



**MINUTES**  
**SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING**  
**MONDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2013**  
**SAN DIMAS COUNCIL CHAMBERS**  
**CONFERENCE ROOM**  
**245 E. BONITA AVENUE**

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**PRESENT:**

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

City Manager Blaine Michaelis  
Assistant City Manager Ken Duran  
City Attorney Ken Brown  
Assistant City Manager for Community Development Larry Stevens  
Director of Public Works Krishna Patel  
Director of Parks and Recreation Theresa Bruns  
Capt. Don Slawson, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Morris called the Special City Council Meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

**1. DISCUSSION OF POLICY/APPROACH FOR CONSIDRATION OF REQUESTS FOR INCREASING DENSITY ON RESIDENTIAL AND OTHER PROPERTIES**

Mr. Michaelis explained that staff is experiencing more inquiries on potential increases in residential densities and would like a general discussion with the Council on their receptiveness on increasing densities.

Mr. Stevens reviewed his report and summarized that staff is seeking input from the Council on their level of support for the concept of increased density and not discussion on specific projects. He reviewed the factors that an applicant needs to consider from his staff report.

Mayor Pro Tem Bertone asked if meeting the State RHNA numbers is the driving force in considering higher density. Mr. Stevens responded that the City has adopted a strategy in the housing element to meet its RHNA goals in the next 8 year cycle, so the RHNA numbers obligation should not be a consideration.

Mr. Stevens shared two recent examples of requests for rezoning and increasing density as illustrations of the types of issues that are raised. One issue that he raised was the desire to have applicants evaluate surrounding property for inclusion in a broader project. There was discussion about the specific example in Specific Plan 23.

Councilman Templeman commented that in regards to the general question of allowing higher density he responds with a qualified yes, only in the right areas. Councilman Ebner added that he concurred that higher density might fit more when adjacent to retail to reduce vehicle traffic.

Mayor Morris commented that in the Specific Plan 23 example it may not make much sense to include adjacent property in the project.

Mr. Stevens reviewed a second example illustrating that it may be beneficial to look at a broader area and consider it as a master plan. There was discussion on the benefits and constraints of having a developer look at the larger project.

Mayor Pro Tem Bertone asked if increased density has a financial benefit to the City. Mr. Michaelis responded that because we are a low property tax city there is not much additional property tax benefit. He added that that should not be a consideration in making the land use decisions.

There was more general discussion on the topic of residential density. Mr. Stevens summarized the Council discussion as them not wanting to encourage wide spread densification but supportive to looking at applications on a case by case basis. He added that the Council also is supportive of staff encouraging applicants to look at larger projects during the pre-application process and encourages community discussions. He also added that the Council expressed a desire for staff to identify project areas that may be candidates for increased residential density and bring a list back for Council consideration.

In response to a question about what is considered high density Mr. Stevens explained the varying levels of density categories with examples. As an example of very high density Mr. Michaelis used an example of a portion of an existing commercial center development that could be changed to a higher density project. He explained a reason to allow for a higher density project could be to provide an incentive for a developer to redevelop an underutilized property. He explained a potential process to consider rezoning a site specific area with use of a development agreement. There was further discussion on the concept of redeveloping existing underutilized centers. Mr. Stevens added that another area that could be considered for higher density is the area around the future Gold Line station.

## **2. DISCUSSION ABOUT STRUGGLING SHOPPING CENTERS REGARDING APPROPRIATE CITY INTERACTIONS**

Councilmember Badar asked about the opportunities to assist with the declining Via Verde shopping center. Mr. Michaelis responded that staff has reached out to the property manager to offer to help with signage, etc., but have had no response from them. There was discussion on the tenants at the center and overall deferred maintenance.

Mr. Stevens reviewed his staff report identifying three choices in dealing with struggling centers in general. The first is to let the market forces let whatever happens happens. The second is to use incentives or regulatory relief to help improve what's there and the third is to consider other land uses for those sites. Mayor Morris commented that he thinks the City should start thinking about what kinds of changes in land uses for existing centers might be acceptable. There was discussion about the potentials for residential land uses for a portion of the San Dimas Station properties. There was further general discussion on struggling shopping centers.

Mr. Michaelis summarized that it seems the consensus of the Council is for the City to try and continue to work with existing shopping center owners to offer assistance to them. In response to a question regarding the status of the new Smart & Final store in the former Ralphs building, Mr. Stevens reported that Smart & Final has indicated that they seek changes from the design that has been approved. Senior Planner Espinosa provided a general update of the concerns of the applicant. Councilmember Templeman expressed concern that the City is cooperating with the applicant. Mr. Stevens added that staff will work closely with the applicant to get as good a design as we can.

**3. DISCUSSION REGARDING POTENTIAL CHANGES IN USES, MARKETING AND DISPOSITION OF FORMER REDEVELOPMENT PROPERTIES AT BONITA/CATARACT AND BONITA/EUCLA**

Mr. Michaelis asked for Council discussion on the potential for changes in land use for the Bonita/Cataract property. There was discussion regarding the current zoning for the property and ideas for alternative zoning. Several Councilmembers expressed they might be open to considering a mixed use development for the property. Mr. Duran explained the process for property disposition in the Successor Agency Long Range Property Management Plan. Mr. Michaelis added that another option the City may consider is appraising the property and then for the City to consider acquiring the property from the Successor Agency and then have complete control over the future zoning and development of the property. There was discussion on this approach and consideration for appraising the property to understand its value.

Mr. Duran reported that the Long Range Property Management Plan identifies that the highest and best use for the Bonita/Eucla property is in combination with one or more of the adjacent properties and it is recommended that the City pursue opportunities with those property owners. There was some discussion on the prior opportunities with this property.

**4. GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC ACCESS TELEVISION DISCUSSION**

Mr. Duran reviewed his staff report on the history of the City's government access channel. He added that in the past some Councilmembers have asked for discussion on adding back the public programming component to the channel. Councilmember Ebner commented that he would like to see the ability for public programming. There was discussion on the pros and cons of adding the public programming. The consensus of the Council was to keep it a government/education access channel.

Mr. Duran asked for Council feedback the benefits of the channel. There was strong consensus that having the City Council meetings televised on the channel is very important. There was discussion regarding some of the other programming. There was discussion with the service quality with the channel and the general management of the channel. There was discussion regarding exploring changes to the programming and options for the future management of the channel. Staff was directed to explore possible changes to the programming on the channel and other potential management options. Staff responded they will discuss with the University of La Verne a shorter term agreement extension while they explore options.

**5. UPDATE ON THE PET FINDER PROGRAM**

Mr. Duran reviewed his staff report on the history of the lost and found pet project and how it would operate on the City's web site. He added that staff is finalizing the details and will have it available to the public in November. There was some concern expressed on the staff time involved in managing the project. Councilman Bertone asked that the Council continue to support the project to see if it can be successful.

**6. REPORT ON PROJECT TO ACHIEVE TECHNOLOGY IMPROVEMENTS FOR OUR FIELD STAFF**

Mr. Michaelis reported that staff is working on technology updates on project tracking and field capabilities. He added that staff has explored some options and needs some more time to refine them and will bring them back to the Council.

## **7. COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Councilmember Ebiner as what the next step is in the downtown revitalization. Mr. Michaelis responded that the decision on the downtown boardwalk had been deferred and staff was planning on bringing the discussion back to the Council in the spring as part of the budget discussions. Mr. Stevens added that it appears that the City will receive a SCAG grant to pay for a review of the downtown specific plan. Mr. Ebiner commented that he sees much more night time activity in other downtowns and provided some examples of restaurants in other cities. There was some discussion of the mix of businesses in the downtown and vacancy.

## **8. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

None.

## **9. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business Mayor Morris adjourned the meeting at 8:35 p.m.