

**CITY OF SAN DIMAS
DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW BOARD MINUTES**

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2010 at 8:30 A.M.
186 VILLAGE COURT
PUBLIC CONFERENCE ROOM, TEMPORARY CITY HALL

PRESENT

Emmett Badar, City Council
Dan Coleman, Director of Development Services
Scott Dilley, Chamber of Commerce
Blaine Michaelis, City Manager
Jim Schoonover, Planning Commission
John Sorcinelli, Public Member at Large

ABSENT

Krishna Patel, Director of Public Works

CALL TO ORDER

Jim Schoonover called the regular meeting of the Development Plan Review Board to order at 8:36 a.m. so as to conduct regular business in the Public Conference Room

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of: September 9, 2010 (Sorcinelli absent)
 October 14, 2010 Amended (Patel absent)
 October 28, 2010 (Michaelis absent)

Mr. Schoonover announced that the September 9, 2010 minutes had been approved via a mail vote 6-0-1 (Sorcinelli abstain).

Action: The October 14, 2010 minutes continued due to lack of quorum for approval.

Motion: Moved by Emmet Badar, seconded by Jim Schoonover to approve the October 28, 2010 minutes. Motion carried 5-0-1-1 (Patel absent, Coleman abstain).

HEARING

1. Reasonable Accommodations Request 10-03

A request for an accommodation from Zoning Code Section 18.156.100.B.4.b to temporarily park a "Non-Motorized RV" three additional days beyond the already permitted two days in the front driveway of 1237 W. Greenhaven Avenue for loading and unloading purposes.

APN: 8385-007-032 Zone: Single-Family 7500
Robert and Lloyd Wilkison, Applicants, were present

Staff report presented by Associate Planner Marco Espinoza who stated there are two applicants requesting reasonable accommodation, Robert and Lloyd Wilkison, who both reside at the subject property. The current code allows 48 hours for loading and unloading of an RV in the driveway; the applicants are requesting an additional 72 hours. A similar application was submitted in January of this year requesting to allow permanent storage of a non-motorized RV in the driveway. The Board did not feel that was appropriate but did grant the applicant an additional 48 hours above the code allowance for loading and unloading. He stated both applicants have submitted letters from their doctor outlining their disabilities. Robert's disability is permanent while Lloyd's is temporary.

Associate Planner Espinoza stated staff is concerned with extending the loading period by three extra days as it may give the perception that RV storage is allowed in the front driveway and cause confusion and visual blight. There is also no limit to the number of permits that can be issued annually and there is a concern that long-term storage on the driveway may occur. In order to address these concerns, Staff is recommending allowing an extra 48 hours for loading and unloading, for a total of four days. The second issue is that while Robert's disability is permanent, Lloyd's is temporary according to the doctor. Staff feels in order to simplify things, the accommodation should be granted to Robert to use as long as he resides at this address. If Robert were to move away and Lloyd was still disabled, he could come back at that time to request accommodation.

Associate Planner Espinoza stated another issue is the RV is currently registered in Arizona, while the house is shown as Lloyd's primary residence with a homeowner's exemption. State law requires residents to register their vehicles within 20 days in California if certain criteria exist. One criteria is claiming homeowner exemption. Staff has included a condition that the vehicle is registered in California prior to granting the accommodation.

In response to Mr. Coleman, Robert Wilkison stated the registration for the trailer was renewed recently in Arizona.

In response to Mr. Michaelis, Associate Planner Espinoza stated the accommodation would be granted as long as Robert resides at this address. If Robert were to move away, his father or mother could apply if they meet the requirements. In response to Mr. Schoonover, he stated if the RV were to change, it would just require an update to the approval at Staff level.

In response to Jeff Hartung, Code Compliance Officer, Associate Planner Espinoza stated the application was only for the Dune Seeker, not the utility trailer, and Lloyd Wilkison confirmed that they did not need extra days for the trailer as it was only used for hauling a golf cart.

Associate Planner Espinoza asked if the Board had any questions regarding the conditions, including the requirement to register the vehicle in California.

Mr. Badar stated if it is a State law, they should uphold the law

Mr. Coleman explained to the applicant that if a vehicle is not properly registered in California, it would be considered an abandoned vehicle. He stated he felt the request was reasonable based on the information supplied by the doctor, and that four days would be adequate. He felt they did not have to call out a specific vehicle in the conditions which would allow the applicant

the ability to change the vehicle in the future without having to go through the approval process again.

Mr. Badar concurred.

Motion: Moved by Dan Coleman, seconded by Emmet Badar to approve Reasonable Accommodations Request 10-03 with an amendment to the conditions to remove all references to Dune Seeker and non-motorized and just make reference to Recreational Vehicle. Motion carried 5-0-2 (Patel, Sorcinelli absent).

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Assistant City Manager of Community Development Larry Stevens, joined the meeting, who was an acting Boardmember at the October 14, 2010 meeting.

Motion: Moved by Jim Schoonover, seconded by Scott Dilley, to approve the October 14, 2010 minutes. Motion carried 4-0-1-2 (Patel absent, Badar and Michaelis abstain)

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2. DPRB Case No. 10-34

A request to establish a City-wide policy for electronic message boards.

Planner: Kristi Grabow

John Rossfeld, CEO, and Sandra Neas, San Dimas Community Hospital were present. Steve Therriault, Signtech, present.

Mr. Badar stated he will be recusing himself from this item as he serves on the Board of Directors for the hospital.

Staff report presented by Associate Planner Kristi Grabow, who stated Staff has received various requests for electronic message boards, and explained the current code requirements. She showed a presentation which covered the current proposal from the hospital for two different size signs and the type of information they would like on the boards. She stated Staff surveyed surrounding cities and HCED Listserve and presented those findings. Some cities prohibit, some allow with a conditional use permit, and others require Commission or Board review. One issue currently with this type of sign is that advertisements are not allowed, so it would have to be considered how to limit the messages displayed. There could also be safety issues since there are no guidelines for brightness or glare, etc. The National Highway Safety Administration is preparing a report in regards to driver distraction with this type of sign and is asking cities not to adopt guidelines until the report is released.

In response to Mr. Michaelis, Associate Planner Grabow stated there have been inquiries from the schools in San Dimas for this type of sign, but the City does not have jurisdiction over their sites.

Associate Planner Espinoza stated a church approached the City about an electronic sign instead of digital, but they never submitted an application.

Mr. Stevens stated there was a request 10 years ago in association with the proposed ice rink project, and there may have been an inquiry from Walgreens, but those would have been digital, not LED.

Mr. Coleman stated the examples presented are of large freestanding pylon signs, like a billboard, which are much larger than the signs the hospital is proposing.

Mr. Stevens stated there are two smaller billboards in Rancho Cucamonga which might be more comparable, but they are still 10' x 10' or 12' x 12'. Mr. Coleman stated they might even be as large as 15' x 15' and that he did not like those signs.

Mr. Stevens stated the signs can be very distracting, and part of that is how frequently the message changes. They could look at limiting the frequency of message changes, and would suggest if they were to consider this type of sign, to look at classifying it as some type of public message board, rather than a commercial sign, which would limit the requests from retailers to use this type of sign. In theory you are regulating the size and type of sign and not the type of message, as they have to be careful of First Amendment conflicts.

Eric Beilstein, Building Superintendent, stated location can also play a part in how distracting the sign is. If it is at an intersection, it could be read while a driver is at a stop sign; if not, it might draw attention away from driving to read the sign.

Mr. Sorcinelli agreed. He felt the thing Mr. Beilstein is touching on is the effect a sign like this will have on the local environment. It is one thing to regulate the sign and come up with governing rules, but what are the impacts on local traffic, residential neighborhoods and the environment by adding more light to the night sky. These are things that impact a community, and once you allow this, it will change the way the City appears at night. This is an issue for him and he felt it raises the question of what type of community do we ultimately want to have.

Mr. Schoonover concurred, especially about the Las Vegas affect, and referenced how negative the Del Mar Racetrack sign is on the surrounding environment.

Mr. Coleman stated he is concerned with driver distraction with these video signs because they are more distracting to the eye, and that is what they are meant to do, to draw your attention to them, as opposed to a static electronic display sign where the message goes on and then off. He felt all of the above comments need to be explored because this is the direction advertising companies are moving towards. Instead of one client on the sign for a month, they could have multiple clients paying for the same space. In regards to the comments from the National Highway Safety Administration, he felt they may not be applicable because they are for highways and we won't have traffic travelling that fast through the community.

Steve Therriault, Signtech, stated the photos presented are of freeway signs and they are much larger than what is being proposed. He understands the Board's concern with the video being distracting, but since the signs are much smaller, he did not think it would have the same impact.

In response to Mr. Stevens, Steve Therriault, Signtech, stated he has not worked with many of these signs but thought the message change was approximately every ten seconds, and that they do have video capability which could show action and motion, etc., but would not have audio. As far as the cost, he just processes the permits and did not know what the cost was.

John Rossfeld, CEO, San Dimas Community Hospital, stated their budget for the entire sign was approximately \$35,000. He was not aware of any local hospitals currently using this type of sign, but others in the country have, either in front of the facility or on freeways near the hospital. Their intent is to limit use to public service announcements and they would be willing to allow other community organizations to use it for their announcements.

In response to Mr. Coleman, John Rossfeld, CEO, SDCH, stated usually they make announcements through general advertising, press releases, or an ad in the local media, though this can be rather costly. They also use word of mouth and ads in the hospital itself.

In response to Mr. Coleman, Mr. Michaelis stated they do not allow outside organizations to put items on the City's website because there are so many and it would overwhelm the City's news. He was also concerned if this type of sign became prevalent throughout the community at all the different businesses, and felt the only way to regulate the number was to limit them for public service announcements.

Mr. Sorcinelli stated that could possibly include churches and there are quite a number of them in the City, and they are normally located in residential neighborhoods. He would have less concern with this type of sign on a commercial highway than in a residential neighborhood, and reiterated they needed to consider the impact on the surrounding environment from an electronic billboard type of sign.

Mr. Stevens stated at their last retreat the City Council directed Staff to look at possibly amending the City's sign code, and it might be better to fold this item into that discussion as opposed to handling it independently.

Mr. Coleman concurred with Mr. Sorcinelli and Mr. Stevens that this issue is important enough to warrant Council level discussion, and that it should not be rushed, whether at the Board or Council level.

The Board discussed the effectiveness in using this type of sign, and Mr. Sorcinelli stated it is early in this type of technology and maybe they should wait to consider allowing electronic signs until they are more immersed in different communities so they had enough data to make a more considerate judgment.

In response to Mr. Coleman, John Rossfeld, CEO, SDCH, stated health care is not something most people think about until they get sick, and then they make hasty decisions because they have a problem. The thought process was while the hospital is on a busy street, they are set far back and many people may not know they are there, so they were looking at ways to draw attention to their location and services offered.

Mr. Michaelis felt it would be better to address electronic message boards in the overall context of amending the City's sign code.

Mr. Stevens explained the process would be to have the Planning Commission host community workshops to receive input from residents and business owners on the current sign code and what they would like to see changed. In response to Mr. Sorcinelli, he stated if the Board wanted to put together a list of issues regarding signs, that could be incorporated into the information presented to the Council.

Motion: Moved by Dan Coleman, seconded by Blaine Michaelis to include the issue of electronic message boards in the upcoming community forum on the sign code and any future discussions of broader sign issues, and agendaize on the next meeting an item to identify issues to bring up at the sign forum. Motion carried 5-0-1-1 (Patel absent, Badar abstain).

3. Discussion of Date for Second Meeting in December, if needed

The Board concurred to cancel the December 23, 2010 meeting.

Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 9:39 a.m. to the meeting of January 13, 2011 at 8:30 a.m.

Jim Schoonover, Chairman
San Dimas Development Plan Review Board

ATTEST:

Jessica Mejia
Development Plan Review Board
Departmental Assistant

Approved: February 23, 2012