not been approved.

Grove Station/Fox project:

Mr. Stevens said the project is in construction, primarily grading; Phase I and Phase II buildings and a portion of residential is done with plan check and likely to be permitted soon. He mentioned they are progressing slower than desired, but to make sure some of the housing set aside money gets spent, City Attorney Brown is working with them to push the schedule.

In response to Commissioner Davis, Mr. Stevens replied that the map has not been recorded and they cannot conduct sales, but are taking reservations.

Walker House:

Mr. Stevens said construction is moving along quickly. He said the City Council approved an increase in contingency funds to address structural issues, lead based paint removal, rot problem, and landscaping. He said a Request for Qualifications was sent out to find users for food service, with deadline to reply by Tuesday, January 15, 2008. He intends to have community meetings to solicit community input before finalizing the space available for users.

Bonita Canyon Gateway:

Development Services Director Coleman reported that as a result of changes the concept was deemed incomplete. He said the project has a much bigger range of sizes of units and affordability component for rentals. He mentioned that he and Mr. Stevens have a meeting scheduled for Wednesday with the developers.

In response to Mayor Morris, Mr. Stevens stated that zone changes would be required where changes are appropriate. He suggested getting community feedback on affordable apartments.

In response to Councilmember Bertone, Mr. Stevens said if they are going to construct apartments, they should meet the City's current standards or completely address the problem with affordability requirements for the housing element.

Commissioner Ensberg inquired why the option to acquire the property is not explored. Mr. Stevens replied that prior to the purchase an appraisal conducted came in at \$4 million for the property and the property was purchased for \$11 million without entitlements or without zoning in place. He added that staff had suggested demolishing the buildings to eliminate blight, and instead, the owners installed a fence.

Mayor Pro Tem Templeman recommended having a study session to help Planning Commissioners understand how housing funds need to be spent and to set the stage for what cannot be built at the site.

Mr. Stevens said staff would meet with them on Wednesday and report back to Council at their next meeting to choose a date for a study session if appropriate.

Bonita - both Cataract and Eucla:

Mr. Stevens said he is working with Chaparral Lanes about possibly putting in a Bravo Burgers and expand chaparral Lanes and will keep the City Council updated in closed sessions.

Mr. Stevens said RFQs will be sent out next week to solicit development interest on the city owned Bonita/Cataract property. He said the primary focus is to encourage retail/restaurant use and has indicated that housing is not acceptable.

Mayor Morris suggested landscaping to make it more attractive. Mayor Pro Tem Templeman stated he would not vote to spend money on landscaping.

Mr. Stevens stated that as part of the budget cycle, staff would look at the issue of landscaping and determine the level of interest. He said staff would also require a non-refundable deposit for development to be applied toward the acquisition of the property.

NJD and Foothills:

Mr. Stevens reported that in November an application was submitted to the Rivers Mountain Conservancy for a \$25.5 million grant to acquire NJD's holdings in San Dimas and Glendora. He said RMC is soon releasing the list of candidate projects for people who submitted to enhance their application and compete in the second round. He believes the City will be invited to submit for the second round.

In response to Councilmember Bertone, Mr. Stevens said he has spoken with RMC staff and they are willing to adjust the scope of the submittal to exclude Glendora's 200 acres if the grant is for fewer funds than requested.

Vista Verde Ranch:

Mr. Stevens said staff is trying to acquire the Dentec property with a grant from the RMC outside of Call for Projects. Staff is considering a joint application with the County of Los Angeles Parks and Recreation and has discussed possible participation with Tzu Chi Foundation.

Open Space Projects:

Mr. Stevens said this item was discussed in the two grant applications above.

Downtown planning:

Mr. Stevens said he is working with Mark Brodeur on a proposal to start implementing what came out of the Charrette. He said they are focusing on land use, development strategies, and possibly amending the boundaries of the specific plan. He said there is also a proposal from the subconsultant to take a look at marketing and economic issues. He indicated that staff is going forward with individual projects, but wants to take a more comprehensive look at the Bonita Corridor for traffic calming, design factors, and other appropriate traffic improvements.

In response to Council, Mr. Stevens said an application was received for a retail office development on the Church property; however, the developer cannot comply with the parking requirements. Mr. Stevens felt there might be an opportunity to look at a more appropriate type of development on some of the downtown blocks, while still respecting the more important historic buildings and thought the City Council should consider acquiring some of those buildings.

Mr. Stevens further responded that the request from Paul Kirby to install "Stop" signs on Bonita Avenue at Monte Vista is scheduled on the Traffic Safety Committee agenda for January 23, 2008, and Mr. Kirby has been notified.

RECESS

Mayor Morris recessed at 10:43 a.m. and reconvened the meeting at 10:56 a.m.

Housing Element:

Mr. Stevens stated that the Housing Element is in draft form and he anticipates scheduling public hearings in February. He said the site analysis required the most attention and once staff makes an initial recommendation, it will be sent to the HCD for determination and brought back for final adoption by June, 2008.

Affordable Housing:

General Plan update:

Mr. Stevens indicated that the housing element may drive some land use changes so not much would be done until the latter part of this fiscal year. He said a General Plan class from USC would be working with staff on the assessment of our general plan and would give a presentation to the Planning Commission this semester.

Gold Line

Mr. Stevens said the consultant for the Gold Line is working with staff on a land use plan east of San Dimas Avenue and will probably include conceptual work done in the downtown planning process over

the next six months. The work will be tested with the community, Council, and Planning Commission to resolve how the Gold Line will be included.

Councilmember Bertone explained that if the costs go over the budgeted amount, each city would have the opportunity to vote to pay an additional \$3 million for contingency. He added that the City has complete control over the parking structure.

Mayor Pro Tem Templeman stated that most of the ridership comes from surrounding communities.

Councilmember Badar inquired if hi-occupany lanes would be charged a toll. Mr. Stevens replied that to charge a fee for carpool lanes requires a change in State law. He said the grant application has been submitted and within one month he will know if the demonstration project is going to be funded by the Federal government. If State legislation authorizes it, they will figure out a fee program for the carpool lanes on Interstate 10 from the 605 freeway to the west. If successful, it will expand to San Bernardino County line.

School District property

Mr. Stevens said the School District property would be addressed with the housing element.

Mr. Michaelis said the District has hired a consultant and is pursuing their expansion project.

Miscellaneous - Verizon and Cable TV

1) Mr. Michaelis reported that 20% of cable work still has to be done as Verizon gets into the video business.

2) Mr. Michaelis said Waste Management is starting a five-day pick up on April 1, 2008.

3) Mr. Michaelis said water issues are critical and representatives would be coming in for a rate increase in the near future.

4) In response to Mayor Pro Tem Templeman's inquiry about the city hall expansion, Mr. Michaelis said to assist in narrowing down the architects, staff would be going on field trips on Monday. Staff is committed to moving forward with this project.

In response to Councilmember Badar, Mr. Michaelis said depending on the size of the project, the plan is to use general fund reserves to fund the expansion project.

5) In response to Mayor Pro Tem Templeman, Mr. Michaelis said the Holiday Express Hotel project is in escrow and a condition of the sale requires the hotel to be completed before the transaction.

6) In response to Mayor Pro Tem Templeman, Mr. Patel replied that a study has been conducted and the traffic signal at Iglesia/Bonita Avenue is warranted. He said the design is underway, and will be funded next fiscal year with construction in July.

Mayor Morris suggested appropriating the funds as soon as the design is completed.

7) In response to Mayor Pro Tem Templeman's concern with shopping carts left in various places, Mr. Duran stated that ordinance samples have been obtained from other cities and will be taken to Council for adoption. Mr. Templeman suggested Commercial/Cataract should be strictly residential and the metal building should be removed.

8) Councilmember Badar inquired if the contract with T-Mobile has been signed to start construction of the barn. Mr. Duran stated the existing agreement was amended.

c. General discussion – exchange between the council and commission on any ideas or issues that may need to be addressed.

1) Commission Issues or concerns?

Commissioners felt the joint sessions with City Council were beneficial and requested being included in discussions about the Canyon Center and other development projects.

Council, Commissioners and staff discussed whether or not to provide training to Commissioners during cancelled Planning Commission meetings, and including Commissioners in the tree study, rezoning, and other development projects.

It was suggested that agendas for City Council meetings be mailed to Planning Commissioners and they would decide whether or not to attend the meetings.

2) DPRB issues or concerns -

3) City Staff - development review -

d. Future issues for the city to focus on – what challenges do we face down the road?

1) Downtown Planning - broad issues along the corridor

2) Private property maintenance

3) City's infrastructure

4) Demographic changes

5) Cost of housing

6) Maintaining a safe community

7) Individual home and business preparation for community and regional emergencies

8) City 50 year anniversary August 2010

4. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Morris adjourned the meeting at 12:12 p.m. The next City Council meeting is January 22, 2008 7:00 p.m.; next Planning Commission meeting is February 6, 2008, 7:00 p.m.

Curtis W. Morris, Mayor of the City of San Dimas

ATTEST:

Ina Rios, CMC, City Clerk