

MINUTES

REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

JULY 6, 2004

A regular meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Rolling Hills Estates was called to order at 7:30 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers, 4045 Palos Verdes Drive North, by CHAIRMAN KILLEN.

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

CHAIRMAN KILLEN led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

3. **ROLL CALL**

Commissioners Present: Vanden Bos, Bayer, Rein, O'Day, Chairman Killen

Commissioners Absent: Somers, Conway*

Staff Present: Planning Director Wahba, Senior Planner Cutler,
Assistant Planner Wong

*Commissioner Conway arrived at 7:45 pm

4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

COMMISSIONER BAYER moved, seconded by COMMISSIONER VANDEN BOS

TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
OF JUNE 21 2004.

There being no objection, CHAIRMAN KILLEN so ordered.

5. **AUDIENCE ITEMS**

None.

6. **CONSENT CALENDAR**

The following routine matters will be approved in a single motion with the unanimous consent of the Planning Commission. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless good cause is shown by a member of the Commission or the public expressed under audience items prior to the roll call vote.

- A. PLANNING APPLICATION NO. 21-04; APPLICANT: LOTUS GARDEN; LOCATION: 550 DEEP VALLEY, BUILDING 9, #145; A PRECISE PLAN OF DESIGN FOR A WALL SIGN, BLADE SIGN AND LOGO.

COMMISSIONER BAYER moved, seconded by COMMISSIONER VANDEN BOS

TO APPROVE PA-16-04.

AYES: Rein, O'Day, Vanden Bos, Bayer, Chairman Killen
NOES:
ABSTAIN:
ABSENT: Somers, Conway

Director Wahba stated there is a 20-day appeal period.

7. BUSINESS ITEMS

- A. PLANNING APPLICATION NO. 19-04; APPLICANT: MR. & MRS. DAN O'DAY; LOCATION: 27711 CONESTOGA DRIVE; A REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF A NEIGHBORHOOD COMPATIBILITY FOR A FIRST AND SECOND STORY ADDITIONS LOCATED AT THR REAR OF A SINGLE STORY HOME.

Assistant Planner Wong gave a staff report (as per written material) and recommended that the Planning Commission approve PA-19-04.

COMMISSIONER BAYER moved, seconded by COMMISSIONER VANDEN BOS
TO APPROVE PA 19-04.

AYES: Vanden Bos, Bayer, Rein, Chairman Killen
NOES:
ABSTAIN: O'Day
ABSENT: Somers, Conway

Director Wahba stated there is a 20-day appeal.

8. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- A. PLANNING APPLICATION NO. 27-03; APPLICANT: JUDY CHAI; LOCATION: 5883 CREST ROAD AT THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF CREST ROAD AND HIGHRIDGE ROAD. THE APPLICANT IS REQUESTING APPROVAL OF:
1. A PRECISE PLAN OF DESIGN (PPD) FOR SITE AND BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS.
 2. VARIANCES TO: 1) EXCEED THE MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE COVERAGE OF THE LOT BY BUILDINGS OR STRUCTURES; AND 2) PERMIT LESS LANDSCAPING THAN REQUIRED IN THE PARKING LOT AREA;
 3. A GRADING PLAN TO PERMIT IMPORTATION OF APPROXIMATELY 167 CUBIC YARDS OF FILL AND A MAXIMUM CUT DEPTH OF 4';
 4. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION UNDER THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) FINDING THAT THE PROJECT, WITH MITIGATION MEASURES, WILL NOT HAVE A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT.

Senior Planner Cutler gave a staff report (as per written material) and recommended that the Planning Commission Open the Public Hearing; Take public testimony; Close the Public Hearing; Discuss the issues; and direct staff to prepare a Resolution No. PA-27-03 approving the proposed project subject to the conditions of approval identified in the staff report for the Planning Commission meeting of July 19, 2004.

Additionally, Planner Cutler stated that there were several phone calls and comments regarding the project's compatibility with residential properties that surround the project..

COMMISSIONER BAYER asked about the trash enclosure and the comment letters. Planner Cutler responded that the City code does require the trash to be enclosed. She discussed the due date for the comment letters which was on July 6, 2004, and that they would be collected and reviewed.

COMMISSIONER BAYER commented that she would be concerned about approving the application without reviewing the comment letters.

COMMISSIONER VANDEN BOS moved, seconded by COMMISSIONER BAYER

TO OPEN THE PUBLIC HEARING FOR PLANNING APPLICATION NO. 27-03.

AYES: Rein, O'Day, Conway, Vanden Bos, Bayer, Chairman Killen
NOES:
ABSTAIN:
ABSENT: Somers

The applicant's architect, Mr. Dale Ulman, discussed the proposed plans and history of the site. He discussed that they worked with staff on the development plans for the property. He stated that they preferred a one story commercial building on the site and the maximum allowable usage as possible. He discussed the landscaping and indicated that they needed some relief with the parking plans.

COMMISSIONER O'DAY asked if soil studies had been conducted due to the site previously being a gas station. Director Wahba stated that there had been a soil study conducted and a Phase I and II Environmental Study.

COMMISSIONER VANDEN BOS asked about changing the dimensions of the parking spaces. Mr. Ulman stated he was open to suggestions.

COMMISSIONER O'DAY asked if they had looked at a courtyard layout similar to the Mixed-Use projects in the Commercial zone under review. Mr. Ulman responded that it would be difficult to carve out a courtyard due to the small size of the site.

COMMISSIONER BAYER asked if they had considered residential. Mr. Ulman responded that anything two-story would be difficult and there was no place on the property to go.

COMMISSIONER BAYER commented that retail or commercial uses had never been successful at that site. Mr. Ulman commented that professionals would prefer to not be in a center area.

COMMISSIONER CONWAY discussed the potential for a minor modification change of the layout to accommodate the 10% landscape coverage requirement. Mr. Ulman was in favor of the suggestion.

Ms. Donna Siegel, representing the Sea Breeze HOA, discussed their concerns and stated they were not opposed to the project but as stated in her letter to the Planning Department, reiterated their concerns for the following:

- Variance for the parking and the overflow into the residential areas;
- Variance for the landscaping;
- Other conditions suggested were to encourage specific hours of operations;
- No street parking within 100 ft of residential;
- No signs on windows; and
- No video, no real estate office, medical offices or magazine or bookstores or convenience stores.

She stated that due to the volume of children going to school on their bikes or walking, she suggested the hours of operation be 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Mr. Bob Myers discussed his letter and concerns for the project. He stated his concerns were to keep the area as residential as possible. He disagreed that the proposed project was compatible as there are no other projects that are currently similar. He concurred with Ms. Siegel on the hours of operation. He asked that the floor plan be configured for three-quarters of the plan to be offices and the other one-quarter would be for retail and if there are any deviations from this, that the public be consulted for input. His final comments were regarding the hedge on the north side to create a two-tiered 10 ft high hedge with foliage and 10 ft across at the expense of the property owner.

Ms. Sandy MacMullen stated she was in concurrence with the previous speakers and her concerns were also for the types of retail on the small project site. She requested the project be used for professional usage only.

CHAIRMAN KILLEN asked staff if they could state that the project was not for retail. Director Wahba stated that they could.

Ms. Marla Herman asked if the retail space could be divided into two stores or how would they subdivide. CHAIRMAN KILLEN stated that parking is determined by square footage, not by the number of businesses.

COMMISSIONER VANDEN BOS asked about the lighting. Ms. Herman stated that there is no lighting.

Mr. Jeff Chai, speaking on behalf of his mother and in support of the project, stated that he had grown up in the area and respected the view of others, that potential success could be possible for the project, and that the Crest Garden Nursery was very successful for a long time. He stated that his mother bought the land in 1988 and has invested over a million dollars. He added that she had worked with staff and will continue to do so.

CHAIRMAN KILLEN asked the audience if there was anyone else wishing to speak on this matter.

COMMISSIONER CONWAY moved, seconded by COMMISSIONER VANDEN BOS

TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING FOR PLANNING APPLICATION 27-03.

AYES: Rein, O'Day, Conway, Vanden Bos, Bayer, Chairman Killen

NOES:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT: Somers

COMMISSIONER CONWAY asked if the property were zoned for residential. He also discussed the possibility of reducing the size of the parking stalls and offered some suggestions to increase landscaping. He also asked about the retaining wall height. Planner Cutler confirmed there would be a retaining wall.

COMMISSIONER VANDEN BOS discussed the possibility of reducing the size of the parking stalls to a more current conforming size, such as some previous site approvals have.

Director Wahba stated that the Parks & Activities Commission would give guidance for the site landscaping and that there would be restrictions to not impinge on the views of others.

COMMISSIONER CONWAY asked for clarification of terminology for #11 in the Mitigated Negative Declaration on the retaining wall, and asked they change to "shall utilize" instead of "should". He discussed equipment noise and asked about the "idling of equipment" in regard to air quality. He asked staff about the "mitigation measure" as discussed in the staff report.

COMMISSIONER VANDEN BOS discussed his concerns of the right of the property owners regarding restrictions on types of businesses, retail, and general offices, professional businesses. He discussed the lighting of the area and the signage.

Director Wahba commented that they have had discussions regarding retail businesses but that usually the sites are constructed and then potential businesses would consider leasing. He discussed the Almar Plaza professional offices up the street on Highridge Road.

COMMISSIONER VANDEN BOS responded that that is exactly the type of professional businesses they are looking for.

COMMISSIONER CONWAY stated that it all depends on what the market demands.

CHAIRMAN KILLEN discussed the landscaping use in regard to views and ridge heights of buildings. He concurred that reducing the size of the parking stalls would be a good tradeoff with the landscaping issues.

COMMISSIONER REIN discussed his concerns for the current building site and the scenic views impacted of the neighbors. Director Wahba discussed the silhouettes and that no views would be impacted.

COMMISSIONER VANDEN BOS discussed his concern for the deviation of the lot coverage. Director Wahba said the 1% lot coverage difference would be a Minor Deviation.

COMMISSIONER O'DAY discussed his concerns regarding defining office space and the flexibility to move walls.

CHAIRMAN KILLEN commented that the defining office spaces would be clear to the Plan Checker. He added that it was the responsibility of the client and what the market would accept.

CHAIRMAN KILLEN and COMMISSIONER REIN discussed the issue of convenience store and medical offices.

COMMISSIONER CONWAY moved, seconded by COMMISSIONER BAYER

TO DIRECT STAFF TO CONSIDER A REDUCTION IN PARKING STALL WIDTH AND TO INCREASE AVAILABLE LANDSCAPE AREA; TO HAVE THE HOURS OF OPERATION BE FROM 8:00 A.M. TO 8:00 P.M.; SUBMIT A NEW SET OF PLANS AND CONTINUE THE APPLICATION TO A DATE UNCERTAIN.

AYES: Rein, O'Day, Conway, Bayer, Chairman Killen
NOES: Vanden Bos
ABSTAIN:
ABSENT: Somers

9. COMMISSION ITEMS

COMMISSIONER O'DAY discussed "The Mattress Store" signs in the neighborhood posted in the right-of-way.

COMMISSIONER BAYER inquired as to the current status of the Crawford property.

Director Wahba stated they would check into "The Mattress Store" signs and then discussed the recent activity on the Crawford property.

10. DIRECTOR'S ITEMS

Director Wahba inquired as to the Planning Commissioners attendance for the next Planning Commission Meeting for July 19, 2004.

11. MATTERS OF INFORMATION

A. PARK AND ACTIVITIES MINUTES, JUNE 15, 2004.

B. CITY COUNCIL ACTIONS, JUNE 29 2004 (Note: See Memorandum of 7-6-04)

COMMISSIONER CONWAY moved, seconded by COMMISSIONER BAYER,

TO RECEIVE AND FILE ITEMS 11A .

There being no objection, CHAIRMAN KILLEN so ordered.

12. ADJOURNMENT

At 8:45 p.m. CHAIRMAN KILLEN adjourned the Planning Commission meeting to July 19, 2004, at 7:30 p.m.

Judith Trujillo
Minutes Secretary

Douglas R. Prichard
City Clerk