

# CITY OF SAN DIMAS PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

Regularly Scheduled Meeting  
Wednesday, December 19, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.  
245 East Bonita Avenue, Council Chambers

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## **Present**

Chairman Jim Schoonover  
Commissioner Dave Bratt  
Commissioner Stephen Ensberg  
Commissioner M. Yunus  
Assistant City Manager for Comm. Dev. Larry Stevens  
Sr. Planner Marco Espinoza  
Planning Commission Secretary Jan Sutton

## **Absent**

Commissioner John Davis

## **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.

## **CONSENT CALENDAR**

1. Approval of Minutes: December 5, 2012

**MOTION:** Moved by Bratt, seconded by Ensberg to approve the Consent Calendar. Motion carried 4-0-1 (Davis absent).

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

2. **CONSIDERATION OF MUNICIPAL CODE TEXT AMENDMENT 12-05** – A request to add Chapter 18.22 to the San Dimas Municipal Code establishing standards for granting density bonuses as required by Government Code Section 65915.

Staff report presented by *Assistant City Manager for Community Development Larry Stevens* who stated the purpose of this amendment was to create zoning code language that reflects the mandatory requirements for various density bonuses for affordable housing in Government Code Section 65915. This was a program identified as necessary in the 2008-

2014 Housing Element. The SF zone allows for density bonuses but the standards are outdated so he is removing that section and replacing with this.

He referred to Exhibit A of Resolution PC-1468 and stated the first section creates definitions that reflect the Government Code. The first eligible bonus is a regular straight bonus, which is a percentage of additional units based on income level as shown in the table in Section 18.22.030. These bonuses are provided by right and are not discretionary if the affordability requirements are met, and he explained the income categories and criteria. He stated the General Plan can't be used as a way to not grant the bonus, so it is automatically granted in terms of a maximum density. The affordability component is required for 30 years. If it's an ownership circumstance, you have to enter an equity sharing agreement, which would probably only be financially feasible for moderate income levels.

The second opportunity for a bonus is in Section 18.22.040, and states if and when you donate land to accommodate very low income housing, then if you meet some very strict criteria, you are able to get a bonus above and beyond the base bonus you get in Section 18.22.030.

The third opportunity is the concession incentive standards. This section states that if you build an eligible project you may also request, and if you do, you must be granted, one of a number of possible concessions based on the categories in the definitions. There are also three findings that would allow for a concession to not be granted. Section 18.22.060 allows a developer to ask for the waiver or reduction of certain development standards for an eligible project in addition to the previous eligible concessions and density bonuses. Most likely this would be a height or parking waiver, or a setback waiver; this section is not discretionary and would have to be granted if the developer demonstrates they provides the financial incentive required to build the project.

**Assistant City Manager Stevens** went over the requirements in the next three sections that would allow the developer to request a waiver for parking and possibly other design concessions, incentives for providing on-site child care facilities and provisions for converting apartments to condominiums.

**Commissioner Ensberg** asked if anyone has proposed a project that asked for these bonuses.

**Assistant City Manager Stevens** stated the only time he can think of was when the original plan for Grove Station was being proposed. The difference was the zoning on the parcel didn't allow for the development of multi-family, and as part of coming up with the zoning there were discussions on how to utilize a density bonus. He felt these standards were used more frequently in larger cities where there are a greater number of affordable housing projects by developers using State bond financing.

**Chairman Schoonover** stated at the League Conference he saw a presentation by the City of Santa Monica about their use of density bonuses and felt the projects they showed looked awful but they were very proud about how many units they could squeeze onto a parcel.

**Assistant City Manager Stevens** stated this is the State's effort to create a one-size-fits-all approach to affordable housing, but in practicality it may not occur very often in San Dimas as there are very few sites available in the City where a developer could accomplish anything meaningful under these regulations.

In response to **Commissioner Bratt**, Assistant City Manager Stevens stated even if they did not adopt this code section and someone wanted to propose a project under the Government Code Section, they would have to process it and there would be no discretion.

In response to **Commissioner Rahi**, Assistant City Manager Stevens stated they can always grant more concessions on a project if they wanted to but this would be the minimum they would have to allow.

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

#### RESOLUTION PC-1468

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF SAN DIMAS RECOMMENDING TO THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL OF MUNICIPAL CODE TEXT AMENDMENT 12-05 TO ADD CHAPTER 18.22 TO THE SAN DIMAS MUNICIPAL CODE ESTABLISHING STANDARDS FOR GRANTING DENSITY BONUSES

**MOTION:** Moved by Ensberg, seconded by Bratt to adopt Resolution PC-1468 recommending approval to the City Council of Municipal Code Text Amendment 12-05. Motion carried 4-0-1 (Davis absent).

3. **CONSIDERATION OF MUNICIPAL CODE TEXT AMENDMENT 12-06** – A request to add Chapter 18.44 to the San Dimas Municipal Code establishing the MF-30 Zone.

Staff report presented by **Assistant City Manager for Community Development Larry Stevens** who stated in the 2008-2014 Housing Element they had to identify a number of sites that could accommodate the State default density amount of 30 units per acre. Creation of this zone will serve two purposes. First, they need to have standards in place in case one of the identified sites decides to proceed with a housing development. Secondly, since two of the identified sites are already developed, this allows them to create an overlay zone that can refer back to these standards without having to actually re-zone the properties and make the existing uses non-conforming. He went over the chart in the staff report that compared the existing MF zone to the new MF-30 zone.

He stated one thing he would like to amend from the report is that currently it sets a height standard of 3 stories or 35 feet. After further consideration, it is more likely that someone would want to construct a podium building where the parking is only partially underground, which would make the building 3-1/2 stories, so they might want to increase the maximum height to 40 feet with proper design. Units built in this zone do not have to be affordable though the State presumes there will be an affordability component if building at that density.

**Commissioner Ensberg** felt they should raise the height limit to 40 feet.

**Assistant City Manager Stevens** stated it might be better to say no taller than 3-1/2 stories so that someone doesn't try to squeeze in a 4-story building. In the new version of the State housing law he believes we will have to re-zone identified parcels within the first two years after adoption of the Housing Element, so if a vacant property is identified it will probably be re-zoned as opposed to using an overlay zone.

*Commissioner Bratt* asked if overlay zones were a new feature.

*Assistant City Manager Stevens* stated they currently have other overlay zones in the City which are used to apply additional design standards in a designated area.

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

#### RESOLUTION PC-1469

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF SAN DIMAS RECOMMENDING TO THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL OF MUNICIPAL CODE TEXT AMENDMENT 12-06 TO ADD CHAPTER 18.44 TO THE SAN DIMAS MUNICIPAL CODE ESTABLISHING THE MF-30 ZONE

**MOTION:** Moved by Ensberg, seconded by Rahi to approve Resolution PC-1469, with the amendment to increase the allowed height to 3-1/2 stories. Motion carried 4-0-1 (Davis absent).

#### **ORAL COMMUNICATION**

##### **4. Assistant City Manager for Community Development**

*Assistant City Manager Stevens* stated they have made an offer of employment to Jennifer Williams to be the new Associate Planner, who is a Cal Poly grad and has worked in both West Covina and Upland. If she completes the hiring process, she should be starting sometime in January.

He stated in the recent appeals to the Department of Finance on the ROPS3, they were approved to use \$2.7 million for affordable housing in the Village Walk project (behind Grove Station). The appeal on the four City-owned units at Grove Station has not been resolved yet. They also received approval for the parking lot lease obligation with Costco so they can pay for that from Redevelopment money, and it was affirmed they can use housing money for the 21 affordable housing units at Loma Bonita. They are still waiting for word on the outstanding loans from the City.

Topics covered at the recent City Council retreat included a discussion on the requirement to underground utilities with a new project, and Staff was directed to create an option for an in-lieu fee in certain circumstances. He also shared with the Council 10-12 sites that could be appropriate for higher density housing in preparation for the next Housing Element submittal. They provided input on locations they would be supportive of. Karen Warner has been hired again to prepare the Housing Element and they will likely hold a joint meeting with the City Council in February or March to go over changes in the law since the last time.

##### **5. Members of the Audience**

No communications were made.

##### **6. Planning Commission**

*Commissioner Bratt* congratulated Marco Espinoza on his promotion to Senior Planner.

**Chairman Schoonover** asked what the current status of the Loma Bonita project was.

**Assistant City Manager Stevens** stated now that they know there will be funding for the affordable housing units, the developer is in a position to try to finalize the sale of the project to Avalon Bay. They will probably be amending the Specific Plan to address the carport issue, otherwise it should be relatively straightforward.

**Commissioner Rahi** stated the owner of Phoenix Garden told him he was concerned about his visibility from the street and felt he needed better signage. He told him he should contact City Staff about that.

**Assistant City Manager Stevens** stated an amendment was recently approved to the Master Sign Program for San Dimas Station North and South that allows five freestanding monument signs that can have individual tenant information on them. The restaurant owner should speak to the shopping center owner about building those signs to increase his visibility to passing traffic.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** Moved by Ensberg, seconded by Bratt to adjourn. Motion carried, 4-0-1 (Davis absent). The meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m. to the regular Planning Commission meeting scheduled for January 9, 2013, at 7:00 p.m.

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Jim Schoonover, Chairman  
San Dimas Planning Commission

ATTEST:

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Jan Sutton  
Planning Commission Secretary

Approved: January 9, 2013