

# CITY OF SAN DIMAS PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

Regularly Scheduled Meeting  
Wednesday, January 18, 2006 at 7:30 p.m.  
245 East Bonita Avenue, Council Chambers

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## **Present**

Chairman Emmett Badar  
Commissioner David Bratt  
Commissioner Stephen Ensberg  
Commissioner Yunus Rahi  
Commissioner Jim Schoonover  
Director of Community Development Larry Stephens  
Associate Planner Laura Lockett  
Assistant Planner Michael Concepcion

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Badar called the regular meeting of the Planning Commission to order at 7:33 p.m. and Commissioner Bratt led the flag salute.

## **CONSENT CALENDAR**

1. Approval of Minutes for December 21, 2005.

**MOTION:** Moved by Schoonover, seconded by Bratt to approve the Consent Calendar. Motion carried unanimously, 5-0.

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

2. **CONSIDERATION OF MUNICIPAL CODE TEXT AMENDMENT 05-03** – A request to amend Chapter 18.38 (Second Units) of the San Dimas Municipal Code as it relates to the maximum size of second residential units; the parking required for such units; and the impacts on equestrian property.

Staff report presented by *Director of Community Development Larry Stevens*, who stated tonight's request was to amend existing standards as they relate to the maximum square footage of second units. He stated the City adopted an ordinance in 1993 governing second units to comply with the State Government Code. It was amended again in 2003 to reflect new legislative changes. Second units are governed by state

law and the City has made every effort to comply with the law while still trying to preserve the integrity of the single-family neighborhoods where they are located.

He stated last year there were two pieces of legislation which would have made it mandatory for cities to allow second units on every single-family residential lot in town without any regard to standards. While that legislation was not enacted, it is likely similar legislation will be proposed in the future in an effort to increase the state's housing supply by turning single-family neighborhoods into duplex neighborhoods. When the Council adopted the changes in 2003, they allowed the maximum size unit permitted under the Government Code, which is 1200 square feet.

At the Council retreat last year, they reviewed this issue and discovered that based on the applications received, everyone was building at the maximum size. Since 1993 there have been twelve second units constructed, and two are in the application process.

**Commissioner Ensberg** asked for clarification on the requirement that the proposed floor area could be 400 square feet or 30% of the house.

**Director Stevens** stated they are proposing a sliding scale and the size of the unit would be dependent on the size of the lot and went over the proposed requirements. He stated the 30% was a secondary calculation that could be used if the main residential dwelling unit was rather small so that the second unit, which is to be an accessory structure, did not overwhelm the main structure.

**Commissioner Ensberg** asked why they didn't use the same standards as the neighboring cities.

**Director Stevens** stated it was the Commission's discretion to amend the proposed sizes. He stated staff was trying to be consistent with standards used by other cities statewide, as shown in the survey information provided by the City of Pismo Beach. The concern is that when you have an existing structure that is only 2000 square feet, a 1200 square foot second unit plus required parking structure is rather large for an accessory building. Staff felt the concept of a sliding scale was a way to address providing second units on various sized lots.

**Director Stevens** stated there have also been issues associated with locating second units on equestrian property and meeting the horsekeeping setback requirements without constraining surrounding properties and what they could do in the future. While it might be more appropriate to address this at another time through the setback requirements, staff wanted the Commission to be aware of it. He stated staff also recalculated the parking requirements and reduced it down to requiring only one garage space. If a second garage space was desired, then the square footage would need to come from the unit to keep the overall structure size reasonable.

**Commissioner Ensberg** stated while he understood the concept of reducing the mass of second units, he didn't see any reason why the City should have one of the strictest requirements and that we should be more conservative and consistent with surrounding

cities to avoid standing out. He felt the 400 square foot requirement should be raised to 750 square feet, and then use the sliding scale if you had property larger than an acre.

*Commissioner Bratt* stated they should remember that a 400 square foot unit was actually a 650 square foot unit because of the requirement for the garage, so for each number that was proposed in the staff report, they should add the 250 square foot requirement for the garage for the overall structure size.

*Director Stevens* stated the 400 square foot unit was for an attached unit, and at this point no one has ever applied for an attached unit, even when it was going to be a family member occupying the unit.

*Commissioner Bratt* felt what they were trying to achieve was to set some guidelines to have reasonable housing sizes and not have the second unit overwhelm the main dwellings. Some people have built massive second units and are taking equestrian properties and turning them into duplex properties.

*Director Stevens* stated the Council has indicated they would like to see the size of second units reduced and felt you could still accommodate a two-bedroom, one-bath with kitchen and living room unit in 600 square feet.

*Commissioner Rahi* asked if the other cities had the same requirements for parking as are proposed.

*Director Stevens* stated they did not have that information.

*Commissioner Ensberg* felt if they raised the floor area by 100 square feet per category for the detached units, it would still prevent overly large units but put them in a reasonable range when combined with the 250 square feet of parking area.

*Commissioner Rahi* felt that the option of having a maximum of 30% of the habitable space of the primary residence was not clearly identified as applicable to all categories.

*Director Stevens* stated they can modify that in the resolution. He stated in regards to the equestrian issue, he suggested the Commission should support Alternative 3 and let the City address the concerns through a separate code amendment.

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

**MOTION:** Moved by Ensberg, seconded by Bratt to approve staff's recommendation for a sliding scale on second unit sizes but to increase the size of an attached unit from 400 square feet to 500 square feet, and add 100 square feet to each of the detached unit categories, provided that they include the additional 250 square feet for mandated garage space, and the minor language changes discussed; and to exclude consideration of equestrian properties and set that aside to be heard separately. Motion carried unanimously, 5-0.

## **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

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

*Director Stevens* stated the League of California Cities Planning Commissioner Conference is scheduled for March 22 – 24, 2006 in Monterey at the convention center. He stated there are funds available in the budget for all Commissioners to attend and staff will forward the information as soon as it is received.

*Director Stevens* explained the latest negotiations regarding the Costco DDA and stated they have started the property acquisition process for the twelve properties that are privately owned. None of the City's offers have been accepted yet, but four have come back with counter offers. The owners have been advised that they have a small window in which to respond as on February 14 the City Council will be considering eminent domain action. They are in the process of demolishing the City owned structures along 5<sup>th</sup> Street and should be done in a few weeks. Costco is going back to the DPRB on some of the design elements they would like to change from the previous approval. The Planning Commission will hold upcoming hearings on the Parcel Map and Street Vacation for 5<sup>th</sup> Street, which are implementation elements of the project. The plans are getting closer to submittal for Plan Check, but there are no proposals at this time for the pad development.

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

No communications were made.

### **5. Planning Commission**

No communications were made.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** Moved by Ensberg, seconded by Bratt to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously, 5-0. The meeting adjourned at 8:29 p.m. to the regular Planning Commission meeting scheduled for February 1, 2006, at 7:30 p.m.

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Emmett Badar, Chairman  
San Dimas Planning Commission

ATTEST:

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Craig Hensley  
Planning Manager

Approved: