

**MINUTES
PLANNING COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING
MAY 21, 2009**

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

The Special Meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Highland was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chairman Haller at the Donahue Council Chambers, 27215 Base Line, Highland, California.

Present: Commissioners Randall Hamerly, Vice Chairman John Gamboa and Chairman Richard Haller

Absent: Commissioner Michael Willhite

Vacancy: One

Staff Present: John Jaquess, Community Development Director
Ernie Wong, City Engineer
Lawrence Mainez, City Planner
Bruce Meikle, Senior Planner
Linda McKeough, Administrative Assistant III

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Haller.

2.0 COMMUNITY INPUT

There was none.

Chairman Haller then introduced and welcomed the City's new Police Chief Captain Ron Cochran to Highland.

3.0 PUBLIC HEARINGS

3.1 A Special Public Hearing of the Planning Commission to begin deliberations on the Draft Specific Plan for the Greenspot Village and Marketplace Project (SP 006-001) and two (2) Site Plans: 1) Planning Area 1 – Highland Marketplace Site Plan (DRB 009-003), and 2) Planning Area 2 – Residential Villages Site Plan (DRB 009-004). An approximate 104-acre triangular shaped Site within the General Plan designated Golden Triangle Community Policy Area which is generally bordered by Greenspot Road on the south, Eucalyptus Avenue on the

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north, Boulder Avenue on the northeast, Webster Street on the east, City and Bledsoe Creeks on the northwest, and State Route 210 on the west.
REPRESENTATIVE: John Snell representing Greenspot Village & Marketplace, LLC and Jeff Lochner representing Vestar Highland GV, LLC

Chairman Haller explained the Commission wants to obtain comments tonight and that the Commission will not be making any decisions tonight. He further explained the Commission will lose its quorum at approximately 6:45 p.m. and requested both Staff and the Applicant to make a brief presentation. As the public provides comments, Chairman Haller requested both the Staff and Applicant take notes on the public's comments in which they may later respond. Chairman Haller then introduced the item and called for Staff's presentation.

Senior Planner Meikle gave a brief presentation from the Staff Report. He explained how the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is out for review / comment period and comments are due on June 1, 2009 which is the end of the EIR review / comment period. He stated that to date, the City has received two (2) letters regarding the proposed Project; one (1) from the Department of Toxic and Substances Control and one (1) letter from an adjacent property owner located on Calhoun and both letters have been provided for the Commission's review. Senior Planner Meikle explained about the Joint Study Sessions last summer with the Planning Commission and Design Review Board regarding the Site Plan and Planning Area 1 (PA 1) and Planning Area 2 (PA 2), along with a variety of Plans, Elevations, Signs, etc. He then explained the Commission will also be reviewing a General Plan Amendment (GPA) and Zone Change (ZC) for a portion of approximately twenty-one (21) acres owned by the San Bernardino County Flood Control District to be Designated and Rezoned Planned Development (PD). The Draft EIR , Specific Plan and Site Plans are for the Commission's review and ultimately, the Commission will recommend to the City Council an action to be taken sometime this summer. Senior Planner Meikle then concluded his presentation.

Chairman Haller asked if the Commission had any questions of Staff.

A question was asked by a Commissioner if this Project will go before the City Council and then the DRB / PC. Staff responded the Commission would have the full role for design-related Plans. A comment was made by a Commissioner the Commission may approve DRB items for PA 1 or PA 2 at its next Meeting. Another comment was made by a Commissioner regarding if the Commission would then review the Specific Plan's Exterior Building Envelopes.

Chairman Haller asked if the Commission had any further questions of Staff. Hearing none, he then opened the Public Hearing and asked if the Applicant would like to make a presentation.

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Mr. Glen Elssman, 308 West State Street, Suite 3D, Redlands, California, of Mission Development, who is the Applicant's Representative, addressed the Commission. He stated how he has been working with Staff, the Commission and City Council for input of the proposed Project. He then explained the proposed Project which included the Site location, is a well thought out Mixed Use Project which includes commercial and residential area, as well as a hotel. There is a special place for this Project in the City of Highland and will meet the goals and objectives of Highland, provide a tax base, has great architecture, etc. This has been a journey of five (5) years in spite of changes which have been incorporated in the retail components i.e. Market Night, Music Events, Plazas and Open Space for other gathering places, as well and as residential areas will be connected with the City's Trail System in which more details will be provided later. Mr. Elssman then stated how he appreciated Staff's efforts. Overall, the Specific Plan for the area and for Precise Plan of Design PA 1 and PA 2. He then stated he will now sit down and is anxious to hear the comments.

Chairman Haller asked if the Commission had any questions of the Applicant. Hearing none, he then asked if anyone would like to speak on the Item.

Ms. Lynda Schubert, who owns property to the north of the proposed Project, submitted a letter distributed to the Commission regarding chickens and her grandchildren. She stated how her grandchildren ride bicycles back to the Wash and is a rural area and they chase squirrels. She has equipment located on the property and is noisy early in the morning. Ms. Schubert indicated that she is neutral about the proposed Project and commented when she attended the first Meeting, the word, "apartments" was used and it was stated how no apartments will be used. Ms. Schubert then stated for the Commission to remember her grandchildren and how they are able to play in the wild.

A question was asked by a Commissioner where is her property. Ms. Schubert responded there is a senior citizen who resides next door who has been living there longer than she has. Mr. Elssman then pointed out Ms. Schubert's property on the displayed map to the Commission. Ms. Schubert then thanked the Commission for their kind consideration and indicated the proposed (perimeter) wall is close to her home.

Mr. Camille Bahri, of Sunland Communities, 10575 Oakdale Drive, Rancho Cucamonga, California, 91730, representing Sunland Communities, addressed the Commission. He stated how he represents the property owner located east of the proposed Project. Mr. Bahri indicated how this is the last piece of property

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left to have a higher Density and Zoning Designations in Highland. This Project is a “shot in the arm” and will be a nice corridor leading to the East Highlands Ranch (EHR) and is supportive of the proposed Project. Mr. Bahri further indicated the Applicant is “gutsy” and wishes him well with the Project.

Chairman Haller asked if anyone else would like to speak on the Item.

Ms. Schubert asked if the Applicant is going to have apartments. A Commissioner responded for rent or for sale and that the proposed Project is a Multi-family complex. Ms. Schubert responded that she, too, is a Property Rental Manager and is hoping there is not a constant turnover of residents and indicated we need people with funds in order for support. A Commissioner responded how the City Council is opposed to apartments and will not fly with City Council and reiterated the City Council is opposed to apartments. The Applicant is proposing townhomes, condominiums project or single family residences. There is a senior living area and need special apartment living similar to apartments located in Orange County and indicated the proposed Project is a nice Project.

Chairman Haller asked if anyone else would like to speak on the Item. Hearing none, he then left the Public Hearing open and opened the floor for discussion / comments amongst the Commissioners.

The following are comments from the Commissioners: 1) with regards to the Goals / Objectives, there are a number of provisions that have a strong Mixed Use being integrated and need to reinforce the residential and retail components; 2) the Buildings within residential areas are three (3) stories in height and needs significant vegetation for screening purposes; 3) due to Elevations, the rooftop equipment of commercial buildings will need special attention for screening purposes; 4) PA 2 needs attention; 5) likes the Main Street concept – with a strong access; 6) the westerly most access in PA 3 and PA 2 is a dominant access and the symmetry along the central area needs to be reinforced in the landscaping / massing and connect all three (3) areas; 7) Boulder Avenue access is like a “back door” how it ties into Webster Street and needs to be strengthened; 8) have the Applicant “partner up” with the residents who are not a part of the Project along the southern edge of the Project; 9) with regards to the Gateway feature located at the southeast corner of the Project, is on the corner and advised the Applicant to do stronger architecture and increase the Building mass in that corner and needs a strong statement going westbound and possibly terms of an Anchor Tenant be located at the southeast corner; 10) is a nice overall basic design – nice job with landscaping and on the backside of small Major Tenant; 11) there is an issue on the backside of the Major Tenant in that the landscaping is stark; 12) both the

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east and west sides of the Project needs to be “dressed up”, as well as the north side of the Project facing the residents needs to be “dressed up” and a suggestion was made about the feasibility of using old time signs from the City or canned lighting to detract from the tilt-up wall; 13) along Major Tenants 1, 2 and 3, Pad A and on the 210 Freeway on-ramp seeing those backsides of the Buildings and need to “dress up” that area also. Staff responded the Commission’s comments are useful and explained about the San Bernardino County Flood Control District (SBCFCD) property possibly being acquired from SBCFCD by the City and the City would then sell the property to the Developer for development. All property owners are in agreement to make this come together and it is possible that the SBCFCD property will be sold to the City and make it a part of the proposed Project and is progressing. The Commissioner responded reiterated his comments made regarding on the west side of the Project is because of not wanting to see the backside of the Buildings.

The following are further comments made by the Commissioners: 1) at the last Meeting, regarding the Liquor Store and Surreal Spa (located on Webster Street) need to be integrated in with the Specific Plan Property – maybe it is a graphic expectation 2) this Project will have the largest parking lots and is concerned about safety moving through them; 3) the use of diamond patterns is disappointing and suggested using larger groupings of planters, rather than the diamond pattern; 4) need to have designated areas for pedestrians with a path of travel ; 5) with regards to the Freeway Oriented Signs – need to do a flag test from the south and ensure not obstructing views; 6) orientation of the intersections – need to and expect to line up the driveways on the north and south sides of Greenspot Road. Staff responded the driveways will line up.

The following are comments from the Commission: 1) with regards to the residential area, the Lyon Homes Project (located on the northeast corner of Greenspot Road and Boulder) how private streets are proposed and the need to provide utility easements and asked how will the Applicant address this in the proposed Project – accessibility, maintenance, trash service for the larger trash vehicles; 2) from the City’s perspective, the proposed Project is a gated community and is segregated for security reasons and is not conducive for pedestrian traffic; 3) fundamentally, the Specific Plan overrules / trumps the City Code Standards and is concerned if new rules / regulations are made by the State / Federal, how would they apply to the Specific Plan; 4) the Specific Plan will be utilized over many years and not locked in the Specific Plan, i.e. NPDES, and how the Specific Plan needs to comply with future State / Federal requirements.

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Discussion ensued between the Commission and Staff regarding the Commission's concerns about whatever is signed off in the Specific Plan and is not addressed in the Specific Plan should a COAs or in the Code, the Specific Plan should be clear. The Commissioner requested Staff to review that clause in the Specific Plan and add language to the clause if this is governing authority. Staff responded this is handled through the Conditioning process. Staff added as an example, the disabled accessibility, they have to comply with future changes to State / Federal laws.

The following are comments made by the Commission: 1) noise in the residential areas in that they are three (3) stories in height and how vehicles will be traveling in / out of the Project and noise is to be considered; 2) energy and water consumption, wants the Applicant to exceed minimum Standards; 3) consider using drought tolerant plants and xeriscape which can look good and not use a lot of water; 4) have the proposed Project achieve LEED Standards in Commercial Buildings; 5) have the Applicant exceed minimum Standards for xeriscaping and LEED Standards. A question was asked by a Commissioner regarding the three (3) story Buildings relative to Fire Standards – the Buildings are sixty feet (60') in height and is the Fire Department okay with that and can the Fire Department meet those Standards. Staff nodded affirmatively.

Additional comments were made by the Commission: 1) regarding PA 2, the Applicant needs to provide a variety of Buildings; 2) wants more work done on individual units i.e. similar to a network of small villages, cul-de-sacs, small individual neighborhoods, etc. and provided an example of an attached single family residence up to an attached multi-family residential units and an option for different massing Elevations within the Project; 3) there is concern with the northeast corner of the Project with the three (3) story structures looking down on the single family residential units and decreasing the mass in that corner; 4) break up the density around the perimeter around Building 13; 5) there needs some "wordsmithing" to be done in the Specific Plan – replace the words, "Design Review Board" with "Planning Commission"; 6) there is multi-development in PA 2, and asked if there is a Phasing Plan for the residential component for PA 2 because in the Specific Plan, it states about a multi-developer and how each developer can chose one Design Guideline and the Commissioner indicated he wants diversity; 7) with regards to phasing overall, Staff needs to look at the COAs and initial phases with infrastructures, etc.; 8) with the Applicant's original / initial submittal, the breaking up of the mass between the Tenants and the Major Tenant i.e. the complex's facade and liked

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that concept and wants that concept back, and; 9) with regards to Anchor 1 and the pedestrian areas and the southern facade of the Main Retail strip, drop a row of parking and increase the width of the pedestrian parkway for the retail establishment.

Chairman Haller asked if anyone else would like to speak on the item. Hearing none, he then left the Public Hearing open and there being no further questions of the Applicant or Staff, or discussion amongst the Commissioners, Chairman Haller then called for the question.

A Motion was made by Vice Chairman Gamboa and seconded by Chairman Haller to:

1. Acknowledge receipt of the "Draft" Environmental Impact Report for the Greenspot Village & Marketplace Specific Plan;
2. Begin deliberations by hearing Staff's and the Applicant's presentation on the "Draft" Specific Plan for the Greenspot Village & Marketplace Project, including the Planning Area 1 – Highland Marketplace Site Plan (DRB 009-003) and Planning Area 2 – Residential Villages Site Plan (DRB 009-004);
3. Receive verbal and written public comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report and direct Staff to respond in writing in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA);
4. Receive verbal and written public comments on the Draft Specific Plan for the Greenspot Village & Marketplace, and;
5. Continue the subject Special Public Hearing to a second Special Public Hearing scheduled for June 30, 2009.

Motion carried on a 3 – 0 vote with Commissioner Willhite absent and one vacancy.

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4.0 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Staff explained the Items tentatively scheduled for the June 2, 2009, Regular Meeting.

5.0 ADJOURN

There being no further business, Chairman Haller declared the meeting adjourned at 6:43 p.m.

Submitted by:

Approved by:

Linda McKeough, Community
Development Administrative Assistant III

Richard Haller, Chairman
Planning Commission

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