

**MINUTES
AMENDED
PLANNING COMMISSION
155 W. Durian, Coalinga, CA 93210
TUESDAY January 14, 2020**

The Mission of the City of Coalinga is to provide for the preservation of the community character by delivering quality, responsive City services, in an efficient and cost-effective manner, and to develop, encourage, and promote a diversified economic base in order to ensure the future financial stability of the City for its citizens.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER (6:00 PM)

Pledge of Allegiance

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

None

ROLL CALL

Commissioners: *Chairman Sailer*
 Vice Chairman Jacobs
 Commissioner Helmar
 Commissioner Garza
 Commissioner Pruitt (telephoned in remotely)

Staff: *Assistant City Manager, Sean Brewer*
 Administrative Secretary Kristi Anderson
 (in for City Clerk Shannon Jensen)

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Under Government Code 54954.3 members of the audience may address the Commission on any item of interest to the public or on any agenda item before or during the Commission's consideration of the item. State law prohibits the Planning Commission from acting on non-agenda items.

Mr. Nathan Vosburg asked if the Commission will be allowing questions from the public during discussion of the individual items?

Chairman Sailer answered yes.

INFORMATION/CONSENT CALENDAR

None

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None

DISCUSSION AND/OR POTENTIAL ACTION ITEMS

1. Planning Commission Adoption of Resolution No. 020P-001, Approving a Site Plan Review (SPR 19-01) and Environmental Review Application for the Construction of a New Office at 1245 W. Elm Ave

Assistant to the City Manager Sean Brewer gave a brief overview of the item.

Vice Chairman Jacobs, referencing the rear 10-foot setback noted in the application, asked if the measurement was correct?

Mr. Brewer answered yes, there is no minimum for commercial/industrial. The only setback requirement would be between the existing structure and the new structure.

*Motion by Helmar, Second by Garza to **Approve** Adoption of Resolution No. 020P-001, Approving a Site Plan Review (SPR 19-01) and Environmental Review Application for the Construction of a New Office at 1245 W. Elm Ave. Motion **Approved** by a Roll-Call 5/0 Majority Vote.*

2. Planning Commission Adoption of Resolution No. 020P-002 Approving, with Conditions, Site Plan Review and Environmental Review Application SPR 19-02 for the Construction of a 76 Unit Multi-Family Housing Project at the Southeast Corner of West Elm Ave. (SR198) and Pacific Street

Assistant City Manager Sean Brewer gave a detailed overview of the item.

Vice Chairman Jacobs asked if there were two points of access off 198 and Pacific? I do not have the measurements in front of me, but will the fire truck have enough space to turn around in the area by the carports?

Mr. Brewer stated the standards were imposed to ensure they could make the turn radius. The Fire Department did not respond with any comments or concerns.

Vice Chairman Jacobs asked if Building B is also a two-story building?

Mr. Brewer stated all the buildings are two-story buildings except for the clubhouse.

Vice Chairman Jacobs, referencing the orientation, commented that it does not appear that anyone will really be looking across the street except for those in Building B.

Mr. Brewer said the separation is wide with Pacific Street, plus you have the landscape setback on the north end, a bus turnout, as well as the trail.

Vice Chairman asked, it's about 18 parking stalls short, correct?

Mr. Brewer stated it is a little more than that. The standard for typical multi-family projects are based on market-rate projects where you have at least two vehicles per household. The density bonus requirement gives you an idea of where affordable housing projects fall in terms standards compared to market-rate. We are not held to it because they are not applying for density bonus. One stall per unit is the rule of thumb.

Chairman Sailer asked if all the units will be income restrictive?

Mr. Brewer answered yes, for the entire complex. It will be 30% to 60% of the household median income.

Chairman Sailer asked, so no one can go in and rent at market rate?

Mr. Brewer answered no, the project is contingent on it being affordable.

Vice Chairman Jacobs asked, forever?

Mr. Brewer said yes, the parking standards are based on a 50-year covenant that is placed on the project to ensure affordability.

Commissioner Helmar asked if the reduction in parking spaces would be for the residents and would there still be the 25 set aside for guests? Or would it be a proportional reduction for both types of parking?

Mr. Brewer explained under the density bonus standards every 2-3 bedroom unit you would get 2 parking spaces, 3 bedroom units would get 2.5 spaces and 4 bedroom units would get 3 spaces. Then you have 1 guest parking spaces for every 3 units which is where the additional 25 spaces come from.

Commissioner Pruitt mentioned Warthan and Westwood apartment complexes are low income and the parking at both of the locations is an issue. She is concerned about the effect on ADA parking should the Commission grant the concession on the reduction of parking.

Mr. Brewer explained that ADA is triggered by Federal Law so there will be one ADA parking stall for every 25 regular stalls. You will not see a reduction in the ADA parking stall requirement. The project shows 203 regular stalls with 8 ADA stalls. The 8 stalls exceed those standards.

Commissioner Pruitt asked if the all ADA stalls would be designated for residents or would some be for guests?

Chairman Sailer said the plans appeared to show 2 ADA stalls would be for guests since they are in front of the community building. Mr. Sailer pointed out that the plans show a total of 10 ADA stalls.

Commissioner Pruitt reiterated her concern over the concession for the reduction of parking stalls.

Mr. Brewer explained that part of the goal with these programs is the reduction of greenhouse gases and having a reduction in vehicle use. These developments usually have less cars per household. This is a newer program where they are putting a greater emphasis on the infrastructure which will help reduce the demand for additional parking.

Commissioner Pruitt asked about CalVans?

Developer Cameron Johnson of AMG & Associates, Inc. gave a brief overview of the new program, explaining you cannot do one without the other with the goal being to build affordable housing in conjunction with public transit and infrastructure improvements for the City. We are trying to build affordable housing and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, so we build bike lanes, sidewalks, increase public transit. And all residents will be provided with free transit passes. One of the other programs we utilize is CalVans. This project includes the purchase of thirty ride share vans which can be utilized by everyone in the City. The vans will be driven by volunteer drivers and anyone can call for a ride. The vans will be parked throughout the City. It is a great way to draw people away from using single passenger vehicular transportation. One thing I'd also like to address, is the parking because that is always a concern. You never want to build too much parking, we would prefer to utilize that space for open space, amenities, landscaping, and other features. You will notice we are only building 16 units to the acre; we could go much denser. The code allows for 3 stories and 25 units per acre. Instead we want to build a nice functional project with plenty of open space.

Commissioner Helmar asked for more information on the transit process. The idea of free transit passes makes sense in a larger City but how would that work in Coalinga? Also, will the apartment complex and infrastructure improvements be built simultaneously?

Mr. Johnson said the two would happen simultaneously. The grant application is due in February and we would expect the award sometime in July. We have additional funding we will need to apply for afterwards, so construction would likely start next summer. We would expect construction to be a 12-month process. While we are dealing with the affordable housing component, the City will be developing the infrastructure improvements with the goal of having those finish simultaneously. Some of those improvements are street lighting, urban greening, trails, bus turnouts and shelters, and bike lanes. We will be working with Fresno County Rural Transit Agency ("FCRTA") on their plans to buy a new bus and develop a new route for Coalinga. This is where the transit passes come in. This is a \$17 million project in total.

Mr. Brewer stated all the improvements will stem from the project site and branch out from there.

Commissioner Pruitt asked how far will the transit system reach? It is a concern that Coalinga has no hospital and a lot of citizens travel outside of the City to see specialist, such as Fresno and Hanford. Will the transit system be able to service these needs?

Mr. Johnson believes the transit will service both, those who need to get to Fresno and some of those other urban cores in the Central Valley, as well as having CalVans. He is not certain on the distance limit, but knows it is significant. There will be 30 vans in the City.

Mr. Brewer stated FCRTA will be adding the "express route", which are trips from Coalinga to Fresno. They are trying to increase frequency with the addition of the express route and reduce the timeframes on how long it takes to get there.

Commissioner Helmar asked if there were plans to include Hanford, our closer neighbor, which is not in Fresno County?

Mr. Brewer stated communications with FCRTA continue as the program is refined. Those are bigger issues that will be discussed in the future. I have heard talks of county-to-county collaboration.

Commissioner Helmar, noting the Zoning Standard Conforming Table, stated there seems to be more common open space than what is referenced here.

Mr. Brewer indicated there was an issue with the figures on the table. There is a significant amount of open space, there is about 55,000 feet of just landscaping space which does not include the pool, top lot, and other green space. The open space on this project far exceeds the requirement.

Commissioner Pruitt asked if this will be a gated or open community?

Mr. Johnson indicated the vehicular access would be open and the community would be fenced.

Commissioner Helmar asked for a description of what the perimeter will look like? It looks like there will be an extensive view of cars from the street.

Mr. Johnson stated this was done strategically with the goal being to push the buildings back as far away from the parking as possible since they are two-story structures. Usually what we do with parking like this is to screen it off with landscaping. We do not want the residents to look out and just see parking. We will be working with the City to make sure the screening is adequate. We want to have good curb appeal and an overall aesthetically pleasing project.

Mr. Brewer indicated the landscape screen is also necessary to minimize vehicle lights shining through the windows when people are pulling in and out of the community at night.

Commissioner Helmar asked if the Planning Commission will have the opportunity to review the landscape plan?

Mr. Brewer answered no, they will not.

Vice Chairman Jacobs asked what would be the criteria to qualify for low-income?

Mr. Brewer stated these types of projects are 30% - 60% of the household median income. A person would be income qualified through an application process.

Mr. Johnson commented that all tenants would be put through a comprehensive background check which includes criminal and employment checks. We want to bring quality tenants into the project. We have a solid management company in place. Our goal is to place people in Coalinga who are currently paying too much of their income in rent and are living in overcrowded households or substandard housing. The goal is to take those existing residents and be able to put them into a new quality housing development so they are not paying a disproportionate amount of their income to rent which will enhance the quality of their lives. They will have more income to buy groceries, they will become better citizens in the community, and have

money in their pockets which they will begin investing in the community. We also provide supportive services to the tenants such as financial literacy courses, resume building, and health and wellness classes. The Governor is pumping in hundreds of thousands of dollars trying to assist with the affordable housing issue and decrease homelessness.

Vice Chairman Jacobs asked how often will they be reviewed?

Mr. Johnson stated they are reviewed continuously. The great thing about this program is there is such a high level of oversight by multiple agencies, the tax credit agency, the California Department of Housing and Community Development ("HCD"), the tax credit investors and lenders. We have a whole asset management plan division that does nothing but go out and perform random reviews of all our projects. If we ever fall out of compliance, we lose those tax credits. We have 20,000 projects throughout the State of California, and we have never had a project fall out of compliance. Just know that they will be heavily regulated with a lot of oversight and quarterly audits.

Mr. Brewer mentioned they will also undergo annual inspections.

Commissioner Pruitt asked if there would be preference to people who already live in Coalinga? The plans make note of sensory units, what is that?

Mr. Johnson explained it is definitely their preference to bring people in who already live in Coalinga, but if they are not successful in filling the project with Coalinga residents, they will expand their marketing to Avenal and the surrounding areas. Sensory units are units designed for the visually and sensory impaired (blind and deaf residents). These units will be equipped with such things as flashing strobe lighting.

Vice Chairman Jacobs asked how will this work with the City's overall need for affordable housing?

Mr. Brewer stated the County publishes the affordable housing requirements for very-low, low, moderate and above-moderate income levels and we are assigned the number of units we are required to build in each category within a seven year period. This will have a significant impact on the City meeting those requirements. The State is now putting in place penalties for those who do not meet their housing goals.

Mr. Nathan Vosburg is opposed to the project in its current state and the lack of mitigating factors.

Mr. Mike Griffith asked if the Commission and Developer were aware of the nearby superfund site?

Mr. Brewer answered yes, it is a fully contained site. You are only restricted to building right on top of it. The superfund site does include a land use, so we are able to build around the site because it is fully encapsulated. There are no restrictions from building on the surrounding parcels.

Mr. Griffith is opposed to the project stating concerns over the superfund site.

Ms. Jodi Keesler (not certain of spelling) agreeing with Mr. Vosburg and Mr. Griffith voice her opposition of the project.

Councilman Adkisson asked if the soil will be analyzed?

Mr. Johnson stated their tax credit investors and lenders will require them to perform a thorough soil investigation, geotechnical reports and Phase I and Phase II Environmental Reports. If anything comes up in any those studies, we will be required to deal with it prior to construction. We would never be able to build on a project that has soil that could be potentially hazardous to our tenants. The program we are utilizing for this project requires us to pay full impact fees, there will be no waiver. I believe we are paying over \$1.5 million in impact fees. These fees go to school, parks, Police and Fire, etc.

Chairman Sailer asked how feasible it would be to make the project a gated community?

Mr. Johnson stated it is possible, we can look at the budget. Typically, we prefer not to gate these projects, as it tends to become a maintenance issue and sometimes it can become an emergency vehicle problem. The project is basically gated except for the vehicular access. We probably gate only 5% of our projects.

Mrs. Mary Jones, recalling a past project that had been denied because of the superfund site, asked if that was true? Has something changed since then?

Mr. Brewer indicated he was not aware of any past project that had been denied because of the superfund site. We have a master plan that was completed some years ago, and the asbestos site has always been notched out because of the land use restrictions on the actual superfund site. There are no impacts to the surrounding area with regard to future development.

Mrs. Mary Jones is concerned with kids riding their bikes down Elm Avenue.

Mr. Brewer indicated there will be buffer bike lanes along Elm Avenue.

Mrs. Mary Jones asked what is a buffer bike lane?

Mr. Brewer stated it means you will have your drive lane, then a 2-foot hatched out area and then the bike lane itself.

Mrs. Mary Jones commented that paint does not stop a car.

Mr. Rodolfo Rodriguez is disturbed by the assumption that the people who would inhabit the complex would only have one vehicle. He is in favor of affordable housing but is concerned with the location being near the superfund site. Mr. Rodriguez asked if soil testing would be performed prior to the Commission's approval of the project?

Councilman Adkisson asked if copies of the soil analysis could be provided to the Council?

Mr. Johnson stated the soil analysis, Phase I and Phase II (only triggered by Phase I) would be performed prior to permit issuance. We have no issue providing copies of the reports to the City.

Councilman Adkisson asked if the soil analysis would cover all the different things that may be present in that site, like asbestos, mercury, etc.?

Mr. Johnson stated they will do a Phase I and based on that report, they will determine if more exploration is needed. A lot of the times nothing more is needed.

Councilman Adkisson asked if the project will be brought to Council for approval?

Mr. Brewer indicated no; this is just a site plan review; it does not require Council approval. The only time we go to Council is for rezones, general plan amendments, any type of discretionary review, and subdivision maps.

Mr. Vosburg urged the Commission to postpone their decision until they have done more research on the superfund site. He is concerned that the development restrictions are not only for the cap site, but for the entire parcel where the superfund site is located.

Chairman Sailer asked if the Environmental Protection Agency ("EPA") has responded to Mr. Vosburg's questions?

Mr. Vosburg answered no, I just reached out to them today.

Mr. Brewer mentioned the General Plan identifies this area as High-Density Residential ("HDR") and the zoning identifies it as HDR, so when the extensive environmental impact report was completed for the General Plan it recognizes the intended land uses for these particular areas. When we do extensive General Plan updates and spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on environmental review and studies, we request comments. If there were any negative comments received from the associated agencies these land uses would have been identified differently. Even the asbestos site itself is zoned industrial because there are certain land uses that can be developed at those sites. There are restrictions on land use, however there is nothing to our knowledge that would prevent us from developing around it.

Councilman Adkisson asked if the Council could require the developer to supply the City with soil samples?

Mr. Brewer did not know.

Commissioner Helmar asked what if we do not approve the project application?

Mr. Brewer stated the Developer could appeal the decision and the Council would have the final say.

Chairman Sailer suggested they table the item until the next Planning Commissioner Meeting in two weeks until staff can get a response from the EPA.

Commissioner Helmar asked if we know when the land use was approved?

Mr. Brewer indicated the Council decided, at the time, what the land would be listed as.

Commissioner Helmar commented the map is similar to the executive report, can we drill down further?

Mr. Brewer stated it does not identify parcel by parcel. The superfund site is inspected annually. Its below ground and encapsulated.

Mr. Rodriguez thanked the Commission and asked them to take the EPA's comments into consideration.

Mr. Johnson said they are working closely with the City. The City Council has already approved the resolution for the grant application. Our company has built on contaminated sites before and environmental reports are extensive and will show anything of concern. Our paperwork is complete and ready to go, the grant application is due by February 11, 2020.

Mr. Vosburg is concerned that the public has not been made more aware of the proposed project and the potential hazards related to the superfund site. He urged the Commission to wait to hear back from the EPA even if it takes more than two weeks. He believes the Council should be the ones to decide.

Chairman Sailer would prefer to schedule a meeting prior to the meeting on the 28th and to ensure they have comments back from the EPA beforehand. The Commission has never had a situation such as this and he believes they should take the citizens' concerns seriously.

The recording stopped at this point. Minutes have been transcribed from meeting notes only from this point forward.

Vice Chairman Jacobs requested to look at the site.

Mr. Brewer indicated the asbestos site is inspected annually.

Commissioner Helmar asked about noticing requirements?

Mr. Brewer stated no public notice is required on a site plan review.

Vice Chairman Jacobs asked if rain wash will run off to the proposed project site?

Mr. Brewer said it would not change the water shed.

Vice Chairman Jacobs asked if they knew where it flows now?

Mr. Brewer said it would flow to the storm drain. The northwest to southeast watershed flows towards the creek.

Chairman Sailer asked when was that developed?

Mr. Brewer indicated it was in the 90s.

Commissioner Helmar stated she would like to hear from interested parties and we would need the information quickly.

Chairman Sailer suggested a Special Meeting next week.

Mr. Brewer stated we need 72 hours for posting.

Chairman Sailer asked if Tuesday, January 21st would work for the commissioners?

Commissioner Helmar stated she would have to remote in via telephone.

Consensus of the Commission is to table the item and to schedule a Special Meeting on January 21st to discuss the issue further.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

None

COMMUNICATIONS

1. Staff Announcements

None

2. Commissioner Announcements

None

3. Chairman Announcements

None

ADJOURN 7:54PM

Chairman/Vice Chairman

Shannon Jensen, City Clerk

Date