

CITY OF ESCONDIDO

**ACTION MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
ESCONDIDO PLANNING COMMISSION**

July 27, 2021

The meeting of the Escondido Planning Commission was called to order at 7 p.m. by Chair Barba, in the City Council Chambers, 201 N. Broadway, Escondido, California.

Commissioners present: Katharine Barba, Chair; Ingrid Rainey, Vice-Chair (via telephone); Dao Doan, Commissioner; Rick Paul, Commissioner; Herminia Ramirez, Commissioner; and Stan Weiler, Commissioner.

Commissioners absent: Nathan Serrato, Commissioner.

Staff present: Adam Finestone, Interim Director of Community Development; Sean Nicholas, Principal Planner; Jay Paul, Senior Planner; Elyse Dayrit, Deputy City Attorney; Elizabeth Lopez, Associate Engineer; and Joanne Tasher, Minutes Clerk.

MINUTES:

Moved by Commissioner Weiler, seconded by Commissioner Doan, to approve the Action Minutes of the July 13, 2021, Planning Commission meeting. Motion carried (6-0). Ayes: Barba, Doan, Paul, Rainey, Ramirez, and Weiler. Absent: Serrato.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:

Memo sent from Interim Director Finestone regarding the minor text revisions to draft Housing Element, and letter from Escondido Community Housing Coalition (both related to item G2) were submitted into the record.

FUTURE NEIGHBORHOOD MEETINGS: None.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Eric Ramon Caldron provided comments related to Coronado and Orange Glen high schools, and a petition to stop the demolition of the old Palomar Hospital.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. **MODIFICATION TO A MASTER AND PRECISE DEVELOPMENT PLAN
– PLANNING CASE NO. PHG 19-0075:**

REQUEST: A Modification to a Master and Precise Development Plan for Mercedes Benz of Escondido. The proposed project involves the demolition of the existing showroom (approximately 30,800 square feet) and construction of a new, approximately 48,842 square foot two-story showroom, along with reconfiguration of parking areas and access driveways, and new signage. The existing multi-story vehicle storage building and repair areas would remain.

PROPERTY SIZE AND LOCATION: The approximately 4.9-acre project site is located on the southwest corner of West 9th Avenue and Canterbury Place, address at 1109 W. 9th Avenue (Assessor's Parcel Nos. 235-100-58, -60, and -70).

ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS: The Project is categorically exempt pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines section 15332 (In-Fill Development Projects).

APPLICANT: Mercedes Benz of Escondido

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Sam Abed spoke on behalf of Mercedes Benz of Escondido.

Doug Hicks, Southwest Regional Council of Carpenters, asked the Applicant to consider what it will give back to the community and suggested that the project should be built by local workers.

Jorge Viramontes, union carpenter and Escondido resident, asked the Applicant and commissioners what they will give back to the local workforce, and asked that they create local jobs for Escondido residents by using a local workforce.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION:

The Planning Commission discussed the project, and Senior Planner Jay Paul provided further information regarding the Applicant's request.

COMMISSION ACTION:

Motion by Commissioner Weiler, seconded by Chair Barba to approve PHG 19-0075 as presented by staff. Motion carried 4-1. Ayes: Barba, Paul, Ramirez, and Weiler. Noes: Doan. Absent: Serrato and Rainey (due to technical difficulties).

2. GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT / HOUSING ELEMENT UPDATE – PLANNING CASE NO. PHG 20-0030:

REQUEST: The Housing Element is one of the mandatory elements of the General Plan and is required by State law to be updated for the 2021-2029 planning period. The City of Escondido has prepared a Draft Housing Element which includes an analysis required by State law related to: 1) existing demographics and housing characteristics; 2) market, government, and environmental constraints; 3) land, financial, and administrative resources available to meet housing demand; 4) establishment of goals and policies to address housing needs; and 5) a review of past accomplishments under the 2013-2021 Housing Element. Minor text amendments are also proposed for the Community Health and Safety Chapter of the General Plan to address environmental justice considerations. At this time, the Planning Commission is being asked to hold a public hearing on the Draft Housing Element, receive any public input, and make a recommendation to the City Council. The proposal also includes a request to adopt an Addendum to the previously certified Final Environmental Impact Report for 2012 General Plan Update, Downtown Specific Plan Update, and Climate Action Plan ("Final EIR"). The City Council will then conduct a public hearing and take action on the Final Housing Element.

PROPERTY SIZE AND LOCATION: CityWide

ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS: An Addendum to the Final EIR was prepared to meet the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (Public Resources Code section 21000 et seq.) ("CEQA"), the regulations promulgated thereunder (14 California Code of Regulations section 15000 et seq.) ("CEQA Guidelines"), and the City's Environmental Review Guidelines (Article 47 of the

Escondido Zoning Code). The Addendum is appropriate pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15164 because only minor changes and additions to the Final EIR are necessary to address the Project changes and no circumstances exist calling for the preparation of a subsequent or supplemental EIR pursuant to CEQA Guidelines sections 15162 and 15163.

APPLICANT: City of Escondido

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Recommend Approval to City Council

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Francisco Pena, Southwest Regional Council of Carpenters, asked that the City require projects to utilize a local skilled and trained workforce.

Doug Hicks, Southwest Regional Council of Carpenters, provided comments related to median income and affordability of housing.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION:

Interim Director of Community Development Adam Finestone noted minor correction to the draft Housing Element as part of the recommendation to Council.

Commissioner Paul asked about the consequences if the State does not approve the draft Housing Element, and provided comments regarding the City's first-time homebuyer program.

Commissioner Doan requested clarification on the table on page 15 showing the mean salary of occupation for San Diego and not Escondido, and asked for details about the first-time home buyer program.

Commissioner Ramirez requested information regarding how our Housing Element compares to other cities.

Commissioner Weiler provided comments on housing costs.

Chair Barba asked if accessory dwelling units serve as affordable housing, and commented on heavy reliance on the East Valley Specific Plan to meet our RHNA requirements.

Commissioner Doan asked for information on historic ADU construction totals.

Vice-Chair Rainey requested information related to mobile home rent review.

Commissioner Ramirez commented on the possibility of providing more notice of meeting cancelations. Interim Director Finestone clarified the City's public noticing requirements and procedures.

Commissioner Weiler commented that updating the Housing Element is a very large undertaking and commended staff and the consultant team.

COMMISSION ACTION:

Motion by Commissioner Paul, seconded by Commissioner Weiler to approve PHG 20-0030 as presented by staff. Motion carried unanimously 6-0. Ayes: Barba, Doan, Paul, Rainey, Ramirez, Weiler. Noes: None. Absent: Serrato.

CURRENT BUSINESS:

1. PLOT PLAN / APOLLO ASSISTED LIVING FACILITY – PLANNING CASE NO. PL 21-0117

REQUEST: A Plot Plan for a 3,099 square foot basement expansion associated with an approved assisted living facility, and an Addendum to the approved Mitigated Negative Declaration for the expansion of the Brush Management Zone associated with a proposed Fuel Modification Plan.

LOCATION: 3141 E. Valley Parkway

APPLICANT: NOAA Group

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval

COMMISSION DISCUSSION:

Commissioner Paul asked for clarification as to whether the project was a noticed public hearing.

COMMISSION ACTION:

Motion by Commissioner Weiler, seconded by Chair Barba to approve PL 21-0117 as presented by staff. Motion carried unanimously 6-0. Ayes: Barba, Doan, Paul, Rainey, Ramirez, Weiler. Noes: None. Absent: Serrato.

PLANNING COMMISSIONERS:

Chair Barba made comments regarding sub-committee presentation to Council for the Green Infrastructure item as part of the Work Plan approval and reported that the Green Infrastructure item was not approved.

Commissioner Doan provided comments regarding the need for a public pool for school sports.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Interim Director Adam Finestone noted that the regularly scheduled meeting of August 10, 2021, would be canceled. The next meeting will be held on August 24, 2021.

ADJOURNMENT:

Chair Barba adjourned the meeting at 8:59 p.m.



Adam Finestone, Secretary to the
Escondido Planning Commission



Jessica Engel, Minutes Clerk