

**A REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY OF SIGNAL HILL
PLANNING COMMISSION
May 13, 2014
7:00 P.M.**

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Richárd called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

ROLL CALL

The Commission Secretary conducted roll call.

Present: Chair Rose Richárd
 Vice-Chair Tom Benson
 Commissioner Devon Austin
 Commissioner Jane Fallon
 Commissioner Shannon Murphy

Staff present:

- 1) Community Development Director Scott Charney
- 2) Associate Planner Colleen Doan
- 3) Assistant Planner Selena Alanis
- 4) Assistant City Attorney Jeff Malawy
- 5) Sr. Engineering Technician II Anthony Caraveo

In addition, there were 5 people in attendance.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Richárd led the audience in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

None.

PUBLIC WORKSHOPS

1. Duplex at 924 E. Vernon Street

Community Development Director Scott Charney read the form of notice, and Assistant Planner Selena Alanis gave the staff report.

Chair Richárd asked for any questions from the Commission.

Commissioner Murphy asked for clarification of a fence area and staff explained how the height of the fence drops to a lower level across the corner cut-off.

Vice-Chair Benson asked about ratio of bedrooms for parking requirements, and noted the potential of a conversion of the 2nd floor den to an additional bedroom. Staff confirmed the project has 3 bedrooms (requiring a 2-car garage) and an additional bedroom would require an additional parking space. The Commission is able to request modifications to the configuration of a project to address design or development standards to decrease the likelihood of a conversion where the possibility of additional parking is not plausible.

Chair Richárd opened the public workshop and asked if there were any members of the public who would like to speak.

The following member of the public spoke regarding the project.

- 1) Guillermo Palafox, designer for the project, stated the applicant had requested the inclusion of a den in the design. It had been placed upstairs due to the inability to locate the den on the first floor.

Vice-Chair Benson suggested a move of the laundry area to the outside corner of den which should make a conversion much less likely. Three Commissioners concurred with the idea, and the applicant agreed to consider the modifications to the plans.

Chair Richárd asked for any further questions or comments from the Commission.

There being no further comments, Chair Richárd closed the public workshop.

The applicant will reconfigure the floorplans and a public hearing will be scheduled for the next Planning Commission meeting if revised plans are submitted on a timely basis.

2. Atlantic Alano Club - A Request for a Zoning Ordinance Amendment and Conditional Use Permit to Operate a Club at 2696 Dawson Avenue

Community Development Director Scott Charney read the form of notice, and Assistant Planner Selena Alanis gave the staff report.

Chair Richárd asked for any questions from the Commission.

Commissioner Fallon indicated she has visited similar clubs which seem to operate well especially when larger events are held off-site.

Vice-Chair Benson asked questions about the draft conditions including who would be responsible for ADA improvements, hours of operation, requirements for an on-site manager and emergency contact, and the number of events. Staff advised a Conditional Use Permit runs with the land/property, and conditions are included to proactively prevent operational issues or disturbances related to any operator. The draft conditions can be customized, but the opportunity for a

discussion with the applicant has not happened.

Staff also explained that a change in occupancy triggers upgrades for code requirements including ADA accessibility and a maximum 50 person occupancy restriction. In this case, two restrooms are required, as well as access to the kitchen area. The Planning Commission does not have authority to modify the conditions of approval related to maximum occupancy and access requirements as these are related to other Fire and California Building Code requirements.

Chair Richárd asked is there would be adequate parking for evening meetings and the potential for noise from club members in parking areas. Staff advised there are 47 parking spaces, and that there is no parking standard for this type of use in the Code. Neighboring businesses have indicated they do not anticipate parking conflicts as the club operates when most businesses are closed in the evenings or weekends. The adequacy of the parking is reviewed as part of the CUP.

Chair Richárd opened the public hearing and asked if there were any members of the public who would like to speak.

The following member of the public spoke regarding the project.

- 1) Stephanie Loftin, President of the Atlantic Alano Club, emphasized the club has searched for a location away from residential neighborhoods so as not to disturb others.
 - She gave a description of the facility and mentioned the property owner has told them the restrooms have been "grandfathered in." She stated there is wheel chair accessibility via the back door, explained the restrooms have handrails, and that wheel chair occupants have been able to access restrooms, the beverage area and main meeting room.
 - Currently the building occupancy allows for 50 people, and they would like to discuss that number with the Fire Department and demonstrate additional access via an additional front door, the double-door in the back and a garage door in the hopes of increasing the number.
 - The club members prefer to not have a specified closing time. After meetings, club members often gather at local restaurants, bringing revenue to this city and local businesses. Fundraisers generally occur on holidays with larger events held off site. Events in-house should not bother neighbors since this is not a residential area.
 - Building two ADA accessible bathrooms would be problematic because of the cost, and they hoped one unisex restroom might be permissible.
 - The club is willing to paint handicapped parking spaces as required.

- Ms. Loftin agreed to be the contact person and to provide her information.

Commissioner Austin asked for further clarification about use of restrooms. It was her understanding that accessibility can be possible even in older configurations.

Commissioner Murphy asked Ms. Loftin if the club has talked with the property owner about making improvements. Ms. Loftin will be having discussions with the property owner.

Staff advised that while many of the conditions for a Conditional Use Permit are at the discretion of the Commission, building and fire department regulations are mandated. Draft conditions can be discussed with the applicant and the Commission. It is our goal to be business friendly and a Conditional Use Permit is of benefit to all community members.

Chair Richard noted that staff will look into the issues discussed and that Ms. Loftin expects to meet with the property owner.

There being no further questions or comments, Chair Richárd continued the public workshop to the June 10, 2014 Planning Commission meeting.

DIRECTOR'S REPORTS

3. Study Session Regarding Lot Coverage and Floor Area Ratio Regulations for Single-Family Dwellings

Associate Planner Colleen Doan gave the staff report.

Chair Richárd asked if there were any questions from the Commission.

The Commissioners all agreed that they would like the ability to consider projects on a case by case basis and utilize their discretion without having comprehensive regulations in place.

Vice-Chair Benson asked for confirmation that modifications to second floors require additional building structural support. Staff confirmed that fully enclosing a space on a second floor triggers additional building requirements, and that the view policy works as a tool to control bulk and scale. Staff can approve additions up to 500 sf on the first floor, but additions to second floors are reviewed at a public hearing by the Commission, which also allows neighbors to provide input.

Staff will bring a follow up study session to discuss options for second floors.

4. Quarterly Beautification Report

Associate Planner Colleen Doan gave the staff report.

Chair Richárd asked if there were any questions from the Commission.

Commissioner Austin noted that Signal Hill Petroleum, the nominee, has upgraded landscaping and fencing and the area is no longer unsightly. She has seen other improvement projects in progress which may soon warrant a nomination, but does not have any additional nominations at this time.

Vice-Chair Benson stated Signal Hill Petroleum has gone above and beyond the requirements of the CUP, and recognizing them would be much appreciated.

No other nominations being made, it was moved by Vice-Chair Benson and seconded by Commissioner Fallon to select Signal Hill Petroleum as the recipient for the Beautification Award.

The motion carried.

Staff followed up on a comment from the last Commission meeting that at one of the Strategic Planning meetings community involvement and increased coverage of the beautification awards program would be welcome.

Chair Richárd suggested publication of the process and awards in the City Views. Staff advised the nomination process could include nominations from the public and emphasized the spirit of the program is to also recognize smaller contributions from small businesses and residential improvements.

Vice-Chair Benson suggested using the website as a public outreach. Staff will post awards on the website which may encourage other improvements as well.

Commissioner Fallon discussed the possibility of placing a yard sign at recipients' properties, with their permission, and potential privacy concerns. Staff will look at options to incorporate the Commission's recommendations to modify the program.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Chair Richárd asked for an update regarding the BMW/Sonic project. Staff advised it has been approved by the Successor Agency Oversight Board and has been forwarded to the State Department of Finance. There is a 60 day due diligence period before Sonic is contractually bound for the project, but they have gone through the plan check process and demonstrated they are eager to proceed.

The Chair stated the following items were on the Consent Calendar for approval:

5. Minutes

Recommendation: Approve.

6. City Council Follow-up

Recommendation: Receive and file.

7. Development Status Report

Recommendation: Receive and file.

8. Code Enforcement Report

Recommendation: Receive and file.

9. In the News

Recommendation: Receive and file.

Commission Received and Filed the Consent Calendar

It was moved by Commissioner Austin and seconded by Commissioner Fallon to receive and file the Consent Calendar.

The motion carried.

COMMISSION NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Fallon advised she will not be able to attend the July meeting.

Commissioner Murphy stated the new street striping on Junipero by the Willowridge condominiums is unclear to drivers and that vehicles still tend to stack up in the left turn lane due to the quick timing of the traffic light. She is concerned it may worsen once the Costco gas station opens. She also suggested the option of having vehicles only turn to the right out of the parking lot. Staff advised the striping is completed at this time is designed for south-bound traffic, but staff can look at the sequencing of the traffic signal and the configuration of the striping with the traffic engineer.

Vice-Chair Benson asked if items on the Development Status Report indicating "no progress" might require action by the City. Staff clarified that usually the applicant was experiencing a minor delay, but the report will include additional details going forward.

Vice-Chair Benson made a comment as a resident of Signal Hill regarding the upcoming election for Measure U.

Chair Richárd reported the abandoned vehicle on Orizaba had been removed. Staff advised the owner has cleared out the vehicle and it has a current registration.

Chair Richárd asked if Walnut Avenue is scheduled to be paved south of Hill Street. Staff advised that paving is scheduled to the north of Hill Street, but it is anticipated that paving would occur with future development anticipated at 1500 E. Hill; otherwise the paving may be included as a Capital Improvement Project.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Commissioner Murphy and seconded by Commissioner Fallon to adjourn to the next regular meeting of the Planning Commission to be held on June 10, 2014.

The motion carried.

Chair Richárd adjourned the meeting at 9:24 p.m.


CHAIR

ATTEST:


SCOTT CHARNEY
COMMISSION SECRETARY