

# CITY OF SAN DIMAS PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

Regularly Scheduled Meeting  
Wednesday, February 17, 2010 at 7:00 p.m.  
245 East Bonita Avenue, Council Chambers

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## **Present**

Chairman Jim Schoonover  
Commissioner David Bratt  
Commissioner M. Yunus Rahi  
Assistant City Manager of Community Development Larry Stevens  
Director of Development Services Dan Coleman  
Administrative Aide Kevin Frey

## **Absent**

Commissioner John Davis  
Commissioner Stephen Ensberg

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Schoonover called the regular meeting of the Planning Commission to order at 7:00 p.m. and Commissioner Bratt led the flag salute.

## **CONSENT CALENDAR**

1. Approval of Minutes: January 6, 2010 (Bratt, Davis absent)
2. Approval of Changing the Location for San Dimas Planning Commission Meetings during construction at the San Dimas City Hall

### RESOLUTION PC-1412

#### A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF SAN DIMAS CHANGING THEIR MEETING LOCATION

**ACTION:** The minutes of January 6, 2010 to be continued as a quorum of the members present at the meeting was not present this evening to vote on their approval.

**MOTION:** Moved by Bratt, seconded by Rahi to approve the balance of the Consent Calendar. Motion carried 3-0-2 (Davis, Ensberg absent).

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

3. **CONSIDERATION OF MUNICIPAL CODE TEXT AMENDMENT 10-01** – A Request to amend Chapter 18.14 of the City's Municipal Zoning Code, regarding Water Efficient Landscaping, to bring the City in compliance with SB 1881.

Staff report presented by *Administrative Aide Kevin Frey* who outlined the legislative history of the Water Conservation in Landscaping Act, initially adopted in 1992, and the City's ordinance adopted in 1993 in response to that Act. He described the significant changes made in the new requirements and how they would apply not only to developers and public agencies, but also individual homeowners if the landscape area was equal to or greater than 5,000 square feet. The State of California has created a model ordinance that would be effective if the City does not pass its own ordinance. Staff feels the State's ordinance is confusing and not user friendly as it contains both policy issues and technical procedures. Staff's recommendation is to create a separate document containing the technical requirements and a zoning ordinance which would enforce compliance of the guidelines.

*Administrative Aide Frey* stated the proposed ordinance will support current conservation efforts as well as comply with State regulations and went over how the ordinance provides a method for calculating water use by specific categories of plants based on state research on plant water factors. The ordinance establishes a formula to calculate a minimum water budget for the project based on landscaped area and local climate conditions. The proposed ordinance gives the option of installing artificial turf as part of the landscaping. A typical residence can save approximately 22,000 gallons of water per year by replacing grass and went over the requirements for artificial turf.

He stated Staff will notify an applicant during the plan check process if their project falls into one of the applicable project categories and provide them with a Water Efficient Landscape and Irrigation Application Package which will detail the requirements of the ordinance. He explained the review and inspection process to ensure that the landscaping plan operates within the parameters of the Maximum Applied Water Allowance.

Staff recommends the Planning Commission recommend approval to the City Council of M.C.T.A. 10-01 and provide comment on the Draft Guidelines, which will be brought back at a later date.

*Commissioner Rahi* asked if there was a method used to identify the minimum square footage requirement which would activate this ordinance. He asked if there were any issues with being past the required adoption date of January 1, 2010, and if the City currently prohibits artificial turf.

*Administrative Aide Frey* stated the State held workshops with interested parties and the square footage requirement was derived from the recommendations from the participants. He stated it wasn't an issue that the City has not adopted its own ordinance yet, and explained that until they do, projects are subject to the State's ordinance. As to artificial turf, the Municipal Code is silent on that topic.

*Assistant City Manager Larry Stevens* stated the use of artificial turf has been discouraged in the past since the quality available was questionable, but the Council has indicated at recent retreats that they wanted Staff to revisit the topic to see if some flexibility could be built into the standards.

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

**Ted Ross, 1152 Via Verde, #193**, who stated it was his understanding that Homeowners Associations have to comply with this ordinance, and felt if someone wanted to install artificial turf, the Association couldn't deny it.

**Assistant City Manager Stevens** stated the Association could submit a letter saying they have reviewed the application for artificial turf, and if they have found a problem with it, the City can consider it. The City has put in guidelines in regards to artificial turf, not the State, and since it is not a requirement of the State's ordinance, he felt the HOA could set guidelines.

**Ted Ross** stated there are many lawsuits in other cities regarding artificial turf and felt this could be a problem down the road. He stated he is also concerned because now it looks like it has to be removed every ten years because of wear of the material, and that lead is being used in the color dyes.

**Assistant City Manager Stevens** stated the way this ordinance is structured, if there are too many concerns at this time, the section on artificial turf can be deleted, or the Commission can make a recommendation. Staff is concerned that there are so many varieties and differences in quality they want to make sure there are high standards in place.

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

**Commissioner Rahi** stated he thought HOA's might have a problem with regulations on artificial turf and asked if they were aware of this proposed option and if any notification was done.

**Assistant City Manager Stevens** stated Staff could process a submittal from a resident in an HOA the way they do now for a development application, which is to require a letter stating the HOA approves the change. If the resident refuses to submit to the HOA, the City can approve based on compliance with the ordinance, and then it would be up to the HOA and the homeowner to resolve their differences as a civil matter. Staff only did the normal notification required for this amendment, but could send a letter to the HOA's if the Commission would like their input. He stated unless an association has updated their landscaping guidelines, they are probably silent on the topic of artificial turf.

**Director of Development Services Dan Coleman** stated it might take up to a month or more to get a response from the HOA's since the boards only meet once a month.

**Assistant City Manager Stevens** stated the landscape guidelines are mandated but artificial turf is something the City added and is discretionary. Staff can remove the section on artificial turf and bring that back as a separate item for consideration, and the landscaping requirements could move forward.

**Commissioner Bratt** did not think artificial turf was going to be a burning issue for HOA's and, in most cases, the landscaping around the house is the HOA's responsibility and not the homeowner's. These are just guidelines and felt it would still give the HOA's an opportunity to object.

**Chairman Schoonover** didn't think artificial turf was an issue at this time, and there was a method for someone to come in and discuss it.

#### RESOLUTION PC-1411

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF SAN DIMAS RECOMMENDING APPROVAL OF MUNICIPAL CODE TEXT AMENDMENT 10-01, TO AMEND CHAPTER 18.14 OF THE CITY'S MUNICIPAL ZONING CODE

**MOTION:** Moved by Bratt, seconded by Rahi to approve Resolution PC-1411 recommending the City Council approve Municipal Code Text Amendment 10-01. Motion carried 3-0-2 (Davis, Ensberg absent).

#### **COMMISSION BUSINESS**

##### 4. **CONSIDERATION OF RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR PLANNING COMMISSION BUSINESS**

*Director of Development Services Dan Coleman* stated that the Planning Commission deals with a wide range of issues and the Municipal Code requires that the Commission adopt a resolution of rules and procedures. The proposed resolution contains many of the past practices of the Commission; this action is to formalize what is already in place.

#### RESOLUTION PC-1413

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF SAN DIMAS ADOPTING RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR THE CONDUCT OF PLANNING COMMISSION MEETINGS

**MOTION:** Moved by Rahi, seconded by Bratt to approve Resolution PC-1413 adopting Rules of Procedure. Motion carried 3-0-2 (Davis, Ensberg absent).

#### **ORAL COMMUNICATION**

##### 5. **Planning Manager**

*Assistant City Manager Stevens* stated there will be a study session prior to the next regular City Council Meeting where he will be giving a presentation on the downtown facades if the Commissioners are interested in attending.

##### 6. **Members of the Audience**

No communications were made.

##### 7. **Planning Commission**

*Commissioner Bratt* asked how much parking was available at the Sheriff's Station.

*Director Coleman* stated there are approximately a dozen spaces, with additional parking available on the street, at the City Yard, the Post Office and the Martin House.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** Moved by Bratt, seconded by Schoonover to adjourn. Motion carried 3-0-2 (Davis, Ensberg absent). The meeting adjourned at 7:33 p.m. to the regular Planning Commission meeting scheduled for March 3, 2010, at 7:00 p.m.

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James Schoonover, Chairman  
San Dimas Planning Commission

ATTEST:

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Dan Coleman, Director of Development of Services

Approved: April 7, 2010