

**MINUTES
PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
JULY 19, 2011**

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

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

Present: Commissioners John Gamboa, Richard Haller, Milton Sparks Michael Stoffel, Michael Willhite, Vice Chairman Trang Huynh, and Chairman Randall Hamerly

Absent: None

Staff Present: John Jaquess, Community Development Director
Lawrence Mainez, City Planner
Sean Kelleher, Assistant Planner
Brandy Littleton, Administrative Assistant I

2.0 COMMUNITY INPUT

There was none.

3.0 CONSENT CALENDAR

There were no Items.

4.0 PUBLIC HEARINGS

- 4.1. Amendment #2 to Design Review Application (DRB-009-008) amending the Applicant's approved Sign Program for the Arco Gas Station Center. The project is located at the southeast corner of Palm Avenue and 5th Street and is identified as Assessor Parcel Numbers 1201-311-26, 30, 31, and 32.
Representative: Alex Cuevas, AGC Design Concept, Inc.

Assistant Planner Kelleher gave a presentation of the Staff Report. The Applicant is proposing to modify the Sign Program with a new sign, an arch over the entrance of the carwash, and three monument signs. Staff is recommending denial of the project due to the size of the signs and the copy area.

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Chairman Hamerly asked if there were questions for Staff.

Commissioner Gamboa questioned the lack of color renderance for the Sign Program.

Assistant Planner Kelleher stated the Applicant supplied color samples.

Commissioner Gamboa stated he did not receive them.

Assistant Planner Kelleher stated that due to the lack of Staff, the color samples did not get to them.

Commissioner Gamboa stated that the illustrations in this packet were not up to par compared to previous Sign Programs.

Assistant Planner Kelleher stated that with Staff working with the Applicant, this is what the Applicant was willing to provide. Staff provided the Applicant with the Highland Crossings packet and asked them to mirror that in term of creating a sign project. Based on that, information was submitted by the applicant providing sign height and different requirements of the code, causing Staff to accept it as a complete application to bring before the Commission.

Commissioner Gamboa stated that this was inexcusable for the Sign Program.

Commissioner Stoffel asked if there was misprint with the colors.

Assistant Planner Kelleher stated that was what was provided to Staff.

Representative to the Applicant, Alex Cuevas, AGC Design Concept, Inc., asked the Commission for a continuance on this project. The representative asked for input on what the Commission is willing accept. To make up for the rising costs of gas, the applicant wants to build a taller sign than previously proposed. Mr. Cuevas stated the importance of having the public see the sign and believed Staff's recommendations to be up for compromise.

Chairman Hamerly asked Mr. Cuevas that based on what the Commission previously accepted, if Mr. Cuevas' client is prepared with hearing what Staff recommends and repurposing the proposal or does the Client just want to hear what the Commission states.

Mr. Cuevas stated they were not comfortable with Staff's recommendation and there has not been any compromise, yet. Based on what was previously accepted in the past, this is the new proposal and the Applicant is hoping to reach a compromise. Mr. Cuevas stated that he is looking for direction and

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flexibility from the Commission for the sign, especially since 3rd Street is planned to be a one way street.

Chairman Hamerly agreed that the Sign Program does allow some disgression by the Planning Commission to work with the Applicant based on all the factors relating to the project. With that being said, Chairman Hamerly does not want the Applicant to misunderstand that proposing a 20' – 25' sign would be acceptable.

Chairman Hamerly opened up questions and comments for the Applicant.

Community Development Director Jaquess cautioned the Commission not to get into the process of designing the project but to accept or deny the project.

Chairman Hamerly agreed that they are not in a position to design the project but would allow comments by the Commission to help the Applicant.

Vice Chairman Huynh stated that the sign, being so large and the top quarter of the sign being only the logo, is a bad design. He then stated that if this was accepted, other projects could also resubmit plans to have the same size sign.

Commissioner Haller stated that the sign was out of proportion. He understands the need for the sign to be visible but feels that is will still be visible with a smaller Sign Program. Commissioner Haller also clarified that the one-way street on 3rd Street will only be between Palm Avenue and 5th Street. This will still allow much of the public to see the sign and know of the buildings existence. Commissioner Haller then stated that the majority of the people in Highland know where the shops are and is not a lot of spontaneous entries because they saw the sign.

Commissioner Willhite asked why he has a new proposal from what was previously presented when the previous proposal was bigger than other signs in the area.

Mr. Cuevas answered that the previous idea was thought to be sufficient and was complying with the code. The new proposal is based on more people are asking for more signage.

Commissioner Haller asked if the Sign Ordinance was approved after the Sign Program was approved.

Staff and the Applicant answered yes.

Mr. Cuevas stated that the Applicant would have proposed this initially, but they were complying with what was allowed at that time.

Commissioner Willhite inquired what direction 3rd Street was going to go.

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Community Development Director Jaquess answered east, towards the freeway.

The Commission and Staff discussed what was previously approved for the sign.

Commissioner Gamboa stated that he agreed with Commissioner Willhite regarding the designs that were previously approved. Previously giving concessions for the size of the sign, receiving this packet left him blown away.

Commissioner Stoffel said the carwash building would be a better place for an Arco sign, rather than a carwash sign, since it is facing traffic.

Commissioner Sparks stated he was not in favor of this proposal and wants to stick with what was originally proposed.

Staff and the Commission discussed the signs on the plans.

Chairman Hamerly stated his concerns. The sign, A1, because of the size of the sign, it is supposed to be 25' back from the intersections and this one is not. Sign A1 is out of proportion. The design of the sign did pick up some of the building character. Sign A2 disserves the sign that has already been approved, due to its size. The carwash sign should have an entrance sign. For the design of the sign, the letters should follow the arch of the sign in composition. The trellis sign is supported. Overall, there are too many signs in too small of an area and the mass is inappropriate for the project.

A Motion was made by Chairman Hamerly and seconded by Commissioner Haller to continue the item to September 6, 2011.

Motion unanimously passed on a 7-0 vote.

5.0 LEGISLATIVE

5.1 A Semi-Annual Report of the Processing of Applications per the City Council's "Come Home to Highland" Program and Policies for the period of January 1, 2011 to June 30, 2011.

Assistant Planner Kelleher gave a presentation of the Staff Report.

Vice Chairman Huynh asked if Staff could present a percentage of increases or decreases to make it easier to review the last 6 months.

Community Development Director Jaquess answered yes.

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6.0 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Community Development Director Jaquess discussed the items scheduled for the next meeting, September 6, 2011. The items will be regarding an appeal that was continued from a previous meeting regarding Staff's decision on a building permit for a nonconforming house and an Environmental for the TIGER II, the road improvement project on 5th Street.

7.0 ADJOURN

There being no further business, Chairman Hamerly declared the Meeting adjourned at 6:36 p.m.

Submitted by:

Approved by:

Brandy Littleton, Administrative Assistant I

Randall Hamerly, Chairman Planning Commission