

**CITY OF EL CENTRO PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF
MAY 12, 2015**

The El Centro Planning Commission convened in a regular session at City Hall Council Chambers, 1275 W. Main Street, El Centro, California at 5:30 PM.

Chairperson Harold Walk presided over the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

	Attendee Name	Title
Present:	Harold Walk Darian Chell Sergio Lopez Cheyenne Gaddis Evelia Jimenez Marcela Miranda Jack Dunnam	Chairperson Vice-Chairperson Commissioner Commissioner Commissioner Commissioner Commissioner

STAFF PRESENT

Norma Villicana, Community Development Director
Kris Becker, City Attorney
Frank Soto, Assistant Community Development Director
Abraham Campos, Senior Engineer
Adriana Nava, Associate Planner
Angel Hernandez, Assistant Planner
Yvonne Cordero, Staff Assistant

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of minutes of the regular Planning Commission meeting of April 14, 2015

Vice-Chairman Chell requested that the minutes be amended to reflect his comment regarding the increase in property value as a result of changing the zone from residential to commercial.

RESULT:	ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Sergio A. Lopez, Commissioner
SECONDER:	Evelia Jimenez, Commissioner
AYES:	Walk, Chell, Lopez, Gaddis, Jimenez, Miranda, Dunnam

PUBLIC HEARINGS

2. Continuance of Public Hearing - Conditional Use Permit 14-07 - Bethel Assembly

The project proposes the phased development of a church and ancillary buildings on 4.08 acres of vacant property located at 1099 Pico Avenue in the R1 (Single Family) Zone. Pursuant to Section 15301 of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines it has been determined this project is exempt for formal environmental review.

Angel Hernandez, Assistant Planner, provided a presentation and described the project.

Commissioner Lopez verified the fencing conditions with Angel Hernandez, Assistant Planner

Chairman Walk opened the Public Hearing for Conditional Use Permit 14-07 at 5:37 p.m.

Tim Jones, Engineer for the proposed project, suggested that the conditions be revised for installation of sidewalk only and eliminate installation of curb and gutter due to rise and falls that occur over time and to prevent future settling repairs. Abraham Campos, Senior Engineer and Norma Villicana, Community Development Director recommended that curb, gutter and sidewalk be installed for proper water flow and in order to function properly. Norma Villicana stated that if needed, the City would repair the curb, gutter and sidewalk if any settling occurs.

RESULT:	ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Darian Dax Chell, Vice-Chairperson
SECONDER:	Jack Dunnam, Commissioner
AYES:	Walk, Chell, Lopez, Gaddis, Jimenez, Miranda, Dunnam

Chairman Walk announced that item 5, Tentative Parcel Map 15-02 for Associated Desert Newspapers was pulled from meeting's agenda.

3a. Public Hearing - Negative Declaration 14-06 for Affordable Housing Land Consultants

The project proposes a change of zone from R3 (Multiple Family) to CG (General Commercial) for the southern 0.75± acres of the property located at the northeastern corner of Waterman Avenue and Cruickshank Drive (APN 064-442-001). Concurrent with the re-zone, a General Plan Amendment is being requested to amend the General Plan Land Use Map to change the land use designation from High-Medium Residential to General Commercial for consistency with the Zoning Map. A Negative Declaration has been prepared pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act and will be considered by the Planning Commission

Angel Hernandez, Assistant Planner, described the project and provided a presentation. The project applicant is requesting a change of zone and general plan amendment to allow for the development of a medical office building on the southern .75 acres of the property. The project

will also require approval of a Tentative Parcel Map in order to separate the southern portion of the property. The Tentative Parcel Map is included on the agenda as item 4.

Public hearing opened at 5:57 by Chairman Walk.

Applicant representative Cameron Johnson spoke in favor of the project and explained that after searching for commercial buyers, they decided to revert the CG parcel back to R3 to develop a senior three story, low-income apartment complex.

Chairman Walk asked Mr. Johnson about the project's parking ratio. Mr. Johnson answered they will provide adequate parking according to code, but generally their other projects park at .75 per tenant. Commissioner Miranda commented that even though tenants may not own cars, caregivers and family may need parking spaces.

Chairman Walk asked Mr. Johnson to provide the requirements for senior projects. Mr. Johnson stated that they would be utilizing the Tax Credit Program to build the project. Requirements are: 62 years of age and older; annual income range of 30-60% of the area mean income; located in urban infill locations to be able to walk to surrounding commercial properties; one elevator; ADA accessibility in all units. Mr. Johnson further stated that project funding has become very competitive especially since El Centro is no longer considered a rural area, but they are actively pursuing funding with the help of Marcela Piedra, Community Services Director.

Public hearing closed at 6:04 p.m. by Chairman Walk.

RESULT:	ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Darian Dax Chell, Vice-Chairperson
SECONDER:	Sergio A. Lopez, Commissioner
AYES:	Walk, Chell, Lopez, Gaddis, Jimenez, Miranda, Dunnam

3b. Public Hearing - Change of Zone 14-03 for Affordable Housing Land Consultants

The project proposes a change of zone from R3 (Multiple Family) to CG (General Commercial) for the southern 0.75± acres of the property located at the northeastern corner of Waterman Avenue and Cruickshank Drive (APN 064-442-001). Concurrent with the re-zone, a General Plan Amendment is being requested to amend the General Plan Land Use Map to change the land use designation from High-Medium Residential to General Commercial for consistency with the Zoning Map. A Negative Declaration has been prepared pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act and will be considered by the Planning Commission.

RESULT:	ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Darian Dax Chell, Vice-Chairperson
SECONDER:	Sergio A. Lopez, Commissioner
AYES:	Walk, Chell, Lopez, Gaddis, Jimenez, Miranda, Dunnam

3c. Public Hearing - General Plan Amendment 14-03 for Affordable Housing Land Consultants

The project proposes a change of zone from R3 (Multiple Family) to CG (General Commercial) for the southern 0.75± acres of the property located at the northeastern corner of Waterman Avenue and Cruickshank Drive (APN 064-442-001). Concurrent with the re-zone, a General Plan Amendment is being requested to amend the General Plan Land Use Map to change the land use designation from High-Medium Residential to General Commercial for consistency with the Zoning Map. A Negative Declaration has been prepared pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act and will be considered by the Planning Commission

RESULT:	ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Darian Dax Chell, Vice-Chairperson
SECONDER:	Sergio A. Lopez, Commissioner
AYES:	Walk, Chell, Lopez, Gaddis, Jimenez, Miranda, Dunnam

4. Public Hearing - Tentative Parcel Map 15-01 for Affordable Housing Land Consultants

The project proposes the subdivision of a single parcel of land in order to create two (2) parcels on property located at the northeastern corner of Waterman Avenue and Cruickshank Drive (APN 064-422-001). The project site consists of 4.08+ acres of vacant land. Both parcels will be accessible from Waterman Avenue and full municipal services are available at the project site. Pursuant to Section 15315 of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines, it has been determined that this project is exempt from formal environmental review.

RESULT:	ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Darian Dax Chell, Vice-Chairperson
SECONDER:	Marcela Miranda, Commissioner
AYES:	Walk, Chell, Lopez, Gaddis, Jimenez, Miranda, Dunnam

5. Public Hearing - Tentative Parcel Map 15-02 for Associated Desert Newspapers, Inc.

The project proposes the subdivision of a single parcel of land in order to create two (2) parcels on property located at 761 Commercial Avenue (APN

053-033-026). The project site consists of a 0.58+ acre parcel containing a parking lot and warehouse building. Both parcels will be accessible from Commercial Avenue and full municipal services are available at the project site. Pursuant to Section 15315 of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines, it has been determined that this project is exempt from formal environmental review.

RESULT: Item withdrawn from the agenda.

NON-ACTION INFORMATION ITEMS

6. Active Transportation Program Grant 2015 An Active Transportation Grant application will be submitted by the City to encourage walking and bicycling throughout the City.

Adriana Nava, Associate Planner, provided a presentation on the Active Transportation Program Grant. Ms. Nava requested public input as to the needs of the community and potential project to include in the grant application.

Various members of the cycling community gave the following suggestions as to what the City needs to improve the safety of cyclists:

- Chevron signs that legally signals motorists/cyclists to share the road and stay within 3 feet of each other
- Repair deteriorated city streets and keep them free of debris
- Bike lane lines or expand bike lanes
- Review, and integrate bike lanes signs to be guided along city
- Provide cyclists safe places to ride without the dangers of opening car doors
- Establish a coalition
- Establish a program to instruct and educate children on cycling health benefits and cycling safety
- Reach out to the cycling community for needs

Commissioner Miranda asked if the grant allows for the purchase of bike racks to install throughout the city. Adriana Nava, Associate Planner, responded that the grant does allow for the purchase of bike racks.

Commissioner Gaddis asked if sidewalks are included in the improvements because current sidewalks are not safe for pedestrian and cycling use and do not have a vegetative buffer. Adriana Nava presented the targeted improvement areas along 8th Street to be completed with funds awarded from last year's ATP grant, which includes improving sidewalks and encouraged cyclist to identify streets for bike lanes. Cyclists and staff agreed to meet to address the improvements and identification of bike lanes.

Chuck Wallace suggested a County / City collaboration to apply for funds to improve the roads between the cities for cycling. He also advised the Planning Commission to make a statement to public and City Council to promote the active lifestyle concept and its benefits to create a culture

for active transportation not only in El Centro, but in the surrounding cities of Imperial Valley. Chairman Walk added that trying to accommodate bike lanes into an already established city is a difficult task.

Commissioner Dunnam advised cyclists meet with Board of Supervisors to address their concerns on improving County roads.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No comments received.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 7:11 p.m.