



CITY OF MONTCLAIR
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
REGULAR ADJOURNED MEETING
Monday, April 13, 2009

COUNCIL CHAMBER
5111 Benito Street, Montclair, California 91763

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Flores called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Flores led those present in the salute to the flag.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chairman Flores, Vice Chairman Lenhert, Commissioners Johnson, Sahagun, and Vodvarka, City Planner Diaz, Associate Planner Frazier-Burton and City Attorney Robbins.

Excused: Community Development Director Lustro and Associate Planner Lai.

MINUTES

The minutes of the March 9, 2009 meeting were presented for approval. Commissioner Vodvarka moved, Commissioner Johnson seconded, there being no opposition to the motion, the minutes were approved 5-0.

ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

None.

AGENDA ITEMS

- 6.a PUBLIC HEARING - CASE NUMBER 2009-5
Project Address: 4110 Holt Boulevard, Unit B
Project Applicant: Holt-Montclair Capital Investors
Project Planner: Carol Frazier-Burton, Associate Planner
Request: Conditional Use Permit for a thrift store

Associate Planner Frazier-Burton reviewed the staff report.

Chairman Flores asked if any responses to the public notice were received; Associate Planner Frazier-Burton stated no responses were received.

Chairman Flores asked whether the extra streetlight issue was resolved. Associate Frazier-Burton stated that to the best of her knowledge, it is still a required condition.

Commissioner Johnson stated that maybe her eyesight is going, but generally speaking when they look at these reports, there is a page with motions and she wondered where it was.

City Planner Diaz explained that staff made changes to the format of the report to help shorten the length of the staff report and enhance the resolution so that all the findings and conditions of approval are located in one spot. He also mentioned that we wanted to make it easier to make motions so when the Chairman calls for a motion, one of the commissioners can simply make the motion to adopt the attached resolution. It is a different way of doing things than we are used to.

Commissioner Johnson asked if only one motion was needed to adopt the resolution. City Planner Diaz confirmed.

Commissioner Johnson stated that since the collection site is in Fontana and so far away, did the applicant own other stores elsewhere. Associate Planner Frazier-Burton responded that she thought this was the only store, but stated that we could ask the business owner.

Commissioner Sahagun commented that he initially had a concern regarding an additional thrift store, but thought it would be okay since they will be bringing in merchandise including some new merchandise. Associate Planner Frazier-Burton replied that there will be a combination of new and used merchandise. Commissioner Sahagun felt it would also be okay because the existing thrift stores were spread throughout the city. Associate Planner Frazier-Burton stated that Quality Thrift and the Pomona Valley Workshop thrift store are just down the street; there is one east of Central Avenue; and Three-Way on Central Avenue north of Holt.

Commissioner Vodvarka stated the thing he likes about this thrift store is the ability to use a vacant building and wished them luck.

John Cataldo, 835 Mission Street, South Pasadena, the property owner, stated that the Commission may have noticed the building undergoing rehabilitation and he has been given careful guidance and lots of help from both Building and Planning and thanked those departments because it is going to be a very nice building. There is another tenant that is proposed for the other side, a printing shop, which is an allowed use and there is not much they need to have done. He felt the thrift shop would be a very positive contribution to the area and was really looking forward to it. He stated that the thrift store owner was present and would like to answer Commissioner Johnson's question.

Nwojo Agwu, 8448 Hunter Drive, Alta Loma, the applicant, stated that he has a warehouse in Fontana and that is where they process all their charitable picked-up items. His intention is to process them in Fontana, move the items to Montclair and display them for sale at discounted rates. They will not make a mess, they do not want to process anything here, they want to provide the city with very cheap items and they promise to do very well.

Commissioner Johnson asked if there were other locations. Mr. Agwu replied that this is the only one so far.

Chairman Flores asked the applicant how long it will be before they comply with all the conditions and are up and operating. Mr. Cataldo answered that he came in to City Hall regarding the conditions that were given and that Building Official Westerlin was nice enough to put the conditions together although she did not realize the extent of work that would be going on in the place. The reality is that there will be very little work done because it is already improved. We are going to be putting in vinyl tile floor in the front and an outlet for the cash register. When he discussed this with her, she asked for a plan showing where the outlet is going to go and that takes care of most of the conditions. The rest of the conditions are acceptable and they pretty much tie-in with the rest of the building and we are probably looking at two weeks. He also mentioned that they have run into some unknown hurdles, such as a sewer ejection system in the building, which was there when he bought it, but he did not know about it. As a result, they have had to put in an entire new sewer system at an enormous expense. One other thing they ran into was a double wall along the north property line with a one-foot gap that was a safety hazard because a child could fall into the gap. The Building Division requested that it be removed and they are going through that right now. So, it looks like about two more weeks. He met with the City Engineer regarding the streetlight and there are some issues regarding placement because the plan has shifted a bit so he was hoping within two weeks that the actual work will be completed and if the Commission gives its approval to Mr. Nwojo's project, he can start moving his stuff in.

Commissioner Vodvarka commented that the property history went way back and he remembered an Italian deli being there years ago.

Chairman Flores opened the public hearing. No one from the public was present. Chairman Flores closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Vodvarka moved to adopt Resolution No. 09-1695, under Case No. 2009-5, to allow a thrift clothing store in the Business Park Land Use District of the Holt Boulevard Specific Plan, at 4110 Holt Boulevard, Unit B, subject to the 30 conditions of approval, Commissioner Sahagun seconded, there being no opposition to the motion, the motion passed 5-0.

INFORMATION ITEMS

City Planner Diaz stated the new formats for the staff reports and resolutions are still a work in progress. He and the City Attorney are working to streamline it further so it is easy for everyone to use. In a couple more weeks, the Commission may see more changes to the staff report, including the addition of a vicinity map to the cover sheet that help all identify the location of project sites. Technology has caught up with us so we have no more excuses. He asked that any comments about the format or length of the staff report or resolution be forwarded to him. Commissioner Vodvarka stated that page numbering is missing and if they want to refer to something on a certain page, the numbering is not there.

Chairman Flores commented it was nice to keep upgrading so they will continue to be the number one Commission in the Inland Valley.

Commissioner Sahagun commented what a nice job the city was doing on the Montclair Action Plan and the housing plan.

Commissioner Sahagun commented that he called the graffiti abatement hotline for graffiti on the Benson Avenue underpass and he knows it belongs to Caltrans, but asked if Caltrans could be contacted because it has been there about one week.

Commissioner Johnson commented that she really liked the signatures at the end of the staff report and felt that when the economy improves the new format will really show as an improvement.

Chairman Flores welcomed a student attending the meeting from Mt. San Antonio College and commented if he had any questions to consult with staff.

Chairman Flores adjourned the meeting at 7:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Berke
Recording Secretary