

**A REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY OF SIGNAL HILL
PLANNING COMMISSION
September 8, 2015
7:00 P.M.**

CALL TO ORDER

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

ROLL CALL

The Commission Secretary conducted roll call.

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

Staff present:

- 1) Community Development Director Scott Charney
- 2) Senior Planner Colleen Doan
- 3) Assistant City Attorney David Kwon
- 4) Sr. Engineering Technician II Anthony Caraveo

In addition, there were 0 people in attendance.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

There was no public business from the floor.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- (1) Roadmap for Adoption of the State Mandated Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance and Commercial Turf Replacement Regulations

Senior Planner Colleen Doan gave the staff report.

Vice-Chair Austin asked if developers of projects currently in process, such as Gundry Hill, would be asked to reconsider landscaping options which were previously approved prior to current drought conditions.

Staff advised that what had been approved were conceptual landscape plans. The developer is in plan check and will be required to comply with the new standards.

Commissioner Benson noted confusing definitions in the Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance for partial landscapes. Staff advised that a consultant is overseeing the verbiage of the Ordinance. Commissioner Benson also asked about providing better definitions of greywater and captured rain water. Staff advised these are incentives rather than requirements, but agreed better definitions would help clarify qualification provisions.

Staff advised the Maximum Applied Water Allowance (MAWA) calculations and the evaporation provisions have undergone significant changes in the new code. However, consultants and industry professionals have already been training on the new standards and their reports reflect installations have been consistent with updated plans.

Commissioner Benson asked about requirements for greywater and rainwater retention. Staff advised that LID requirements are separate regulations from the Ordinance.

Commissioner Benson asked about commercial turf replacement, limiting the hardscape, and encouraging swales to keep water on-site. Staff advised there will not be an incentive for swales in order to retain options, and that residential guidelines will emphasize water retention and minimizing water run-off.

Commissioner Benson asked if the artificial turf at the new BMW dealership will be in compliance with the goals being developed, and staff confirmed it is. Commissioner Benson stated that trees need a greater amount of water than turf, and staff confirmed there will not be amendments regarding watering of trees or hand watering. Staff also explained that larger projects have soils analyses which may affect a different level of water demand due to soil conditions.

Chair Fallon asked if there were any further questions from the Commission, and stated she thought staff had been very thorough.

Vice-Chair Austin asked if there would be considerations for future commercial projects that are close to residential areas. Staff advised once the Ordinance is adopted all projects will fall under the requirements. Current projects fall under the existing water efficient landscape ordinance.

Commissioner Benson asked if information was available about the reflection of heat from artificial turf. Staff advised that while researching qualities of artificial turf that issue was not addressed. Commissioner Benson noted that a grass-like image softens the appearance of an area and asked if such a common theme was desirable. Staff advised that new projects generally have a variety of treatments with only a limited amount of artificial turf and that most of the setback is comprised of other plant materials.

Chair Fallon asked for the reason for lack of turf at Fresh & Easy. Staff explained that the need was to be able to service the parking lot oil well which resulted in the use of rock in that area. Also, there is a slope which required a complex stormwater retention system. Some landscape plantings balance the site.

Staff indicated that significant direction had been received and will bring standards back for a Public Hearing.

CONSENT CALENDAR

(2) Minutes of the Following Meeting

Regular Meeting of August 11, 2015.

Recommendation: Approve.

(3) City Council Follow-up

Summary: Attached for review is a brief summary on the City Council's action from the August 18, 2015 and September 1, 2015 meetings.

Recommendation: Receive and file.

(4) Development Status Report

Summary: Attached for review is the monthly Development Status Report which highlights current projects.

Recommendation: Receive and file.

(5) In the News

Summary: Articles compiled by staff that may be of interest to the Commission.

Recommendation: Receive and file.

It was moved by Commissioner Benson and seconded by Commissioner Richárd to receive and file the Consent Calendar.

The motion carried 5/0.

COMMISSION NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Richárd asked if the City had begun preparing for projected rain from the El Niño weather system in order to prevent flooding. Staff indicated the Public Works Department will have sand available for sandbags and that they will follow up with Public Works. The Building Department will also be sending a reminder to developers of their obligation to install stormwater best management practices for projects under construction.

Commissioner Benson suggested storm grates be cleaned, and staff advised they will pass the request to the appropriate department. The City is also talking with

Signal Hill Petroleum, the independent oil operators, and trucking and storage yards regarding stormwater issues.

Staff also advised that some stormwater requirements are now affecting the oil industry. They must demonstrate appropriate dikes and berms. The City is looking to adopt a Vacant Parcel Ordinance in the near future to decrease dirt flowing into storm drains. The City is working with a consultant to find effectual and cost effective methods to do so.

Commissioner Benson asked if red-lined comments of ordinance amendments might be printed in color for easier reading; staff advised the model Ordinance was provided only in black and white but would try to have that available in the future.

Commissioner Benson noted that mulch in parkways tends to wash away in heavy rains. Staff advised that the guidelines will include information regarding maintenance responsibility as well as pros and cons to aid residents in making choices.

Commissioner Benson mentioned that lava rock material and decomposed granite wear over time. Staff advised that those working with landscaping contractors may need to emphasize alternatives such as edging and creating a lip in order to retain water on-site. Commissioner Benson also mentioned a storage yard on a sloped site which appeared to have a fair amount of dirt piled along with a number of vehicles. Staff advised they will follow up about the storage yard.

Commissioner Benson noted there are landscaping and trees on 21st Street which may die soon due to lack of water. Staff will pass on as appropriate.

Commissioner Murphy stated the traffic flow at Costco gas station was problematic and that she has seen vehicles driving outside the prescribed lanes. When she spoke with the attendant, he stated he had not noticed. Staff advised that Costco is still within their one-year review period for the CUP and that providing remedies is still in process. The relocation of the Wells Fargo ATM is also under consideration.

Commissioner Murphy asked if information was available regarding the landscaping for the Willow Ridge HOA entry area. Staff advised the plans and scope of work could be forwarded to her, and that staff would note if the landscaping triggered the new requirements.

Commissioner Richárd stated a Fish-O-Licious restaurant will be coming to the former City Mex location and will be managed by the former Khoury's owner. This may also increase the traffic in the Town Center East area. Staff advised that a meeting is scheduled with RED, the shopping center manager, and with Costco to discuss traffic concerns.

Chair Fallon stated that she had previously nominated Arkraft for the beautification award, however, drought resistant plants had been removed. Staff advised other

requirements had not been completed correctly and that the nomination can be rescinded.

Commissioner Benson announced the Signal Hill Historical Society's Pancake Breakfast on September 19, 2015 at the Applebee's restaurant.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Commissioner Richard and seconded by Commissioner Benson to adjourn to the next regular meeting of the Planning Commission to be held on Tuesday, October 13, 2015, at 7:00 p.m., in the Council Chamber of City Hall, 2175 Cherry Avenue, Signal Hill, CA, 90755.

The motion carried 5/0.

Chair Fallon adjourned the meeting at 7:55 p.m.

Jane Fallon
Chair

Attest:

Scott Charney
Commission Secretary