

**A REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY OF SIGNAL HILL
PLANNING COMMISSION
September 9, 2014
7:00 P.M.**

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Benson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

The Commission Secretary conducted roll call.

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

Staff present:

- 1) Community Development Director Scott Charney
- 2) Associate Planner Colleen Doan
- 3) Assistant Planner Selena Alanis
- 4) Assistant City Attorney Jeff Malawy

In addition, there were 70 people in attendance.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

There was no public business.

PRESENTATION

The Planning Commission presented the Beautification Award to the Willow Ridge Community Association.

PUBLIC WORKSHOPS

1. **Conservation Corps of Long Beach Request for a Zoning Ordinance Amendment and Conditional Use Permit to Operate a Public Charter High School for Adults Ages 18-25 at 1982 Obispo Avenue**

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

Charney gave the staff report.

Chair Benson asked for any questions from the Commission.

Chair Benson opened the public workshop.

The following members of the public spoke regarding the project:

- 1) Mike Noll, Signal Hill resident and Council Member. Mr. Noll encouraged everyone with an issue, either in favor or against the project, to express themselves at the workshop.
- 2) Ty Tran, Long Beach resident, asked what is the revenue impact to the City of Signal Hill and if it would be possible to get a copy of the PowerPoint presentation.
- 3) Peter Navarro, Signal Hill resident, was concerned about the school for reasons of parking, graffiti, and compared the use to a pawn shop or check cashing business. He questioned if the number of faculty/staff members will be taken into account in parking and traffic counts. He was also concerned about traffic travelling down Hill Street. He expressed concerns since he understood 15% of kids were on parole, and questioned what will happen to property values. He asked how we would be degrading our city – there must be another solution.
- 4) Mike Basset, Executive Director, Chief Executive Officer of Conservation Corps of Long Beach Gateway Cities Charter School. He stated the organization has been working in partnership with the City of Long Beach for 23 years. They have received environmental awards and thought they have been good neighbors. They would not like to see students typified in an unfair way that was inappropriate to the young people they serve. He wanted to clarify misunderstandings and emphasized they are completely separate from the Browning High School.

Chair Benson advised that the workshop was exploratory and to gather questions. He expressed understanding that people who attend the meeting are concerned. He explained the Commission's job is to get the information, resolve the things that can be resolved and address the concerns. The parking and traffic study are needed to get information on traffic impacts.

Commissioner Murphy commented that she had participated in one of the facility tours and asked about the number of students at the Long Beach school. Mr. Basset advised there are approximately 150 students, and said the number of people without high school diplomas has increased and the need is great.

- 5) Triphina Moore, Signal Hill resident, stated the issue is not about disparity or typifying or stereotyping students but is about the location. She spoke in opposition of the project, that she felt there is a better location and did not want to be impacted by having the students in this neighborhood. She felt it would negatively impact property values. Other examples of zoning modifications

have been beneficial to Signal Hill. She did not see how the at-risk school would be beneficial to Signal Hill. She mentioned at the Community Meeting that she believes it is too close in proximity to the Browning High School and gymnastics school across the street.

- 6) Christina Dameron, Long Beach. Ms. Dameron stated the Aubrey homeowner's community is not represented in Signal Hill, but said their neighborhood is the one that would be impacted the most by the school. She was concerned and stated this would not be a closed campus and students could loiter in their area. She was also concerned about the 15% of the student population on probation or parole. The school would not be serving the students of Long Beach or Signal Hill as much as it would bring in other problems. She also felt traffic was going to be horrendously impacted especially since the only entrance for their guests is from 20th Street. There are also only 62 parking spaces and 175 students and she was not sure how they would be encouraged or required to only use the 62 on-site parking spaces. There was no guarantee that students are all going to be taking the bus. She said an Environmental Impact Report would be inaccurate at this time.

Chair Benson advised no decisions have been made at this time and there is no Environmental Impact Report to review. Information about police services will be obtained and parking standards will be determined. The purpose of the workshop was to gather information and listen to concerns.

- 7) Diane Curr, Signal Hill resident. She visited the school facility on Atlantic and was impressed. Students are given individual counseling and their studies are based on their needs and goals. Job placement is offered along with apprenticeship programs, trade schools or college. It can be difficult for a community to accept new people but she thought this a worthwhile cause to get young people ready for and into the job market.
- 8) Diane Barrett, Signal Hill resident. She agreed that young adults need education, but thought this was not a good location. This is a 2-lane road with no traffic control on Obispo, and drivers on Skyline nearby often run the stop signs. Once the Browning High School is built, the traffic will be disastrous.
- 9) Gloria Nava, Signal Hill resident. She was opposed to the zoning ordinance amendment and conditional use permit necessary for the proposed charter high school. Since the traffic study and police study are not yet complete, comments by residents are not as relevant at this time. The requested zoning change would be based on traffic and other physical things in the city, but would not be based on the qualities of the students, and the zoning change should not be based on adults returning to school. Taxpayers are already supporting other educational facilities so this school would be a duplication of effort. The only security would be the faculty presence. She had doubts about the number of students reported to use public transportation since she had not noticed 18-25 year old students on buses. She stated the Glenn County Board of Education will be the controlling entity, but two members of the board expressed concerns about controlling a school more than 500 miles away. She thought the

Conservation Corps should have looked to Long Beach Unified School District as their Board of Education since they serve many charter schools. Obispo is a major street and there is already heavy traffic along this road. She mentioned the Browning High School will be open in 2016 and is within close proximity of the Palms Gentlemen's Club, an indoor soccer facility and the gymnastics academy.

Chair Benson stated the cumulative effect of both schools is a concern for all of us. Community involvement up front is important and will guide us through the concerns needing to be addressed. He stated it would not be constructive to draw conclusions at this time.

10) Matt Simmons, Signal Hill resident. He stated a responsible decision regarding this school could not be made until the effects of the Browning High School have been observed. There is no environmental impact report that can predict effects such as traffic, graffiti, loitering, and impact to the community. He thought we should do one thing at a time and should wait to see the effect before making any type of decision.

11) Bob Mendoza, Signal Hill resident. He asked if the students would be compensated for going to class and if the PowerPoint presentation be put on the City's website. He thought Gloria Nava's comments were very important and she should provide a copy to the City.

12) Roke Castro, Signal Hill resident. He stated the reason he moved to Signal Hill was because it was a growing, safe community, evidenced by fitness teams and individuals attracted to the hill. He indicated if an incident occurred at all, it would change the mindset, not for the better.

13) Tamala Davis, Signal Hill resident. She thought there might be some conflict of interest regarding the Gateway Cities/Conservation Corps of Long Beach since she noticed that a few of the City Council members are also on the board of those organizations and thought they could not make unbiased vote. Also, she stated that as a resident of California Crown and a mother of 2 young children, it would be nice if Signal Hill would build a school that accommodate her family. On her block there are 15-25 kids. She does not believe any of those kids go to school in their area. They either go to private school or schools outside their city. She was concerned that the school would not have services for kids with IEPs or ADA issues including handicapped parking. She said the term "at-risk" that was present at the community meeting was dropped off from the PowerPoint at this meeting. She was concerned about the 15% of students that have records and asked the nature of the records, given there is a gymnastics school nearby with young girls.

14) Mark Pelekakis, Signal Hill resident. He stated he had seen the development of the City turn into a place where people can enjoy being. Local high schools bring track teams to practice and there is other fitness training at the parks. He felt the Browning High School was dumped on us - at first an elementary school, then it changed to a high school. Now the charter school may also be dumped

on us. He stated this is a great community and he did not feel there are even two people at the meeting tonight who were in favor of the new school.

Chair Benson reiterated the purpose of a public workshops was to listen to the community and that many of the same concerns were shared by City representatives, which is responsible for reviewing requests by all applicants. No decisions were yet made.

15)Linda Heeb, Signal Hill resident. She stated there are already adult schools that serve this area for the demographic of people who are returning to school to complete their education. There is an adult school on Willow and Long Beach Community College. Financial aid is a spectacular gift for this demographic. Those who could get to the facility by walking do not need an additional facility and it would not serve our community. She did not believe we need to import problems.

16)Robin Chay, Signal Hill resident. She shared concerns of everyone else about property values. Her main concern was the safety of her young children who might be affected by one of the student population. She agreed it was important to not bring problems to our neighborhood. She would like to be provided with a list of the benefits specific to Signal Hill and our citizens by the school (not to the general population or region).

Community Development Director Scott Charney explained normal protocol is for staff to answer questions that they can at the meeting and to get back with answers later in the process. The applicant was available to answer questions first.

Commissioner Murphy asked if the applicant could also answer the questions raised at the community meeting for those that were not able to attend that meeting.

Chair Benson asked if Burroughs School was a student facility or for adults. Staff clarified that the Burroughs School does not have students but is currently used as a teacher resource center. There is an adult school on Willow Street administered by LBSUD for 18-25 year olds which offers a high school certificate.

Commissioner Murphy asked about lunch facilities since there are no restaurants nearby. During the tour, she was told Pratt Security monitors the Long Beach site and asked if they would be at the proposed school full time. She also asked for an explanation of the shuttle vans from the Atlantic facility, and expressed a concern about the possibility of graffiti by students.

The Community Development Director stated that staff and the applicant would answer those questions that they could at the workshop. He stated two letters were received that day that were essentially letters of opposition from Christina Dameron and Lauren Dameron. Written comments were also submitted by Ellen Bitters on a speaker card.

Staff advised the City is a participant in the Gateway Cities Council of

Governments related to regional planning as part of a JPA (Joint Powers Authority). The City of Signal Hill does not have any interest in the school per se. The Gateway Cities COG has allowed the Conservation Corps to use their name as the school name. Any Council Members that are affiliated with the Conservation Corps of Long Beach and would be making decisions on this item will recuse themselves at that time.

Commissioner Murphy asked about the date and source of information from the PowerPoint related to unemployment and demographics. The Community Development Director advised the reports were prepared by the Gateway Cities, the data presented was up to 2011 and that citations would be provided to the Commission and the public via the City's website.

Chair Benson stated the questions would be categorized and invited Mr. Bassett to step forward to address the list of questions from the community workshop as well as concerns from this workshop.

Mr. Bassett stated there is no other school in the LA region with the exception of LA and Orange County that provides high school diplomas to 18-25 year olds. The school on Willow doesn't offer a diploma and they charge a fee. The proposed charter school is a regular school and they receive funding based on average attendance. Students are not paid but they can take part in the work experience program for the Conservation Corps of Long Beach.

How is the school promoted? Mr. Bassett stated: we are trying to make sure we get the word out. The population of non-high school graduates is growing in this very technical society (approximately 35%). There's one other Conservation Corps in the San Gabriel Valley. We work in partnership with Workforce Investment Boards and are exempt from being county specific.

What is the difference between the CCLB facility and the Long Beach School for Adults? I think we covered that already.

Request that documents be made available for public review i.e. charter documents, CCLB submittal binder, environmental document including traffic report as well as Browning High School environmental documents. The City has all the requested documents and more which are available for public view.

Traffic/circulation impacts taking both Browning High School and the CCLB facility into consideration (cumulative impacts). I would submit to this Commission and the audience that the Browning High School has nothing to do with us. The use of the facility, by parking and approximate occupancy will not exceed what we have at our current facility, which is roughly the same size. We have 27 parking spaces at the current location and 60 spaces at the proposed location. 98% of the students take public transportation. Most of the parking is for teachers.

Chair Benson asked Mr. Bassett to address the cumulative impacts with the Browning High School. Mr. Bassett stated that even if they don't occupy the proposed building site, someone else will and the same traffic/parking situation

would occur. Chair Benson noted that at some point we will have a traffic study that will show the impacts.

How much revenue does the school receive for the average daily attendance? Revenues are based on a local control funding formula for the nearest elementary school using the number of full or assisted lunches provided. Long Beach Unified gets a fairly high number and we would receive about the same which is between \$7,900 - \$8,000 per student per year. We provide uniforms, but Long Beach Unified makes them buy their own.

Why is Signal Hill the proposed location if 80% of the student body is from Long Beach or elsewhere? It was the best site. It's very central. There are very few sites out there of the size and nature we need. We want to be in a professional location. The reason Signal Hill does not have zoning for a charter school is that no city does. The school districts in the State of California have their own system and cities don't control that. With us, we go through the process and residents have a chance to review the proposal.

Can an alternate location be found? Mr. Bassett stated: who knows. We have looked for 2 years. It's a combination of size, public transportation, and accessibility. 98% of students use public transportation. Chair Benson stated 98% is a big number and asked the source and date of the statistic. Mr. Bassett said the statistic has remained the same since he has been with the Corps for 23 years. Most young people can't afford a car.

Probationary Parole. Mr. Bassett stated two people from the audience had asked how many people are on parole. We don't have a single student or Corpsmember who is on parole. They have 15% probation. Most schools have that similar number or higher in certain areas. Juvenile records are sealed. Some of those records are simply for driving without a license which is very common for young people.

Chair Benson asked Mr. Bassett about the police reporting and hoping to find what impact would be. Mr. Bassett said they have been working in the City of Signal Hill for 23 years. If we could find a single police instance in Signal Hill in that time related to the Corps he would be very surprised.

Chair Benson asked what year the facility on 19th Street opened. Mr. Bassett stated he believed it has been there for 4 years. They have improved the facility greatly and it is an environmental education facility, not just a processing center.

What percent of the students are required to attend as condition of probation? Mr. Bassett stated none. If a student decides to attend the school and they are on probation, they confirm that with the probation officer. The school does not have a requirement about that.

Can students go off campus for lunch? Mr. Bassett stated: yes, this is America and the students are adults. They're probably going to go to the closest Jack in the Box, following the trend seen at the Atlantic facility. We believe the manager would even give us a letter of support if asked for, because he likes the business.

Can they go to Discovery Well Park on breaks? Yes. The Corps helped to build part of DWP and helped move away the rocks that in the past were being thrown onto houses below.

Do we provide a breakroom? Yes, we provide a breakroom. At the other facility, a classroom is being used for a breakroom. A lot of students will go to fast food places. They have 30 minutes for lunch.

Chair Benson stated it might be helpful if a student profile could be provided showing a day in the life of a student including times for classes. Mr. Bassett stated they had provided that to the City already as the complete curriculum. Classes begin around 7:30 a.m. Class is in session until 2:30 and afterwards only the faculty are at the school.

Is security on campus? They do not want to disclose all security measures, but the Corps had talked to an officer who has patrolled the area around the Long Beach facility for two years and the officer reported that, if anything, the graffiti and vandalism was reduced with them occupying that site.

Impact on property values? Mr. Bassett pointed out that the Long beach location is near the California Heights area and he doesn't see anyone complaining about their property values there. We try to be a good neighbor. Two years ago there was some tagging, we worked with the police and found it was being done by someone who was not one of their students.

Would the CCLB be willing to accept a CUP condition prohibiting students from driving to the facility since most of them do not drive anyway? Since this is the USA, he didn't believe this was something he could answer. He reiterated that very few drive and they would be encouraged to carpool.

Would the CCLB be willing to make PCH the primary driving route a condition of their CUP? Same answer as the previous question.

What would be the fiscal impacts on City regarding reclassification of site from office to charter school? Mr. Bassett stated he believed the City would better answer this question. Non-profits do not pay property taxes but assessments and fees. Mr. Bassett clarified that they are a non-profit 501(c)3 corporation and that charitable donations to them even give the donor a tax deduction.

The Community Development Director clarified that information that the Corps provided to City staff has also been provided to the Planning Commission and the handbook that is available at the Planning Department counter.

Mr. Bassett wanted to address requests regarding the CUP. Pratt provides security services for them and they are an armed response company, however, they have not had to use armed response. The Corps security concern has not been about their students, but about people from the outside, which can happen anywhere.

Mr. Bassett said the Deputy Chief of Police is on their Board. Larry Forester is on the Board for the Conservation Corps of Long Beach. He was recruited years ago because we wanted Signal Hill to be represented on the CCLB. He is a fine representative and a great human being. He was originally on the board for the proposed school but Larry stepped down because he did not want to have a conflict of interest. If there are any other matters related to the Conservation Corps that are presented to the City Council, Larry would recuse himself.

Are students compensated? Students are not compensated. If they are on the work experience program, they would be compensated by that program for their work.

IEP students? Individual education plans mean SELFA, where the school contracts with special education needs organizations to serve the needs of special education students. There are 6 students now. That is a special education service that must be provided by every public school including charter schools.

Glenn County. There are four counties that sponsor Conservation Corps, YouthBuild, and Workforce Investment Boards, which are exempt from the code requirement to be county specific. The fee for the back office and expertise that counties have to support them is 6%. The school board is comprised of local individuals. Glenn County approved this proposal on April 7. The newspaper made a misstatement: there were 4 ayes and 1 abstention. Ms. Mendel felt we were kind of far away, but still a great program. The other woman was originally against it, but she came down and became enamored of the program. The final vote of the board was 4/0 and the final member Ms. Mendel was not there.

Physical education. There is some physical education requirement for students but it's not much and it's usually credited to them through their work program.

Non-profit organization. Public charter schools have to act under the Brown Act like other agencies. The school board has 5 members and we ensure there are not 3 members together.

Traffic. Mr. Bassett stated they understand the issues with the Browning High School, but it is not appropriate or accurate to lump the charter school in with the Browning High School.

Chair Benson asked if the Commissioners if they had additional questions.

Commissioner Richárd asked the typical length of time needed to complete the program. Mr. Bassett stated the work experience program is a 1 year readiness program. Their charter allows students to join for a trimester. The average time to complete the program is 18 months. The goal is to get them to a high school diploma.

Commissioner Richárd heard at the tour of the facility that they hire some of the graduates and assist in job placement and asked if that was that correct. Mr. Bassett reported that one of their graduates is a member of staff and 2 of the 3

field supervisors are also graduates of the Corps. They try to connect with the community and their people have done well in the working world. It is a boost to their confidence to go back to school, and many of them have young children and work part-time which requires time management. He invited the public to attend the graduation on September 25th at The Grand where they expect almost 600 people, 56 of them will be graduates.

Chair Benson asked if they have any online programs. Mr. Bassett stated they do some online classes, but their school work is all done in the classroom, and there is a grant where their students will have Chromebooks with textbooks eliminated. The Chromebooks will stay at the school location.

Commissioner Murphy asked what the graduation rate is. Mr. Bassett stated that because many students are working or may have family issues, they can sit out a trimester, so the numbers fluctuate. The graduation rate is about 65%, which is greater than that of LA Unified and most high schools.

The Community Development Director stated staff will look at the revenue impact, and the environmental document, parking study, police review and security concerns, including cumulative impacts involving the Browning High School, will need to be completed prior to a public hearing. The City's process, like that for all cities, is to have the public hearing with documents readily available. The City encourages engagement early in the process and believes in getting the questions up front so we can address those concerns.

The Community Development Director stated that Council Member Larry Forester has not participated in the process for this application and has indicated his intent to recuse himself at any Council level decision. To date, there has been no Council consideration. Also, typically handicapped access issues are dealt with during the plan check process and the required improvements will be reported at the next meeting.

The Community Development Director also reported the City will have oversight regarding the land use decisions and a conditional use permit, but not over administration or educational components, which would be done by Glenn County.

The Community Development Director had discussed the process that school districts go through in complying with local zoning rules with the City Attorney. School districts may exempt themselves from local rules by making specific findings (this is not the case with charter schools). On the LBUSD website are copies of the resolutions for Jessie Nelson Academy and the Browning High School with the required findings, and they decided to not go through the local zoning process because of cost and considerations, and can do so under State law.

The Community Development Director stated that through the CUP, the City can implement conditions of approval for impacts shown in the traffic study, the parking study and security concerns. He highlighted examples of traffic requirements for other projects: EDCO, the Costco Gas Station, and Fresh & Easy.

Commissioner Murphy stated she toured the Long Beach facility and was impressed by the environment and students. She talked to nearby businesses about any negative impacts from students, who stated they weren't even aware the school was there. She stated she is also concerned about impacts from the Browning High School and is looking forward to the traffic study. Other concerns for her are the potential for graffiti, loitering, property values and parking. When she attended the tour, there were 60-80 students, with about 5 vacant parking spots.

Commissioner Richárd also toured the facility and was also impressed. She was also concerned about parking and traffic. Currently there is a 4-way stop sign at Obispo and 20th and quite a lot of traffic. She hopes people will keep an open mind as staff comes back with information about some of the issues.

Commissioner Austin agreed about increase of traffic and the potential impact by the Browning High School. She stated her belief that many students will have cars due to their age. The Commission and staff will be addressing questions raised. She stated she favors ensuring these students have the same opportunity as other students. She stated it is the position of a lot of school districts to bring students back to the neighborhoods they are serving, and is looking forward to seeing questions about traffic, property values and security addressed.

Vice-Chair Fallon noted there is a great deal of traffic because this is an attractive city, many people come to the hill for views and other opportunities. When applications come to the Commission, they are seriously considered with the goal of making the majority of people happy. She stated once the studies are received, they will be evaluated and recommendations made. She stated the Commission also wants the best for this city since it is their home as well.

Chair Benson stated that work on the studies of traffic, parking standards, security, and their cumulative effects with the Browning High School should continue toward completion. Staff will obtain demographics of the classes, additional security information from the police department. He would entertain a motion to continue this to another workshop in the future when this information is ready.

The City Attorney advised that staff can be directed to come back with a workshop once the studies are done. The Community Development Director indicated a meeting notice would be sent in the same manner as for the community meeting and workshop.

It was the consensus of the Commission to close the public workshop and direct staff to return once more information is available.

Motion carried 5/0.

2. Revised Conceptual Plans for a 3-Story 10 Unit Detached Residential Project at Pacific Coast Highway and Molino Avenue

Community Development Director Scott Charney read the form of notice, and Associate Planner Colleen Doan gave the staff report.

Chair Benson asked for any questions from the Commission.

Commissioner Murphy asked and staff clarified that no outreach that had been done by the applicant regarding the view policy.

Chair Benson opened the public workshop.

The following members of the public spoke regarding the project:

- 1) Mike Afiuny, applicant, stated he spoke to adjacent property owners about acquiring additional properties, however, no agreement was reached for purchase or regarding the project design.
- 2) Gloria Nava, Signal Hill resident. She provided comments in favor of zoning changes in cases where there is positive economic development to the community, however, density is already very high. She was opposed to the modification of current height and setback restrictions. She stated the parking provided in the project is insufficient for guests, and may not be adequate for families with more than 2 cars. She noted that two on-street parking spaces will be eliminated by the driveways, which would impact the neighborhood. Air quality would be poor due to proximity with Pacific Coast Highway. She was not opposed to the creation of a cul-de-sac. She reiterated any residential development needed to be within all current zoning requirements because of the already high density.
- 3) Bob Mendoza, Signal Hill resident. He stated there would be impacts to units at the nearby apartment building because of the height of the new project. He was not opposed to a cul-de-sac but suggested the current design include a sign prohibiting left turns onto PC due to the potential for accidents. He was concerned about the proximity of the project to PCH since these units appear quite close to the street. He asked about the ownership of the property and if the City had owned it at one time. He was also concerned about sufficient room for emergency vehicles in the event a cul-de-sac was created. He stated the project design is not yet what it should be.
- 4) Mike Afiuny, applicant. In response to questions about garages and parking spaces, he stated the units are directly accessible from the garage and that the design met all requirements for parking criteria. He stated the setbacks are met except for unit #4, which could be redesigned. He explained that the height of the project was designed around the slope of the property, which caused it to exceed the 30' height limit.
- 5) Mike Noll, Signal Hill resident. He stated street parking is already very crowded. The goal of PCH Specific Plan was to improve a rundown area on PCH, and this project plan is too dense. The height restriction is a concern to another

resident he knows who lives adjacent to the site. He suggested the applicant make another attempt to talk with the property owner of the bungalows to the east regarding a possible collaboration. He thought a cul-de-sac might be a positive addition. He stated the applicant had made some good progress to the design but that additional progress should be made.

There being no further public testimony, Chair Benson closed the public comments section of the workshop.

The Community Development Director addressed the ownership issue and said he did not believe the City or Redevelopment Agency ever owned this property. Chair Benson asked the applicant how long it had been under the current ownership and Mr. Afiuny stated it had been owned since the late 1980s.

Commissioner Murphy asked that the plans be revised. At previous workshops several members of the community had spoken in favor of a cul-de-sac. She affirmed that parking is impacted. Creating a higher density on Molino was not what was envisioned for the area. She had concerns about the open space, setbacks and the loss of two street parking spaces. When she visited the area she noted the apartment buildings would have a loss of view and believes there needs to be some outreach to the neighbors. It was her wish the applicant would do some outreach to neighbors and come back to the Commission with a revised design.

Commissioner Austin agreed. She lives near the area. She thought there were several apartment buildings affected and that there should be some outreach. She also asked about the square footage. Staff clarified 1,350 sf was the average. She wondered, should one of the units be eliminated, if the size for the others would increase. She stated the plan needs some revisions.

Commissioner Murphy stated the design for the driveway for unit #10 should be redesigned since other vehicles could potentially park on the sidewalk by the unit.

Vice-Chair Fallon agreed with the other Commissioners that the project plans need more work. She hoped the units could be larger.

Chair Benson said community outreach is crucial, especially since some residents might be unaware of the proposal and he thought they might have some good ideas to contribute. He is not in favor of any deviations in the height and setbacks and disapproved the span between the units. He was in favor of the consolidation of the properties. Also, the common area between units 7, 8, 9 and 10 would not receive sunlight due to the height of the buildings. He stated there a better design is needed.

It was moved by Commissioner Austin and seconded by Vice-Chair Fallon, given the consensus of the Commission regarding the need for community outreach and changes in the design, to close the public workshop.

Motion carried 5/0.

CONSENT CALENDAR

It was moved by Vice-Chair Fallon and seconded by Commissioner Austin to receive and file Consent Calendar Items No. 4, 5, 6 and 7.

The motion carried 5/0.

It was moved by Commissioner Murphy and seconded by Vice-Chair Fallon to receive and file Consent Calendar Item No. 3.

The motion carried 4/0/1 (Chair Benson abstained due to his absence from the August meeting).

COMMISSION NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Austin shared concerns about traffic circulation at the Costco Gas Station and suggested additional signage and review of traffic flow. Staff advised that the installation of signs is not yet complete and that an evaluation of the effectiveness of the signage and circulation is required after six months, per the Conditions of Approval. Staff is monitoring the site daily and management is being very responsive.

Commissioner Austin also asked if there is any information about It's A Grind coffee shop. Staff confirmed their website lists the store closed currently but there is a sign in the window that indicates it is closed for remodeling.

Commissioner Richárd also shared a concern with traffic circulation at the Costco Gas Station. Staff advised they will make a suggestion to route traffic in the westward direction to ease traffic flow. Chair Benson noted and staff confirmed that supply trucks are directed to exit on Cherry Avenue.

Commissioner Murphy complimented the Costco store manager who has been very responsive to her emails regarding an electric charging station and some construction noise. Staff clarified that public electric charging stations can be discussed by the Sustainable City Committee. A lot of corporations are promoting them and sites are being considered including at Fresh & Easy.

Chair Benson advised that the November meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 12th due to the Veterans Day holiday on November 11th. He also mentioned the Signal Hill Historical Society's 5th annual pancake breakfast is Saturday, September 20th and there will be festivities for the 90th Anniversary.

Commissioner Richárd mentioned that the Rock for Vets concert will be held on September 20th.

Chair Benson also reminded the Commission that the filming of the EDCO video would take place on Saturday, September 13th which would highlight the household hazardous waste program. Also, a National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day will take place on Saturday, September 27th.

Chair Benson noted that Signal Hill Petroleum is continuing their beautification project by installing fencing and new landscaping, most recently along 21st Street from Temple Avenue to Terrace Drive. Staff advised that Signal Hill Petroleum is sending email notifications to staff as part of their outreach efforts and the notifications will be forwarded to the Commission. They will also advise when work on oil wells is being done (those notifications are forwarded to City Council).

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Commissioner Richárd and seconded by Commissioner Austin to adjourn to the next regular meeting of the Planning Commission to be held on October 14, 2014.

The motion carried.

Chair Benson adjourned the meeting at 10:40 p.m.


CHAIR
TOM BENSON

ATTEST:


SCOTT CHARNEY
COMMISSION SECRETARY