

City of Los Banos

Planning Commission Minutes for Regular Meeting of Thursday, February 13, 2003

Chairperson Hurley called the regular meeting of the Los Banos Planning Commission to order at the hour of 7:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers of the City of Los Banos, 520 "J" Street.

1. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Commissioner Giesel led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. **ROLL CALL:**

Commissioners Present: Buettner, Giesel, Guerra, Lewis, Williams, Chairperson Hurley

Commissioners Absent: Pruitt

Others Present: Timothy Miller, Community Development Director; Carrie Tai, Associate Planner; Don Germino, City Attorney; Rachel Solano, Planning Lead Clerk

3. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA** – On Motion by Giesel, seconded by Buettner, it carried by a 6-0 vote to approve the agenda of the February 13, 2003 Planning Commission meeting as submitted.

4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – On Motion by Buettner, seconded by Giesel, it carried by a 6-0 vote to approve the Minutes of the January 22, 2003 meeting as written.

5. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION FORUM** – Tom Kaljian, member of the DPAC Committee. Would like to make sure that the recommendations that were made by the DPAC were incorporated into the final document that will be presented to the City Council. Director Miller provided Kaljian with a copy of said recommendations as part of a working draft of the Downtown Design Standards.

6. **OLD BUSINESS**

a. **Site Plan Review #2002-22**

To allow the construction of eight apartment units on a 13,924 square foot parcel in the High Density Residential zone district. Location: North side of West J Street approximately 270 feet west of Linda Vista Drive. APN: 027-072-009. Applicant: Joe Rocha. (**Resolution No. 2003-06**)

Associate Planner Tai presented Items 6a & 6b together referring to the staff reports of February 13, 2003. Tai informed the Commission of the changes that were made from the previous site plan. Lewis commented that the applicant is indicating lighting. Did he indicate what would be used? Tai stated that it would be decorative lighting. Lewis stated that Condition of Approval #10 – it states that wooden play structures would be installed in the play area. It was her understanding that this type of structure was not allowed and that the City requires plastic structures. Tai stated that most wooden structures are treated and made to last for years. Tai stated that staff would check with the Public Service Department if there were a standard the applicant would have to meet those requirements. Miller stated that this is a private development and they are not under the same regulations as a public park.

Buettner stated that the applicant has made some significant changes as in accordance with what the Commission had asked for.

On Motion by Buettner, seconded by Williams, it carried by a 6-0 vote to adopt Planning Commission Resolution #2003-06 approving Site Plan Review #2002-22 with Findings and Conditions of Approval as stated in said Resolution.

b. **Site Plan Review #2002-23**

To allow the construction of nine apartment units on a 15,799 square foot parcel in the High Density Residential zone district. Location: South side of West I Street, approximately 360 feet west of Linda Vista Drive. APN: 027-072-004. Applicant: Joe Rocha. (**Resolution No. 2003-07**)

On Motion by Buettner, seconded by Williams, it carried by a 6-0 vote to adopt Planning Commission Resolution #2003-07 approving Site Plan Review #2002-23 with Findings and Conditions of Approval as stated in said Resolution.

7. **NEW BUSINESS**

a. **Magnolia Grove**

Amendment to the Conditions of Approval for Vesting Tentative Tract Map #2002-03. APN: 083-030-044. Applicant: Ranchwood Homes Corp.

Director Miller presented the project referring to the staff report of February 13, 2003. Lewis asked what the round about inappropriateness was. Miller informed the Commission that what the traffic circle was envisioned just a small landscaped element within the intersection. When talking to the City's traffic consultant and other cities, they need to be designed to achieve a turning radius. It requires tapers on either end to direct the traffic, which extended into the cross streets. The smaller traffic circle if not done properly could create more of a problem. In looking at the project with staff and the city engineer we knew that something else could work therefore it was decided to use the curb flares. Lewis stated that she has been through quite a few new neighborhoods in other cities where they used the round about with berming. Every single area she has looked at seems to be working. Why is the City saying that it will not work here? Miller explained how this type of curb flare design is being used in several cities here in the central valley. If the Commission is not supportive then the applicant will have to work on something else. She stated that it is human nature for people to speed through no matter what is out there to slow them down. Miller stated that it is a supported study that this design can slow down traffic. Miller explained that while this design is not in the City's they will be incorporated. Lewis asked if they could maybe add some cobblestone in the street to help in slowing people down. Hurley stated that his concern was with people using that street as a way out to Ortigalita Avenue but he will let staff work with the applicant. Lewis suggested that the applicant consider some slight berming and some cobblestone to help with the slowing down of traffic. Giesel concurred with Lewis and stated that he likes the funnel affect and would like to see some cobblestone. Lewis asked if they could decide where the cobblestone starts. Stamped concrete for visual and slowing down traffic in the area. Miller stated that the crosswalk would have to be moved to allow for the decorative/cobblestone.

It was the Commissions determination to allow the amendment to the Conditions of Approval with these amendments:

- Reengineering the intersection of Magnolia and Birch to include stamped concrete and possibly a slight rise in the elevation in that area.
- Consider relocating the crosswalks from the current location to further west and east of the Birch intersection.

On Motion by Lewis, seconded by Giesel, it carried by a 6-0 vote to approve the Amendment to the Conditions of Approval.

b. Rail Corridor Land Use Preferred Plan

Director Miller presented the discussion informing the Commission that he would like to explain the implementation of the Rail Corridor Land Use Plan. There are several things that will need to happen to implement this plan. Miller demonstrated the areas along the corridor that belong to the Redevelopment Agency. Staff is looking to do different uses in the area to bring diversity to the corridor. Incorporated into the overall plan would be an aquatic center, parks, and mixed-use commercial, residential low and medium density housing. There will be some flexibility in what is going to be allowed. Civic center which will include some county and city facilities. Senior housing that will be near to the downtown is planned. Implement some very significant changes in the area, which will bring a different mix to the city. Miller informed the Commission that this project would come back for final review and approval.

Lewis asked what businesses on H Street would be allowed to remain? Miller stated that some of the areas that belong to the agency would be looked at on a case-by-case basis. There may be properties that have leases on them, but as the leases expire they would not be renewed. At this point it is unclear to the City as to how we deal with anything that is not owned by the agency. Hurley asked how the high density residential would fit into this area. Miller stated that staff believes that it would be appropriate to bring residential to bring people to the downtown. There are about 30 acres that were acquired about half of that will be used for the trail way. The other land will be made available for sale to private investors for development. Hurley asked how the Agency goes about selling off property. Is there a bid process? Miller explained that the City would probably request proposals from private parties. Williams stated that she does not want to see the area behind the public plaza become a dead zone. She would like to encourage activities and events happening in the area. She would rather not see too many public facilities in the area. Williams believes that that if we get the traffic in the area that will make things downtown and the corridor more busy. Giesel asked if the parkway is the first phase? Miller answered in the affirmative and staff will keep the Commission updated as the project progresses. Miller informed the Commission that the City has received grants for some of the work. Miller commented that the rails have been removed and the ties are out. They have been sold to the highest bidders and should be moved within the next two weeks. Miller stated that as soon as those things are done and the plan approved the project would go out to bid for construction. Giesel asked if the trail way would be done by this summer? Miller answered in the affirmative. Giesel asked if the phasing plan has been completed? Miller answered in the negative stated that there are some other things that have to be done first. Lewis asked if the plan still show an outdoor amphitheater. Miller stated that he believes there are areas in the plan where one could be included. Williams asked if vehicle parking would be allowed in the trail way? Miller answered in the

negative explaining that there would be other parking available. Miller asked the Commissioners to look over the plan and any comments or question should be directed to staff.

c. Downtown Design Standards

Miller presented the discussion explaining that he wanted to get feedback from the Commission. He informed the Commission that staff is planning a meeting with the downtown business and property owners to give them an opportunity to view the draft and get their comments/concerns.

Public Comment:

Kaljia stated that the standards are very exciting. If the City and citizens are going to take the downtown to the next level we need to move forward with this plan. He said all the comments that are on the document are those made by the Committee when they reviewed the draft.

The Commission reviewed the draft and made comments and suggestions. These comments will be put into the annotated document and come back to Commission for review and final approval before going to City Council.

Comments by the Commission:

Giesel commented that most of what the DPAC committee asked for seems to be within the document. **Williams** stating that she does not feel that the downtown property and business owners have been given ample information on this plan. This plan is going to have major impact on those people. She asked that staff hold a series of meetings with these people to get their feedback on the Standards. She asked if a property owner decides to rehab a building are they going to be subject to the new standards. She also stated that she does not believe that there should be a color palette it is very unfair to tell people what colors they can use. The City of Newman gives downtown owners the right to choose their colors and that gives the downtown area a unique look.

Miller stated that there have been ample public notices in the newspaper and personal contact to each business by staff. He believes that these owners were already given the chance to state their comments. Miller informed the Commission that there would be one more meeting with these people so they can look at the draft.

Buettner stated that he read through the draft and believes it is not as good as it can be. He believes that there are going to be business owners who are going to ask for variances. It will be done on a case-by-case basis. Buettner commented that there would come a time when even the Pacheco Beautification Plan meets resistance. People are going to get tired of Spanish Mission. But change is good.

Giesel stated that he was pleased to see the process moving forward. Giesel commented that a lot of the process would be phased out. It is not going to all happen at one time.

Hurley suggested that the Commissioners get their comments in writing to staff. The Chamber of Commerce is supposed to inform the business community of what is going on. The Commission cannot expect staff to go to each and every business.

Lewis stated that the DPAC did a very good job. Compliment to all committee member who did his or her part. Lewis would like there to be a color palette for the downtown area. In this way the color schemes can be consistent and fit in with the other buildings in the area. It also has to be made clear that architectural standards must be adhered to.

8. COMMISSIONER REPORTS

- **Buettner:** No report.
- **Giesel:** Commented that the Wild on Wetlands event is coming soon. He appreciated the information that was distributed to Commission. This is great information and he would like to see it more often. Enjoyed the discussion for the Downtown Design Standards and Rail Corridor glad to see thing moving along. The City has spent a lot of money. Lets get this project off the ground.
- **Guerra:** No report.
- **Hurley:** No report.
- **Pruitt:** Absent
- **Williams:** Food 4 Less has put out tin garbage containers in their parking lot. Wasn't there a condition that said they could not do that? Miller stated that staff would check into it.
- **Lewis:** Thanked the City for allowing the Commission to attend the workshop in Waterford. It was quite interesting. She is looking forward to League of Cities Planning Institute. Ranchwood's office looks really nice.

9. DEPARTMENT'S REPORT

Miller reported on the following:

- Comments and concerns were answered.
- Staff will be handing out regular updates to the Commission.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The Planning Commission Meeting for February 13, 2003 adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

TIMOTHY A. MILLER, AICP
Planning Commission Secretary

APPROVED BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION
On February 26, 2003

TIMOTHY A. MILLER, AICP
Planning Commission Secretary

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