

CITY OF MONTCLAIR  
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES  
REGULAR ADJOURNED MEETING  
Monday, November 8, 2010

COUNCIL CHAMBER  
5111 Benito Street, Montclair, California 91763

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**CALL TO ORDER**

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

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Vice Chairman Sahagun led those present in the salute to the flag.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Chairman Flores, Vice Chairman Sahagun, Commissioners Johnson, Lenhart, and Vodvarka, Community Development Director Lustro, City Planner Diaz, Assistant Planner Gutierrez, and City Attorney Robbins.

**MINUTES**

The minutes of the September 13, 2010 regular meeting were presented for approval. Commissioner Vodvarka asked that the last line of page 3 be corrected from the language that he "met" Mrs. Maria who teaches 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grades to "he saw a sign" that read "Mrs. Maria" on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade classroom. Commissioner Johnson moved to approve, with revisions, Vice Chairman Sahagun seconded, and the minutes were approved 5-0.

Chairman Flores welcomed everyone back after several canceled meetings and extended congratulations to Mayor Eaton and the Council Members who are returning.

## ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

None.

## AGENDA ITEMS

- 6.a PUBLIC HEARING - CASE NUMBER 2010-16
- |                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| Project Address:   | 4801 Holt Boulevard                                  |
| Project Applicant: | DBBS Properties for Throne of Grace Apostolic Church |
| Project Planner:   | Michael Diaz, City Planner                           |
| Request:           | Conditional Use Permit                               |

City Planner Diaz reviewed the staff report. He recommended approval based on the findings contained in the resolution and subject to the conditions of approval. He was glad to answer any questions about the church or the project and if the Commission had any questions for the church members, all three of the guests present in the audience were from the church and available to answer any questions.

Chairman Flores opened the public hearing.

Wale Alofe, 10036 Big Pine Drive, Alta Loma, CA, a representative of Throne of Grace Apostolic Church, stated that he had no presentation but was available to answer any questions.

Hearing no other comments and no one else being present, Chairman Flores closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Johnson noted there were no plans for a church school and she did not see any space for that in the plans, but where was Sunday school going to be held? City Planner Diaz replied that what staff was referring to in the staff report was a parochial-type school where the education would be a little more beyond what you would expect on a Sunday morning at a regular church service. He imagined that there would be a separate place for the kids during Sunday services, but there are no plans for an official or formal school there.

Chairman Flores asked staff how many churches are in Montclair. City Planner Diaz replied staff has not done an official count so he had no idea. He added that lately, because of favorable leasing arrangements and the vacancies that are out there, there has been a slight increase in the number of inquiries about locating religious facilities, but he was unaware what the actual number was. Chairman Flores commented that an actual number might be a good thing to have and asked if staff could come up with one for the next meeting. City Planner Diaz answered that staff would research it and respond to the Commission.

Commissioner Lenhart moved that, based upon evidence submitted, the project is deemed exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act

(CEQA). Further, the project qualifies as a Class 1 exemption under State CEQA Guidelines Section 15301, which exempts projects involving little to no expansion of existing structures or uses. As such, a DeMinimis finding of no impact on fish and wildlife will be prepared, seconded by Commissioner Vodvarka, there being no opposition to the motion, the motion passed 5-0.

Commissioner Johnson moved to approve a Conditional Use Permit under Case No. 2010-16, subject to making the required findings, and subject to the conditions as described in attached Resolution Number 10-1732, seconded by Chairman Flores, there being no opposition, the motion passed 5-0.

## **INFORMATION ITEMS**

Director Lustro stated that at the Commission's next meeting on November 22nd, staff plans to bring forward the Arrow Station project, proposed by the Hutton Companies, on the north side of Arrow Highway east of Monte Vista Avenue.

Hutton project on Arrow Highway for the North Montclair Specific Plan, a tentative tract map and precise plan of design for 129 dwelling units on the Robertson Ready Mix site, just east of the Edison substation on the north side of Arrow Highway, east of Monte Vista Avenue. If the Commission recalls, it was the project presented to the City Council at its study session on September 7<sup>th</sup> and they have continued to work diligently on their project, get their water quality management plan done and, from what he understood, it was very close, finalizing the architectural and site plan details. They are very anxious to move forward so staff is looking forward to bringing it to the Commission at the next meeting.

Vice Chairman Sahagun commented he knew about the bi-monthly reports on project status, but asked for a verbal update regarding the shopping center at Ramona and Holt.

Vice Chairman Sahagun asked about the Costco southbound entryway that was cut out along with the new ingress, the long one, and another one was added further south. We discussed accidents on the outside, but not on the inside and, as he mentioned on different projects before, suggested cutting the planters back. It is when you get in there when it becomes a problem because that corner is tight. He's never seen an accident, but if they ever work on it, maybe they could cut back those planters because once you turn in, there is a three-way stop and you cannot move because of the planters.

Vice Chairman Sahagun congratulated the Mayor and Council Members on their re-election.

Director Lustro responded regarding the project at Ramona and Holt by stating the entitlements died a long time ago. The applicant did not move forward on the project and those entitlements were no longer in place and if they or another applicant want to pursue something on that corner, they will have to start all over again. That is why it

does not appear on the update list of current projects because the entitlements no longer exist. They still have a sign out there that contains a rendering of the center/project that was approved and what they are attempting to do now is sell the property and the broker was given a friendly reminder that if the property is purchased and someone wants to pursue a project, they would have to start all over again and the broker is aware of that. The broker advised they are leaving the sign up as an incentive to what type of project got approved.

Director Lustro stated that with regard to the south Costco entrance, to staff's knowledge, there have not been any accidents out on Central Avenue as of yet that he is aware of. He did not know if anything has been going on inside the parking lot. When staff reviewed the proposed site plan for the reorganization of that part of the parking lot, there was not 100% agreement among staff as to how that should be reconfigured and staff ended up getting what we got and staff will continue to monitor that, but accidents on private property is not really staff's call. It would really be up to Costco to make the first move. If they (Costco) determine that it is a less than desirable condition out there, it would be up to Costco to try to alleviate that. Staff can determine that accidents on-site are directly attributable to how the entrance is configured.

Director Lustro stated with regard to the length of the landscape finger islands, staff has, on new projects, been actively indicating to applicants to shorten the planters at the ends and middles of aisles to facilitate easier ingress and egress as has been suggested by the Commission.

Vice Chairman Sahagun commented especially ingress and egress to the streets because there are large SUVs and trucks that have a hard time going in and out.

Commissioner Lenhart asked if we could get Costco to put up a sign further in along the main driveway that directs where the exit is because people seem to search for the exit. Director Lustro replied that staff could ask.

Commissioner Vodvarka commented that he also has Costco issues as well because every time he goes there to get gas, one of the attendants who he knows well, is belly-aching because he still has to use a coffee can for a restroom. Commissioner Vodvarka asked what happened to the project to put in a car wash and a restroom. Director Lustro replied Costco decided not to pursue it. Commissioner Vodvarka asked if, for sanitary reasons, we could make them do something, even a port-a-potty of some sort. Commissioner Johnson asked why the employee doesn't use the store's restroom facilities. Director Lustro commented that in any of his conversations with the attendants, that is what they do, they use the store's facilities. Commissioner Vodvarka asked what if you "really" had to go. Director Lustro stated it was Costco's choice to build it that way, there was no requirement for them to construct a restroom out there and to his knowledge, other Costco's with gas stations, do not have a restroom out by the gas station either. Commissioner Vodvarka commented that he has been to the Redlands Costco and they do not have a restroom by the gas station.

Commissioner Vodvarka commented he had been at Long John Silver's a while back and knows many of the employees and one employee asked how long he was going to have a job. He told the employee he did not know, but at least until the bulldozers came. Because there are a few new faces, he felt some of the employees got scared off and got another job. He commented the food is still good and recommended everyone try to go there if they haven't been for a while.

Commissioner Johnson echoed the congratulations to the Mayor and re-elected Council Members. With regard to Costco, she has always parked on the south side (and thought her secret was safe until they moved the driveway) because she remembers when it was being planned, the spaces over there are bigger and because that is the only place she parks, she has seen several near-misses and one where a lady was driving an enormous pick-up truck and several people tried directing her, but she took out a couple carts because it was just too tight.

Commissioner Johnson also wanted to comment on parking requirements for churches. She believed one space required for every six seats originally came up when it was mother, father, and four kids, but more and more, there are two people per car and many others with one person per car. She did not feel it would impact the item on this agenda because it was so small, but in the future felt we should review it and require more parking, especially for a large church. Director Lustro replied that staff has had that discussion regarding religious facilities and have looked at other cities and, as happens when you survey other communities, you get a range of requirements, but our staff's discussion went along the same lines and maybe at some point in the future, staff can look at a 1 to 4 ratio or something that moves it down a bit or something that is a bit more realistic for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century with not as many people going in one car. The traditional family, as our generation knows it, does not exist to the degree it did when we were growing up so it is a parking standard we want to take a look at along with some others when we get an opportunity.

Chairman Flores stated that was part of the reason he asked how many churches were here because we may have problems with their parking. He was questioning why so many churches are coming here, was there a loophole? City Planner Diaz replied it was not a loophole, just the prices of the square footage and vacancies are abundant right now so they get to pick their cream of the crop and property owners are getting desperate and would love to have the high rent, but there's only so much to spread around. The good news is that most of these are leased spaces so they still continue to pay rent and are not taken off the tax rolls and are easier to work with because of their small size and generally operate during off-peak hours so they don't compete for the parking.

Chairman Flores had several comments, starting with observing another survey crew at the Monte Vista – Moreno property. The "green pond" he previously commented on had cleared up and looked clean. The market at Ramona and Holt has a fence and the first 50 feet of fence was covered with papers and did not look good. And, the fence near Olive Garden restaurant had about 30 feet of it pushed down to the ground and he wanted something done.

Chairman Flores adjourned the meeting at 7:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Berke  
Recording Secretary

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Title: PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES  
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Keywords:  
Comments:  
Creation Date: 11/9/2010 9:19:00 AM  
Change Number: 12  
Last Saved On: 11/10/2010 3:14:00 PM  
Last Saved By: Laura Berke  
Total Editing Time: 677 Minutes  
Last Printed On: 11/18/2010 5:37:00 PM  
As of Last Complete Printing  
Number of Pages: 6  
Number of Words: 15,324 (approx.)  
Number of Characters: 87,351 (approx.)