

# **CITY OF SAN DIMAS PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES**

Regularly Scheduled Meeting  
Wednesday, June 15, 2005 at 7:30 p.m.  
245 East Bonita Avenue  
Council Chambers

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## **Present**

Vice-Chair Emmett Badar  
Commissioner David Bratt  
Commissioner Howard Levreau  
Commissioner Jim Schoonover  
Planning Manager Craig Hensley  
City Attorney Ken Brown

## **Absent**

Chairman Ash Dhingra

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Vice-Chair Badar called the regular meeting of the Planning Commission to order at 7:41 p.m. and Commissioner Levreau led the flag salute.

## **CONSENT CALENDAR**

1. Approval of Minutes for June 1, 2005.

**MOTION:** Moved by Schoonover, seconded by Bratt to approve the Consent Calendar. Motion carried unanimously, 4-0.

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

2. **CONSIDERATION GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT 04-01; ZONE CHANGE 04-01; AND MUNICIPAL CODE TEXT AMENDMENT 05-01** – A request to amend the General Plan to add a Mixed Use Designation to the Land Use Element; amend the General Plan from Commercial to Mixed Use on various properties; change the zoning from M-1 to Creative Growth Zone-Area 3 on various properties on the east side of San Dimas Avenue; and amend Creative Growth Zone-Area 3 (Chapter 18.140) revising current standards and revising setback map.

Staff report presented by Planning Manager Craig Hensley who stated the first item under consideration is General Plan Amendment 04-01 to change the designation from Commercial to Mixed Use in the designated area. This area is along the east and west sides of San Dimas Avenue south of the Santa Fe railroad tracks to Arrow Highway, including the gas station on the southeast corner. The second item is a zone change from M-1 to Creative Growth, Area 3 (CG-3) for property located on the east side of San Dimas Avenue which includes a vacant parcel and the parcel which contained the Flavor House. The third item under consideration is modification to the CG-3 code revising the standards and revising the setback map. This is the first Specific Plan adopted by the City in the 1970's, and consists of four different areas. Tonight's hearing deals with Area 3.

In 2002 the City adopted the 2000 Housing Element of the General Plan to meet state requirements, and at that time the City Council identified vacant, underutilized properties as future mixed use sites. The property in this area was part of that review and this is an implementation of the approved Housing Element. Under General Plan law, there is a requirement that the General Plan be internally consistent. The proposed General Plan Amendment and Zone Change will accomplish that and allow for development in the entire area. While there isn't a specific project in front of them tonight for consideration, a proposal has been submitted for a mixed-use project on the east side of San Dimas Avenue by the William Fox Group. The Council has held study sessions on the proposal and it is an example of the type of development that might occur under this zoning.

Manager Hensley then outlined the Fox proposal which would include townhomes, commercial space, loft units, subterranean parking, and seven live-work units. As it relates to the General Plan, the proposed amendment would change the designation on 8.4 acres to Mixed-Use, covering the five acres in the Fox proposal plus the vacant property on the west side of San Dimas Avenue, the gas stations on the corner of Arrow Highway and San Dimas Avenue and the L-shaped shopping center on the northwest corner of San Dimas and Arrow Highway. The maximum density for residential is 16-units/acre, along with an allowed density bonus under certain circumstances.

The Municipal Code Text Amendment rewrites the Creative Growth Zone Area 3 section by adding four new subsections. Subarea A would allow mixed-use in the downtown area and the properties generally fronting San Dimas Avenue. Subarea B would be high-density residential on the property located behind the east frontage property on San Dimas Avenue behind the mixed-use. Subarea C allows medium-density residential, which is the existing Gables subdivision. Subarea D is a single-family zone for the property along Shirlmar Avenue behind the two-acre parcel located on the west side of San Dimas Avenue, south of Commercial Street.

Subarea A would allow live-work units, which is a traditional downtown use. The existing gas stations would be allowed to expand and add other uses, i.e., restaurant or convenience uses, but they would have to reconstruct the sites in order to do so. This will provide a more aesthetic corner at this important location, plus allow for better site layouts than currently exist. Also, this area will allow for office use on the first floor. Currently in the downtown area ground floor office has to receive DPRB approval, and while they feel this area is an extension of the downtown, it is on the fringe so allowing ground-floor office would be a positive thing to do. This is similar to other offices which have been allowed in the fringe area of CG-2 at Bonita and Eucla Avenues. Allowing office space in this area may also increase the desire for more commercial/retail uses in the downtown along Bonita Avenue.

Commissioner Bratt asked why are the live-work units required to have a Conditional Use Permit.

Manager Hensley stated there are a variety of reasons but a major reason is that the zone change is not tied to a specific development plan so this is a way for them to control the uses and ensure that the ground floor is used for office or service uses and not residential. He stated they have contacted RKA Civil Engineers to develop a proposed street plan for San Dimas Avenue and explained some of the potential modifications. In conclusion, he stated staff is recommending the Commission recommend adoption of GPA 04-01, ZC 04-01 and MCTA 05-01 and the Mitigated Negative Declaration to the City Council.

Commissioner Levreau commended staff on a well written report. He stated that when the issue of putting a fence up around the Girl Scout Camp was reviewed, there were environmental issues because of the streambed that ran across the property. He asked if there was an extension of that streambed on any of the property and would they run into the same environmental concerns.

Manager Hensley stated the area they are looking at is an existing storm drain area, so the storm drain would need to be reconstructed with any development, but there is not a blue line stream crossing the property. There may be some issues with tree replacement but nothing else.

Commissioner Levreau stated there is a State mandate that all cities increase their moderate income residential housing units by providing higher density. He asked Legal Counsel if this will satisfy the State requirement.

City Attorney Ken Brown stated the State is requiring changes to allow low and very-low income housing, and this is consistent with those mandates and the direction of City Council.

Manager Hensley stated that in order for the Housing Element to be adopted by the State, the Council had to create additional housing opportunities. It was felt that because of the proximity to the downtown area, these parcels were reasonably suited to the change in the General Plan. Had the Council not adopted changes that would allow for additional housing opportunities, they risked losing funding from the State. While it did not mandate affordable housing, the feelings of HCD were that if you allow more density than the units should be less expensive, but that is not always true. The caveat placed on this area was that it had to be mixed-use, not just straight residential with the idea of extending the downtown.

Commissioner Levreau asked if items like a traffic study would be done at a later date.

Manager Hensley stated they have done a preliminary review but thinks with the current proposal and the type of density they are looking at, you could expect smaller units which would mean smaller household sizes. Calculations based on potential build-out indicate there is adequate capacity on Arrow Highway, San Dimas and Bonita Avenues.

Commissioner Levreau asked about the height of some of the buildings.

Manager Hensley stated again that there wasn't a project to specifically review tonight, just an example of what could be done under the proposed changes. The City Council has had several meetings with the William Fox Group to discuss what they would like to do. Under their proposal the tallest building would consist of two subterranean parking levels with three levels of

living space above, the top level consisting of loft units. This building would be about 50 feet tall, but part of it would be below the grade of San Dimas Avenue. There are no height limits in the Creative Growth zone, it is up to the City Council to decide.

Commissioner Schoonover wanted to clarify that if either of the gas stations wanted a convenience store, they would have to remodel the gas station.

Manager Hensley stated currently what is allowed is an accessory snack shop not to exceed 300 square feet. Portions of M&M Dairy have been there prior to the current code so it is possible they are slightly larger, but neither station can expand their use, they can only maintain what they have. Under the proposed code amendments, if they would like to expand and have additional uses, they would actually have to totally reconstruct the site, not just remodel. The intent is to do away with poorly located buildings and provide adequate parking to meet their needs.

Commissioner Schoonover asked about the live-work units and if the owner of the first floor would own the living space above.

City Attorney Brown stated that was correct and that there is a market for that kind of unit.

Commissioner Schoonover asked about the 10% allowance for reduced size parking spaces.

Manager Hensley stated any subterranean parking space can be 9-1/2' x 18' instead of the standard 10' x 20'. The reason is that when someone has a garage with a door, the standard is 10' x 10' to allow space for the car and the location of other things like trash cans or laundry facilities. It is not uncommon to have much smaller spaces in parking garages.

Commissioner Schoonover asked in regards to the Negative Declaration, will there be fill to bring the level of the lot up to San Dimas Avenue.

Manager Hensley stated development will be designed to fit the terrain, such as having garages below grade so it only looks like a two-story building from San Dimas Avenue.

Commissioner Bratt asked if there are any other developments in San Dimas that allow 24 units/acre. He stated he was concerned about the high density in this area and didn't think it would work there.

Manager Hensley stated the Gables is 8 to 9 units/acre, but thinks the Rancho Retirement Villas by Valley Center and Cypress is well over that. The hardware store in the downtown is actually a much higher density but the project is much smaller so not as noticeable. The average amount under the previous General Plan is about 20 units/acre. The density bonus is only given if there is an affordable housing component on-site, which is in response to a State mandate signed into law last year.

Vice-Chair Badar opened the meeting for public hearing. Addressing the Commission were:

Maria Barbosa, 148 Citrus Ranch Road in The Gables, stated their subdivision has 40 units and the average size is 2,000 square feet. She wanted to know what size the units would be in the new project and expressed concern that the increased density would attract low-income residents and create a high crime area. She wanted to know what they were expecting to sell these units for because she didn't want anything that would be of lesser value than The Gables.

City Attorney Brown stated the units would be a variety of sizes and he has heard that the prices proposed for the possible project are from \$350,000 to \$500,000.

Maria and Seferino Heredia, 122 Nubia, wanted to know what impact this action would have on their property and when the vacant property next to them would be offered for sale.

Manager Hensley stated their zoning remained the same, and the vacant parcel would be zoned for single-family residential, the same as their street. There are no plans at this time by the property owner to develop that property. The General Plan considers this area to be a buffer between Pioneer Park and San Dimas Avenue.

Ed Treder, Attorney representing Kay Staley, co-owner of the one-acre property described as the Flavor House, stated an item on Page 2 of the Environmental Checklist indicates the proposed demolition of the Flavor House. He asked if there was anything in front of them tonight regarding that issue or if the City would be exercising its eminent domain right.

City Attorney Brown stated there is nothing under consideration tonight in regards to the property. It is located in the Redevelopment Area and an offer has been made to purchase the property, which was declined. There have been no hearings on that at this time.

Bill Fox, owner of the William Fox Group, stated he has heard a lot of questions tonight but did not come prepared to give a presentation. He hoped that they would hold onto those questions until such time as they bring the project back in detail.

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

Vice-Chair Badar asked what was the size of the Canyon Center and the proposed density for the mixed-use project brought to Council several months ago.

Manager Hensley stated the site was 8-1/2 acres and the density was 12 units/acre.

Commissioner Bratt asked if the density bonus was part of the General Plan Amendment or the Zone Change.

Manager Hensley stated it was part of the General Plan Amendment.

Commissioner Schoonover stated he didn't have any problems with what was before them tonight. He had some issues with the Fox proposal but would hold those until a project was actually submitted for their review.

**MOTION:** Moved by Schoonover, seconded by Levreau to recommend approval of General Plan Amendment 04-01 to the City Council. Motion carried, 3-1 (Bratt voted no).

**MOTION:** Moved by Schoonover, seconded by Bratt to recommend approval of Zone Change 04-01 to the City Council. Motion carried unanimously, 4-0.

**MOTION:** Moved by Schoonover, seconded by Levreau to recommend approval of Municipal Code Text Amendment 05-01 to the City Council. Motion carried unanimously, 4-0.

**MOTION:** Moved by Schoonover, seconded by Bratt to recommend approval of the Mitigated Negative Declaration to the City Council. Motion carried unanimously, 4-0.

### **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

#### **3. Director of Community Development**

##### **➤ Planning Commissioner Appointments**

Manager Hensley stated three Commission terms were expiring in August of this year, and asked if Commissioners Bratt and Levreau would want to be considered for reappointment.

Both Commissioners Bratt and Levreau indicated that they would be interested in reappointment.

#### **4. Members of the Audience**

No communications were made.

#### **5. Planning Commission**

Commissioner Schoonover stated he would be out of town for the July 20<sup>th</sup> meeting.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Vice-Chair Badar adjourned the meeting at 8:55 p.m. to the regular Planning Commission meeting scheduled for July 6, 2005 at 7:30 p.m.

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Ash Dhingra, Chairman  
San Dimas Planning Commission

ATTEST:

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Craig Hensley  
Planning Manager

Approved: