



City of Arts & Innovation

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

THURSDAY, April 15, 2021, 9:00 A.M.
VIRTUAL MEETING
PUBLIC COMMENT VIA TELEPHONE
3900 MAIN STREET

COMMISSIONERS

PRESENT: L. Allen, R. Kirby, J. Parker, T. Ridgway, C. Roberts, J. Rush, R. Singh, J. Teunissen
and A. Villalobos

ABSENT:

STAFF: M. Kopaskie-Brown, P. Brenes, D. Murray, B. Norton, K. Smith, N. Mustafa, C.
Scully, F. Andrade, N. Freeman

Chair Kirby called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE AUDIENCE

Drew Oberjuege, Executive Director, Riverside Art Museum, and Timothy Jackson spoke in support of the AC Marriott and Residence Inn.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

PLANNING CASES P19-0560, P19-0561 and P19-0562 – CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT AND VARIANCES, AC MARRIOTT AND RESIDENCE INN - 3420-3482 MISSION INN AVENUE, WARD 1

Proposal by Overland Development Company to consider the following entitlements for the construction of a dual branded hotel (AC Marriott and Residence Inn) and the conversion and modification of the former fire station into office space: 1) a Conditional Use Permit to permit a hotel development, with a floor-area-ratio greater than 3.0, and a building height greater than 60 feet; 2) a Variance to reduce the required 15-foot front setback on Mission Inn Avenue; and 3) a Variance to allow fewer parking spaces than required by Code. Brian Norton, Senior Planner, presented the staff report. He stated that staff received three letters in support of the project and three letters in opposition. The letters in opposition raised concerns regarding available parking, viability of an additional hotel in the Downtown and the environmental determination. He noted that adequate parking is available in nearby parking lots, parking structures and on-street located along Mission Inn Avenue. With regard to the viability of the hotel development, the applicant has conducted studies demonstrating the need for the proposed project. The project qualifies for infill as it is consistent with the General Plan, Zoning Code and the Downtown Specific Plan. It should be noted that the Municipal Code allows for variances to be granted that deviate from the development standards. The Project was found not



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to have any impacts regarding traffic, noise, biological, water or air quality impacts. The project is less than 5 acres and will be served by adequate infrastructure. Additionally, indoor air quality impacts will be addressed through standards set forth by the State under Title 24 California State Building Code. Condition 63 will need to be modified as follows: Backflow prevention devices will need to be located inside the building in a mechanical room adjacent to an outside wall. Andrew Walcker, Overland Development, introduced his development partner, Atkan Kadakia, Greens Group. He thanked city staff and his design team and introduced his design team present to answer questions. He stated that they were in agreement with the published conditions of approval. He noted that a 31page letter was received yesterday from Lozeau Drury citing unfounded claims regarding the projects CEQA findings. A written response to the letters received, was prepared by Sagecrest and distributed to the Commission this morning. Christine Saunders, Director of Environmental Services, Sagecrest Planning and Environmental, reiterated that the Class 32 categorical exemption remains the appropriate CEQA determination for this project. She summarized Sagecrest's letter for the record. She noted that the Cultural Heritage Board will review a Certificate of Appropriateness on April 21, 2021. She indicated that no new significant information identifying significant impact or inadequacies has been identified. Atkan Kadadia, Managing Principal at Greens Group addressed the Commission. They are in agreement with the recommended conditions. They are excited to have this before the Commission and requested the Commission's support for the project.

Public Comment: Richard Drury, law firm Lozeau Drury stated they did not oppose the project, but noted that the hotel requires CEQA review.

Rico Alderetti and Nick Adcock, Vice President Greater Riverside Chamber of Commerce, spoke in support.

The public hearing was closed. Commissioner Villalobos commented on the height of the hotel and expressed his concern with the compatibility of the hotel with the fire station and the surrounding historic structures

Commissioner Roberts expressed her concern regarding parking, especially during events such as the Festival of Lights, the height of the proposed hotel and the compatibility with the historic structures adjacent to the site.



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Nathan Mustafa, Deputy Public Works Director, stated that Public Works, Fire and special events staff met to review the traffic flow during important events. The proposed developments ingress and egress will be slow on festival of lights switch on day or peak times but Lemon Street itself remains pretty clear, the site will also have access via the alley way.

Commissioner Allen complimented the developer for using the fire house for staging during the hotel construction. He stated the hotel would be an asset.

Commissioner Rush agreed with Commissioner Allen regarding the blending of the façade with the existing fire station as seamless. This project is a good use of the property.

Following discussion it was moved by Commissioner Allen and seconded by Commissioner Teunissen to: 1) Determine that the project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15332 (Infill Development Projects) of the CEQA Guidelines, as the project will not have a significant effect on the environment; and 2) Approve Planning Cases P19-0560 (Conditional Use Permit), P19-0561 (Variance), P19-0562 (Variance) based on the findings outlined in the staff report and subject to the recommended conditions, including the modified condition 63: Backflow prevention devices will need to be located inside the building in a mechanical room adjacent to an outside wall.

Chair Kirby advised of the appeal period.

The Planning Commission decision for Planning Cases P19-0560 (Conditional Use Permit), P19-0561 (Variance), P19-0562 (Variance) is final unless appealed to City Council.

Motion Carried: 8 Ayes, 1 Noes, 0 Absent, 0 Abstention

AYES: Allen, Kirby, Parker, Ridgway, Rush, Singh, Teunissen, Villalobos

NOES: Roberts

ABSENT: None

ABSTENTION: None

Chair Kirby thanked the developers. Being in major construction for 30 years and dealing with big buildings himself, he appreciated having the construction office on-site.

Board Members Roberts and Ridgway left the meeting at this time.



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DISCUSSION CALENDAR

BROWN ACT TRAINING

Kristi Smith, Chief Assistant City Attorney, presented the Brown Act Training.

Following discussion, no formal action was taken by the Commission. Chair Kirby thanked Ms. Smith for the presentation.

COMMUNICATIONS

ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS AND UPDATE FROM CITY PLANNER

Ms. Kopaskie-Brown updated the Commission on the meeting of April 29. There will only be one item on the agenda.

Commissioner Allen inquired when the Commission may start meeting in the Council Chamber again.

Ms. Kopaskie-Brown replied that the City Manager had provided an update at the last City Council meeting. It is expected that the earliest will be late June or July.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:54 a.m. to the meeting of April 29, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.

The above actions were taken by the City Planning Commission on April 15, 2021. There is now a 10-day appeal period that ends on April 21, 2021. During this time, any interested person may appeal this action to the City Council by submitting a letter of appeal and paying the appeal fee. In the absence of an appeal or referral, the Commission's decisions and conditions become final after 5:00 p.m. on April 21, 2021.

Minutes approved as presented at the April 29, 2021 meeting.