

CITY OF SAN DIMAS PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Wednesday, April 20, 2011 at 7:00 p.m.
245 East Bonita Avenue, Council Chambers

Present

Chairman Jim Schoonover
Commissioner David Bratt
Commissioner John Davis
Commissioner Stephen Ensberg
Commissioner M. Yunus Rahi
Director of Development Services Dan Coleman
Planning Commission Secretary Jan Sutton

CALL TO ORDER AND FLAG SALUTE

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

PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. **CONSIDERATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND PRECISE PLAN NO. 11-01 AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW 07-27 – DEFALCO** – Request to construct a 4,690 sq. ft. single-story house, 484 sq. ft. detached garage, and a 1,892 sq. ft. barn, on 40 acres of land (Falcon Ridge Ranch) in Specific Plan No. 25 located on Sycamore Canyon Road. (APN: 8678-030-005) Related File: Conditional Use Permit 11-01.

Staff report presented by *Director of Development Services Dan Coleman*, who stated the subject property is located in the Northern Foothills on a 40 acre parcel. He presented the as-built plan showing the improvements made by Mr. DeFalco over the years, and the proposed location for the house, barn, and other facilities, and pointed out the large number of trees that have been planted. He stated in order to construct the house on the ridgeline, the dirt road will have to be widened, and the house will be on a stepped pad. There will be some small slopes created but they will be covered with new landscaping. The detached garage will be one-story and on a stepped pad to follow the contours of the hillside. The house was designed to break up mass and bulk, with solar panels hidden behind the parapet. The barn is a traditional design with wood siding and timbers, featuring resawn wood and standing seam roof. All of the buildings are in an area identified as a potential development area in SP-25. Staff has worked with the applicant to resolve all design issues, and the project has been approved by the DPRB. This is considered a very high fire hazard area by the State Fire Marshall and will be the first structures built in this area using the new 2010 California Residential Code, and stated page 5 of the staff report outlined some of the provisions that will have to be complied with.

Director Coleman stated for the environmental review, the Northern Foothills has a very detailed EIR which identifies a number of impacts and mitigation measures to address; this

project is consistent with all requirements of the EIR and he detailed the numerous supplemental reports prepared by the applicant to comply with the requirements of the EIR. He also presented a copy of the standard conditions approved by the DPRB that were not contained in the package, and stated they will be added to Resolution PC-1438.

Commissioner Ensberg stated an issue with the Brasada project was having two sources of emergency access, and asked if that was a concern for this property. He also asked for clarification on the ridgeline requirements and if there were any flood control issues to be addressed.

Director Coleman stated this property would not require two emergency access routes since it is only a single-family residence, but it can be accessed from Sycamore Canyon Road and Wildwood Motorway. He explained that the Northern Foothills covers a large area with a series of ridgelines all the way up to Johnstone Peak. To be considered primary a structure built on the ridgeline would be visible against the skyline. A structure built on the ridgeline of this parcel would only be visible against the sky if you stood at the foot of the property looking up, so it is not considered primary. He stated there are no flood control concerns as this project consists of limited development on a large parcel, as opposed to the NJD project which was for 61 home on a larger site that would create a quite a bit of run-off. The Army Corps of Engineers reviewed this application as part of the environmental review and determined there will be no impact.

Commissioner Ensberg asked if the positioning of the house and barn on this property would still allow for it to be subdivided in the future.

Director Coleman stated from the perspective of the Specific Plan, this property was identified as having a development potential for four homes. While this owner is not proposing subdivision, the siting of the house, garage and barn would not preclude subdivision in the future.

Commissioner Davis asked if this parcel was higher than Shay Hill.

Director Coleman stated the house pad would be lower than Shay Hill and would probably only be seen when traveling northbound on the 57 freeway through the Via Verde area.

Commissioner Bratt asked how many cubic yards of dirt would be moved for this project. He also asked if they would just be widening the existing road or building a new road.

Director Coleman stated the first page of the grading plan exhibits show there will be 5,800 cubic yards of cut and 2,100 cubic yards of fill. He stated it is actually a driveway that needs to be widened, not an actual road. There is a really old easement for Sycamore Canyon Road but is a paper road only and does not even follow the dirt road which is there. He stated the existing driveway will be paved as an all-weather surface.

Commissioner Bratt asked what is the use of the structure above the duck pond.

Director Coleman stated there are numerous structures around the property, most having to do with solar power, pumping water, etc., to support the property. The particular structure in question is the shed housing the propane generator.

Commissioner Rahi asked if there is a gate on the existing driveway and if so, would it remain.

Director Coleman stated there is a gate near the end of Sycamore Canyon Road, and it would remain as the owner did not want unrestricted access due to fire hazard.

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

John DeFalco, Applicant, stated he has read the conditions and is in agreement with them. He stated he plans to keep the property in the family through a trust that will be passed on for generations. He explained the aviary operations they conduct on the site to raise birds for release in the wild. He stated this site is unique and there will only be two main structures. The house itself won't be seen from anywhere in San Dimas. While they have gates on the road to only allow access for themselves and the Fire Department, they do allow horseriders and hikers to come through the property. He has provided an outdoor toilet for them and watering devices for the horses. They also have people from the dog park come up, but they require the dogs to be kept on leashes. So far everyone has cooperated with them. He has also planted 600 avocado trees and multiple fruit trees, and there is a garden area utilized by Seeds for Life.

Commissioner Rahi asked if Mr. DeFalco created the pond.

Mr. DeFalco, Applicant, stated the pond was built with a special waterproof concrete mix and six inches of lining, and then filled with sand and rock on the sides so that fish and turtles can spawn.

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

Commissioner Bratt asked if there will be any development along the west property line from the NJD project.

Director Coleman stated there are only plans for a horse trail and a water tank in that area.

RESOLUTION PC-1437

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF SAN DIMAS RECOMMENDING TO THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL OF PRECISE PLAN REVIEW 11-01 (DPRB 07-27), A REQUEST TO CONSTRUCT A 4,690 SQUARE FOOT SINGLE STORY HOUSE, 484 SQUARE FOOT DETACHED GARAGE, AND A 1,892 SQUARE FOOT BARN, ON 40 ACRES OF LAND (FALCON RIDGE RANCH) IN SPECIFIC PLAN NO. 25 LOCATED ON SYCAMORE CANYON ROAD (APN: 8678-030-005)

RESOLUTION PC-1438

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF SAN DIMAS RECOMMENDING TO THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL OF DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW BOARD CASE NO. 07-27, A REQUEST TO CONSTRUCT A 4,690 SQUARE FOOT SINGLE STORY HOUSE, 484 SQUARE FOOT DETACHED GARAGE, AND A 1,892 SQUARE FOOT BARN, ON 40 ACRES OF LAND (FALCON RIDGE RANCH) IN SPECIFIC PLAN NO. 25 LOCATED ON SYCAMORE CANYON ROAD (APN: 8678-030-005)

MOTION: Moved by Ensberg, seconded by Bratt to approve Resolutions PC-1437 and PC-1438 recommending the City Council approve Precise Plan Review 11-01 and DPRB Case No. 07-27. Motion carried unanimously, 5-0.

2. **CONSIDERATION OF CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. 11-01 - DEFALCO** – A request for a nature preserve on 40 acres of land (Falcon Ridge Ranch) in Specific Plan No. 25 located on Sycamore Canyon Road. (APN: 8678-030-005) Related Files: Precise Plan No. 11-01 and DPRB Case No. 07-27 **(Continued from April 6, 2011)**

Staff report presented by *Director of Development Services Dan Coleman*, who stated there are a number of improvements that have been made to the site that are agriculture in nature in regards to horses, the planting of avocado and fruit trees, construction of aviaries, as well as beautification of the site. Essentially a nature preserve has been created on the property and there is an active breeding and release program for birds. In January 2011 the City Council adopted Ordinance 1201 that allows creation of a nature preserve in SP-25 with adoption of a Conditional Use Permit. Staff is recommending approval of this request.

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

Commissioner Rahi asked why a CUP was needed for this, and if it was the creation of the duck pond that made this required.

Director Coleman stated there are very few allowed uses in this zone so due to the nature of all the uses on the property, the Council felt it was appropriate to designate a nature preserve as something that would require conditions. It is the sum of all the uses on the property which requires the need for a CUP.

Commissioner Davis asked if there is anything that is occurring on the site that is restricted by the City.

Director Coleman stated this action would legalize what is already developed on the property. Mr. DeFalco has been trying for a number of years to get all the proper approvals from the City, but it wasn't until January of this year that the code was amended to allow him to submit the proper application.

RESOLUTION PC-1439

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF SAN DIMAS APPROVING CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT 11-01, A REQUEST FOR A NATURE PRESERVE ON 40 ACRES OF LAND (FALCON RIDGE RANCH) LOCATED IN SPECIFIC PLAN NO. 25 LOCATED ON SYCAMORE CANYON ROAD (APN: 8678-030-005)

MOTION: Moved by Davis, seconded by Bratt to adopt Resolution PC-1439 approving Conditional Use Permit 11-01. Motion carried unanimously, 5-0.

ORAL COMMUNICATION

3. Director of Development Services

Director Coleman stated the Council held their Spring Retreat and topics of discussion included budget preparation, the historic downtown area in regards to sidewalks and trees, and the closure of Gold Hills Road and stabilization issues. There were a number of items that they were unable to discuss within the allotted time, and those were continued to after the next regular Council meeting.

4. Members of the Audience

No communications were made.

5. Planning Commission

Commissioner Bratt asked where they were in the process with amending the sign ordinance.

Director Coleman stated that item will be coming to them in the near future with a summary of the comments received from the public as well as comments from Staff.

Commissioner Davis asked if there was any further word from the consultant regarding San Dimas Station and if the Council discussed issues with San Dimas Station at their retreat.

Director Coleman stated the man who spoke at the sign forum was the broker for the majority property owner. The Council has not discussed this matter, and City staff is investigating options on how to address the lack of maintenance issues.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Moved by Ensberg, seconded by Davis to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously, 5-0. The meeting adjourned at 7:46 p.m. to the regular Planning Commission meeting scheduled for May 4, 2011, at 7:00 p.m.

James Schoonover, Chairman
San Dimas Planning Commission

ATTEST:

Jan Sutton
Planning Commission Secretary

Approved: June 2, 2011