

MINUTES  
ARCHITECTURE & LANDSCAPING REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING

A regular meeting held at the La Quinta City Hall  
78-495 Calle Tampico, La Quinta, CA

July 1, 2009

10:00 a.m.

I. CALL TO ORDER

- A. This regular meeting of the Architecture and Landscaping Review Committee was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Planning Manager David Sawyer who led the Committee in the flag salute.
- B. Committee Members Present: Jason Arnold, Ray Rooker, and David Thoms
- C. Staff present: Planning Director Les Johnson, Planning Manager David Sawyer, Associate Planner Jay Wu, and Secretary Monika Radeva.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT: None

III. CONFIRMATION OF THE AGENDA: Confirmed

IV. CONSENT CALENDAR:

Staff asked if there were any changes to the Minutes of April 1, 2009. It was moved and seconded by Committee Members Rooker/Arnold to approve the minutes as submitted. Unanimously approved (Committee Member Thoms was unable to vote on this since his appointment was effective July 1, 2009)

V. BUSINESS ITEMS:

- A. Site Development Permit 2009-912 a request submitted by Nadador, LLC. for consideration of Architectural and Landscaping Plans for an Approximately 300 Square Foot Guardhouse located at 54-500 West Residence Club Drive; East Side of PGA Boulevard, South of Avenue 54.

Associate Planner Jay Wu presented the information contained in the staff report, a copy of which is on file in the Planning Department.

Committee Member Rooker said he found the project to be delightful and he thought it was perfectly scaled and proportioned to the rest of the facilities. He asked what differentiation would be in place for vendors, guests, and residents.

Mr. Frank Cahill, P.E., with RCE Consultants, 7595 Irvine Center Drive, Irvine, CA 92618, replied there were several layouts for the site identifying separate driveways for residents and visitors. He explained the Fire Department required twenty-foot drive aisles for emergency vehicles which reduced the available space on the site for additional aisles. In order to blend in the aisle requirements with the architectural components, it was decided to introduce a simpler site plan with one twenty-foot aisle in and another twenty-foot aisle out that would be shared by visitors and residents.

Associate Planner Wu said the original site plans submitted by the applicant had identified two drive-in aisles, which did not meet the engineering standards for turning movements for trucks, thus the plans had to be revised to a one drive-in aisle in order to be in compliance.

Committee Member Rooker said the plans showed the Carolina Cherry Shrub being placed up against the wall in a hedge form. He asked why the palm tree boxes identified on the site plans were 24-inches in size which he found to be too big.

Christine Kiener, Director of Sales and Marketing with The Residence Club at PGA West, 54-500 West Residence Club Drive, La Quinta, CA 92253, replied the large size tree boxes were chosen in an attempt to try to blend in the new landscaping with the existing mature landscaping on the site.

Committee Member Arnold commented on the nice architecture and he said he found the project to be very compatible and beautiful.

Committee Member Thoms said he had driven by the site and thought that it definitely needed to be improved as it was not inviting at all in its current condition. He inquired about the water urns identified on the site plans.

Diana Corleone, with South Coast Architects, Inc., 13 Corporate Plaza, Suite # 210, Newport Beach, CA 92660, replied the water urns identified released a minimal amount of water which was

recycled. Committee Member Thoms commented that, in the current political environment with its emphasis on green projects, the introduction of water features might not be favorable.

Committee Member Thoms said he would like to ensure that the existing palm trees remain as they are and he suggested lighting the trunks of at least some if not all of the palm trees. He did not see the need for any additional palm trees.

Committee Member Thoms complimented the architectural design of the guardhouse and he said it would be a very nice addition to the development.

Committee Member Rooker asked of Committee Member Thoms' to clarify that he would like to see the 12 proposed new palm trees eliminated. Committee Member Thoms said he did not find it necessary for new Date Palms to be introduced as there were a sufficient number of existing Washingtonia Robustas not only by the proposed guardhouse, but throughout of the development as well.

Ms. Kiener pointed to page T-3 of the site plans showing that the existing palms would remain as they were. Ms. Corleone added that the existing palms were already lit.

Planning Manager Sawyer clarified that there was a discrepancy between the proposed plans and the applicant's explanation regarding the existing trees. He noted the proposed plans showed the six proposed Date Palms on either side of the guardhouse, but the existing Washingtonia Robustas were not identified at all, the plans showed shrubs instead.

Ms. Corleone said the existing palms would not be removed.

Planning Manager Sawyer said the proposed plans needed to be modified to reflect the final outcome of the project with the existing palm trees as well as with what was being proposed.

Committee Member Rooker said that, based on the proposed site plan, it would seem like some of the existing palms would have to be removed to make space for the new Date Palms.

Planning Director Johnson said the applicant had said that T-3 showed both, the existing Washingtonia Robustas, as well as the 12 new proposed Date Palms. He pointed out that the existing Washingtonias were actually in conflict with the identified shrubs on the plans. He said the Committee needed to understand what the final product would be, as proposed, in order to be able to make an accurate recommendation to the Planning Commission.

Planning Manager Sawyer clarified that the site plans would be as proposed on page 5 with the addition of the existing Washingtonias; thus, the plans would have to be revised before the case was presented to the Planning Commission.

Committee Member Thoms said his comment was that the existing Washingtonias should remain as they were. He noted the palms were rather tall and to introduce new Washingtonias, it would be impossible to match the height and they would look funny next to the already existing palms. Committee Member Arnold pointed out that the palms proposed, six on either side of the guardhouse, were Date Palms and not Washingtonia Robustas. Committee Member Thoms said the use of Date Palms would not be appropriate because there were none in the development.

Planning Director Johnson said there were some existing Date Palms by the Clubhouse. He explained the idea with the use of the proposed Date Palms was not only to compliment the entrance and the guardhouse, but also the existing Date Palms located right at the main clubhouse entrance.

Committee Member Thoms commented that the clubhouse was nowhere in sight from the proposed guardhouse. Planning Director Johnson pointed to the location of the clubhouse on photos submitted as exhibits to the staff report.

Committee Member Thoms emphasized that his recommendation was not to add any palm trees to the site as there were plenty of existing ones.

Committee Member Rooker said he disagreed with Committee Member Thoms' comments. He found the existing Washingtonia palms were irregular and he liked the idea of introducing something different at the entrance to accentuate it. He explained he liked the smaller size of the Date Palms and the formality of having two

groups of six on either side. He noted if the existing Washingtonia palms were in the way, an ecological way of handling them would be to relocate them somewhere else within the development. He said he liked the project as proposed.

Committee Member Thoms recommended approval of Site Development Permit 2009-912 without the introduction of additional Date Palms or water features. The motion failed due to the lack of a second.

Commissioner Thoms asked to clarify if all of the Washingtonia palm trees on the guardhouse site would be removed. Committee Member Arnold explained that, even though, it was not shown on the plans, the Washingtonia palm trees were located off of the guardhouse site up on a crest and out of the way of the proposed twelve Date Palms which were in the drive-in area below; thus, the Committee was requesting that the applicant submit accurate site plans before the case was presented to the Planning Commission.

Discussion followed regarding the difference in size and appearance between Washingtonia Robusta and Date Palm trees.

Committee Member Thoms stated if the Washingtonia Robustas in question were in fact located behind the wall of the development and out of the way of the proposed guardhouse site, he would be in favor of the project as submitted. However, if that was not the case, he found the introduction of the proposed Date Palms unnecessary as it exchanged one tree for another.

Planning Manager Sawyer said the motion included a request for clarification on the site plan. He said staff would work with the applicant to determine the accurate location of the palm trees and the Committee's comments would be forwarded to the Planning Commission accordingly.

Committee Member Thoms asked what would be the appropriate way to address the introduction of the water features. Planning Manager Sawyer said the discussion was between the Committee Members.

Committee Member Arnold explained the motion on the floor was recommending approval of the project as submitted with the

proposed water features as long as the applicant was in compliance with the CVWD requirements.

Planning Director Johnson said the City's water ordinance included CVWD's provisions and further set forth additional water feature standards.

Committee Member Thoms commented that he still found the introduction of water features to be a political issue, but if it was in compliance with the City's water ordinance and CVWD's requirements he would be supportive of it.

It was then moved and seconded by Committee Members Rooker/Arnold to adopt Minute Motion 2009-006, recommending approval of Site Development Permit 2008-912 as submitted, with recommendations to provide an updated site plan accurately reflecting the final result of the project and to relocate any Washingtonia palm trees, that may have to be removed, elsewhere on the property. Unanimously approved.

VI. CORRESPONDENCE AND WRITTEN MATERIAL: None

VII. COMMITTEE MEMBER ITEMS:

A. Discussion of Attendance Requirements

Planning Manager Sawyer explained the attendance requirements for the Architectural and Landscaping Review Committee, including the number of allowable absences per year, and the protocol for requesting an excused absence in advance by the City Council.

Planning Director Johnson said if the Committee Member knew in advance that their schedule was in conflict with a meeting date, staff would encourage them to submit a written request for an excused absence to the City Council. However, if the absence is due to an illness or an emergency, the request could be submitted after the fact. He explained all members of all Boards, Commissions and Committees were allowed two absences per fiscal year. Any additional absence after that would be grounds for automatic removal from their appointed position.

Planning Manager Sawyer said staff would give the Committee quarterly attendance updates to help the Committee Members keep track.

Committee Member Arnold asked if there was a schedule available that would identify the dates for all meetings that he would have to attend. Planning Director Johnson said the only meeting the Committee Members were required to attend was the one scheduled for the first Wednesday of every month. He explained that any additional special meeting that might come up would require staff to contact each Committee Member individually to ensure that everyone could attend, otherwise, the meeting would not go forward.

Committee Member Arnold asked about the Joint Meeting with the Planning Commission and the City Council. Planning Director Johnson explained those meetings were not counted into the attendance tracking as they were optional. However, he said, staff encouraged the Committee Members to attend the meetings, if they could, because that was their opportunity to communicate directly with the Council.

General discussion followed regarding the Planning Commission and City Council dark meeting dates and the scheduling of the joint meetings.

#### VIII. PLANNING STAFF ITEMS:

##### A. Planning Commissioner Update

Planning Manager Sawyer gave an update on the Planning Commission action on SDP 2008-905 and CUP 2008-112 for the Express Car Wash, and an update on FLP 2008-045 for CVS Pharmacy.

Committee Member Thoms asked if the ALRC reviewed any projects handled by the Public Works Department. Planning Director Johnson said the Committee did not.

B. Discussion Regarding Summer Meeting

Planning Manager Sawyer asked the Committee if they would like to decide on a date to go dark. Discussion followed and the Committee agreed it would not go dark.

Planning Director Johnson said staff had some tentatively scheduled items possibly for the next regularly scheduled meeting on August 5, 2009.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, it was moved and seconded by Committee Members Rooker/Arnold to adjourn this meeting of the Architecture and Landscaping Review Committee to a Regular Meeting to be held on August 5, 2009. This meeting was adjourned at 11:49 a.m. on July 1, 2009.

Respectfully submitted,



MONIKA RADEVA  
Secretary