



**PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES
TUESDAY, MAY 13, 2014**

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the La Quinta Planning Commission was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Chairperson Barrows.

PRESENT: Commissioners Blum, Weber, Wilkinson, Vice Chair Wright, and Chairperson Barrows

ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Planning Manager David Sawyer, Principal Engineer Ed Wimmer, Principal Planner Wally Nesbit, and Executive Assistant Monika Radeva

Vice Chair Wright led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENT

CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA - Confirmed

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion – A motion was made and seconded by Commissioners Wright/Blum to approve the Planning Commission Minutes of April 22, 2014 as submitted. AYES: Commissioners Blum, Weber, Vice Chair Wright, and Chairperson Barrows. NOES: None. ABSENT: Commissioner Wilkinson. ABSTAIN: None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Sign Application 2014-1768 submitted by Sign-A-Rama for the consideration of a sign program for an existing building located at 51-350 Desert Club Drive.

Principal Planner Wally Nesbit presented the staff report, a copy of which is on file in the Community Development Department.

Commissioner Wilkinson joined the Commission at 7:05 p.m.

Chairperson Barrows declared the PUBLIC HEARING OPEN at 7:10 p.m.

Public Speaker: Mr. William Sigurdson, Applicant and Project Manager with Sign-A-Rama, Palm Desert, CA – introduced himself and answered the Commission's questions.

Chairperson Barrows declared the PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED at 7:11 p.m.

Motion – A motion was made and seconded by Commissioners Wright/Blum to approve Sign Application 2014-1768, as submitted with staff's recommendations. Motion carried unanimously.

2. Site Development Permit 2013-932 submitted by David Prest with Prest Vuksic Architects for the consideration of architectural and landscaping plans for a 3,400 square-foot, one-story medical/general office building. Project: Parcel 2 of PM 29889 within La Quinta Professional Plaza. Location: La Quinta Professional Plaza commercial center at the southeast corner of Avenue 47 and Washington Street.

Principal Planner Wally Nesbit presented the staff report, a copy of which is on file in the Community Development Department.

Chairperson Barrows declared the PUBLIC HEARING OPEN at 7:21 p.m.

Public Speaker: Mr. John Greenwood, Architect with Prest Vuksic Architects, Palm Desert, CA – introduced himself, gave a brief overview of the project, addressed the Commission's concerns in regards to the proposed copper element on the roof of the building, the proposed plant/landscaping palette and deep irrigation. He indicated the applicant was amenable to the recommended changes by the Commission to replace the proposed Mesquite trees with a more appropriate tree type and to provide deep irrigation for all tree wells.

Chairperson Barrows declared the PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED at 7:23 p.m.

Motion – A motion was made and seconded by Commissioners Weber/Wilkinson to adopt Resolution 2014-010 approving Site Development Permit 2013-932 as submitted with staff's recommendations and the following revisions:

- Irrigation plans shall provide for an appropriately designated deep watering system for all tree wells.
- The landscape planting plan shall be revised to replace the Hybrid and Honey Mesquite trees with a suitable lower maintenance species (Desert Museum Palo Verde, Tipuana Tipu or similar).

BUSINESS SESSION – None

CORRESPONDENCE AND WRITTEN MATERIAL – None

COMMISSIONER ITEMS

1. Report on City Council meeting of May 6, 2014.

DIRECTOR'S ITEMS – None

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, it was moved and seconded by Commissioners Wright/Wilkinson to adjourn this meeting at 7:26 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Monika Radeva', is written over the typed name.

MONIKA RADEVA, Executive Assistant
City of La Quinta, California



**PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES
TUESDAY, JUNE 10, 2014**

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the La Quinta Planning Commission was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairperson Barrows.

PRESENT: Commissioners Blum, Weber, Wilkinson, Vice Chair Wright, and Chairperson Barrows

ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Community Development Director Les Johnson, Planning Manager David Sawyer, Principal Engineer Ed Wimmer, Attorney Peter Howell with Rutan and Tucker, LLP, Consultant Principal Planner Nicole Criste, Associate Planner Jay Wu, Executive Assistant Monika Radeva, and Office Assistant Beatrice Acosta

Commissioner Wilkinson led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Weber joined the Commission at 7:02 p.m. after the Approval of Minutes.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Public Speaker: Ms. Andrea Spirtos, Investment Advisory Board Member, La Quinta, CA – introduced herself and thanked Chairperson Barrows and Commissioner Weber for their loyal service on the La Quinta Planning Commission over the years.

CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA - Confirmed

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion – A motion was made and seconded by Commissioners Wright/Blum to approve the Planning Commission Minutes of May 13, 2014 as submitted. AYES: Commissioners Blum, Wilkinson, Vice Chair Wright, and Chairperson Barrows. NOES: None. ABSENT: Commissioner Weber. ABSTAIN: None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Environmental Assessment 2013-633, Specific Plan 2006-081, Amendment 1, and Site Development Permit 2013-937 submitted by West Coast Housing Partners LLC for the consideration of a specific plan amendment and a site development permit to allow construction of 74 single-family homes on 28.3 acres. Project: Canyon Ridge. CEQA: reviewed under Environmental Assessment 2006-579; no changed circumstances or conditions are proposed which would trigger the preparation of subsequent environmental analysis pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21166. Location: west side of Washington Street, north of Avenue 48 (extended).

Consultant Principal Planner Nicole Criste presented the staff report, a copy of which is on file in the Community Development Department.

Discussion followed regarding environmental review conducted in reference to the stability of the required retaining wall along the western edge of the site and the protection it would provide from any possible rocks falling; the proposed street accesses for the project from Washington Street and Avenue 48, the threshold for street improvement requirements, drainage, landscape lighting, light fixtures, and noise levels.

Chairperson Barrows declared the PUBLIC HEARING OPEN at 7:31 p.m.

Public Speaker: Mr. Whit Hollis, Applicant with West Coast Housing Partners, LLC., Westlake Village, CA – introduced himself, gave a presentation of the proposed project, including details regarding the retention wall and requested that the trees identified in condition of approval 3-A be removed from the proposed wall's landscaping palette due to erosion concerns and the word "wall" in same condition be replaced with the word "system" which would give staff and the applicant flexibility in designing the wall. He said the applicant had also inherited and existing agreement with the church located to the north of the property which was entered into by the previous owner, and both the applicant and the church were working together on ensuring the agreement was complied with. He also answered the Commission's questions in regards to the project's access along Washington Street, and other general questions.

Public Speaker: Mr. Chris Bergh, Project Engineer with MDS Consulting, Palm Desert, CA – introduced himself and stated that the proposed street improvement plans do include a deceleration lane on Washington Street. He noted that the stacking distance from Washington Street to the main entry gate of the project is approximately 200 feet which would provide stacking of eight-to-nine cars.

Public Speaker: Ms. Faye Pokletar, Landscape Architect with C2 Collaborative, San Clemente, CA – introduced herself and answered the Commission’s questions in regards to the proposed landscaping palette and number of trees along Washington Street.

Public Speaker: Mr. Tom Ward, La Quinta Resident and Construction Coordinator for St. Francis of Assisi, CA – introduced himself, advised the Commission that the church was very supportive of the proposed development and was involved in negotiations with the applicant. He expressed concerns regarding egress and ingress for church patrons exiting the property southbound and noted that he has been in communications with West Coast Housing, as well as with staff from both the Public Works and the Community Development Departments who are all actively working on getting these concerns addressed and resolved before the project is presented to City Council for review and consideration.

Chairperson Barrows declared the PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED at 7:50 p.m.

Motion – A motion was made and seconded by Commissioners Blum/Wilkinson to adopt Resolution 2014-011 recommending to the City Council approval of Specific Plan 2006-081, Amendment 1, as submitted with staff’s recommendations and amending Condition of Approval No. 3-A to read:

“ 3-A. The retaining system along the west border of the property shall be redesigned and approved by the City Engineer and Community Development Department. Said retaining system shall incorporate a tiered design where any portion of the vertical face of the wall that is greater than eight (8) feet in height is stepped back a minimum of six (6) feet. The resulting step-back area(s) shall not exceed a maximum slope of 3:1 and shall be landscaped with a variety of cascading vines and large shrubs in order to soften the overall mass of the walls.”

Motion carried unanimously.

Motion – A motion was made and seconded by Commissioners Blum/Wilkinson to adopt Resolution 2014-012 recommending to the City Council approval of Site Development Permit 2013-937, as submitted with staff’s recommendations and amending Condition of Approval No. 55 to read:

“ 55. The retaining system along the west border of the property shall be redesigned and approved by the City Engineer and Community Development Department. Said retaining system shall incorporate a tiered design where any portion of the vertical face of the wall that is greater than eight (8) feet in height is stepped back a minimum of six (6) feet.

The resulting step-back area(s) shall not exceed a maximum slope of 3:1 and shall be landscaped with a variety of cascading vines and large shrubs in order to soften the overall mass of the walls."

Motion carried unanimously.

2. Environmental Assessment 2014-636 and Amended Final Map 32742 submitted by Monterra Properties, LLC proposing to reconfigure the recorded map in order to relocate the primary access for a 14-acre tract consisting of 40 single-family residential lots from Monroe Street to Brown Deer Park. Project: Monterra (TR 32742). CEQA: the Community Development Department has prepared an Addendum to Environmental Assessment 2004-515 certified by the City Council on October 5, 2004 for Tentative Tract Map 32742. Location: east side of Monroe Street, between Avenue 54 and Airport Boulevard.

Associate Planner Jay Wu presented the staff report, a copy of which is on file in the Community Development Department.

Staff stated that the applicant submitted a revised map after the staff report for this public hearing was prepared and distributed. The Memorandum dated June 10, 2014 prepared by Community Development Director Johnson and distributed to the Commissioners before the Planning Commission meeting identified the most current revisions to the Amended Final Map 32742. Due to the inadequate amount of time for staff review, staff recommends that this item be continued to the next regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting of June 24, 2014. Staff suggested that the public hearing be opened to give an opportunity to public to comment on the item.

Chairperson Barrows declared the PUBLIC HEARING OPEN at 8:00 p.m.

Public Speaker: Ms. Emily Hempmill, Council for Monterra Properties, LLC, Palm Desert, CA – introduced herself, gave a brief overview of the project, noted that the applicant has been in negotiations with the adjacent PGA West development to allow residents from Monterra to purchase golf memberships from PGA West. She stated the applicant has also discussed with the PGA West Master Association and the Fairways Homeowners Association moving the access from Monroe Street to Brown Deer Park Road to make the new residents feel part of the existing community. She noted that after the proposed map was distributed, residents' comments expressed a concern regarding the omission of any access along Monroe Street, and thus, the applicant revised map to address these concerns by still relocating the main entry access to Brown Deer Park Road, but leaving an exit-only access along Monroe Street which will also serve as the construction gate during the build-out of the project.

Public Speaker: Jonathan Shapiro, PGA West Resident, La Quinta, CA – introduced himself, said the developer and the associations had been in communications with the existing residents and he was supportive of the project if it included the exit access point on Monroe Street as it would alleviate some of the traffic that would no longer have to go through Turnberry Street.

Public Speaker: Mr. Jerry McDonald, Representative of the Board of Directors and Manager of the Fairways Association, La Quinta, CA – introduced himself, said the applicant had been in constant communication with the Association during the process of revising the map. He said both the Association and the residents were supportive of the project with the exit-only access along Monroe Street.

Motion – A motion was made and seconded by Commissioners Blum/Wright to continue Environmental Assessment 2014-636 and Amended Final Map 32742 to the next regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting of June 24, 2014. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Site Development Permit 2014-940 submitted by GHA Companies for the consideration of architectural and landscaping plans for Tract 31087, a 5.0-acre tract consisting of 19 single-family residential lots approved in 2004. Project: Darby Estates. CEQA: previously reviewed under Environmental Assessment 2003-480 prepared for Tentative Tract Map 31087, and approved on August 17, 2004; no changed circumstances or conditions are proposed which would trigger the preparation of subsequent environmental analysis pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21166. Location: Darby Road; east of Palm Royale Drive.

Associate Planner Jay Wu presented the staff report, a copy of which is on file in the Community Development Department.

Chairperson Barrows declared the PUBLIC HEARING OPEN at 8:21 p.m.

Public Speaker: Mr. Mario Gonzales, Project Manager with GHA Companies, Cathedral City, CA – introduced himself, gave an overview of the project, and answered the Commission's questions.

Chairperson Barrows declared the PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED at 8:28 p.m.

Motion – A motion was made and seconded by Commissioners Wright/Wilkinson to adopt Resolution 2014-013 approving Site Development Permit 2014-940 as submitted with staff's recommendations and amending Condition of Approval No. 53 to read as follow:

“A pedestrian pathway or wider driveway shall be offered to homeowners that provides direct access from the street to the front door areas of the homes. These pathways or wider driveways shall be reviewed and approved by the Community Development Department as part of the Final Landscaping Plan process.”

Motion passed unanimously.

BUSINESS SESSION

1. Consideration of the Architectural and Landscaping Review Board’s request of the Planning Commission to direct staff to amend the La Quinta Municipal Code to require additional pedestrian access be provided from the street to the entrance of individual residential units.

Planning Manager Sawyer presented the staff report, a copy of which is on file in the Community Development Department.

Public Speaker: Ms. Tina Burtel, La Quinta Cove Resident – introduced herself and spoke against having a direct pedestrian pathway from the street to the entrance of the residence as a mandatory requirement.

General discussion followed regarding the pros and cons if such a requirement was made mandatory through the La Quinta Municipal Code including aesthetics, drainage impacts, additional hardscape, etc.

Staff will research the issue and will report back its findings and recommendations to the Commission in August of 2014.

CORRESPONDENCE AND WRITTEN MATERIAL – None

COMMISSIONER ITEMS

1. Discussion of the Commission’s Summer Schedule.

The Commission will be go dark the first meeting in August, 2014.

2. Report on City Council meetings of May 20 and June 3, 2014.

DIRECTOR’S ITEMS – None

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, it was moved and seconded by Commissioners Blum/Wright to adjourn this meeting at 9:11 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Monika Radeva', written in a cursive style.

MONIKA RADEVA, Executive Assistant
City of La Quinta, California

