



PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

May 3, 2001

West Hollywood Park Auditorium, 647 N. San Vicente Boulevard, West Hollywood, California 90069

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair DeLuccio called the meeting of the Planning Commission to order at 6:30 PM.

A. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Pro Tempore Sal Guarriello.

B. Roll Call

Commissioners Present:

John Altschul, David Behr, Brad Crowe, Donald DeLuccio, Barbara Hewitt, and Brad Torgan

Commissioners Absent:

None.

Staff Present:

John Jalili, Interim Community Development Director, Hassan Haghani, Acting Planning Manager; Christi Hogin, Assistant City Attorney; John Chase, Urban Designer, John Keho, Senior Planner; Liz BarEl, Associate Planner; Jack McGee, Contract Planner and Jennifer Diaz, Administrative Staff Assistant.

C. Approval of Agenda

Action: Approve the Agenda as presented.

Motion: Altschul Second: Hewitt

Vote: All Ayes

Motion passes

D. Posting of Agenda

This agenda was posted at City Hall, the Community Development Department counter, West Hollywood Library on San Vicente Boulevard, Plummer Park, and the West Hollywood Sheriff's station.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

A. Katherine Thulin, West Hollywood, spoke on item 7.C. and the number of extensions of the jumbo tron. She also reported that the construction worker's park on the street and the residents are unable to find parking.

B. Lauren Meister, West Hollywood, spoke on the variance approved for the Center for Early Education and questioned the legalities of the circumstances for the approval. Believes that Commissioner Hewitt has a conflict of interest.

3. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Altschul - Reminded the Commissioners and staff of the CSW parade and would like the Commission to participate again this year.

DeLuccio - Agreed with Commissioner Altschul in participating in the parade.

4. CONSENT CALENDAR

- A. Conditional Use Permit 00-21, Development Permit 00-61, and 00-19, Variance 00-61 (Amend approved permits):** Reduce approved parking for new building including auditorium and classrooms to provide 50 additional spaces rather than 100.

Applicant: Center for Early Education

Location: 563 N. Alfred Street

Planner: Liz Bar-EI

Recommendation: Approve the revised resolution as approved at the hearing held on April 19, 2001.

Commissioner Altschul, who was not present on April 19, 2001, recused himself from the hearing.

Liz Bar-EI recited the amendments to the resolution approved at the April 19th, 2001 meeting to include: 1) the addition of section 3-2 which includes the fees for the mitigated declaration, 2) section 4-2 was amended to read "outside of school hours", 3) section 4-4 was amended by including the word feasible, 4) section 5-1 was amended to request a full current enrollment of 475 students, 5) attachment A was amended to correspond with all the amendments.

Action: Move to approve the resolution.

Motion: Torgan Second: Hewitt

Votes: Ayes: Torgan, Hewitt, DeLuccio

Nayes: Crowe, Behr

Motion passes.

The appeal process was explained.

Commissioner comments:

Behr - Believes that the variance should not have been given and the Commission should approve a variance as a last resort.

Crowe - Stated that other options were not explored and the Commission acted hastily. He also believes that grounds exist for reconsideration although it will prolong the project.

Torgan - Stated that it is unfair to change the rules on the applicant and make them file a new application. If an appeal is filed, it will take less time to go through the appeal process than to have the applicant file a new application.

Several Commissioners made other comments and staff and the Assistant City Attorney answered questions regarding the approval, appeal and reconsideration processes.

Action: Reconsider the approval and explore a parking reduction.

Motion: DeLuccio Second: Behr

Discussion followed regarding the process and ramifications of the Commission reconsidering its decision.

Motion and Second withdrawn.

5. EXCLUDED CONSENT CALENDAR

None.

6. COMMISSION CONSIDERATION

A. Creative Sign Permit 2001-01: Four wall signs and one blade sign.

Applicant: Allen Ravert

Location: 9040 Sunset Boulevard (Senoritas on Sunset)

Planner: John Chase

Recommendation: Conditionally approve the request subject to the findings and conditions in the proposed resolution.

John Chase presented the staff report.

Robert Mechielsen, Topanga architect, presented the applicant's report.

Action: Approve the resolution as presented.

Motion: DeLuccio Second: Altschul

Votes: All Ayes

Motion passes

7. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. Development Permit 2000-10, Demolition Permit 2000-04, Conditional Use Permit 2000-05, and Tentative Tract Map 2000-02

Applicant: Jacques Mashih

Location: 849 West Knoll Drive

Planner: Emmeline Elzin

Recommendation: Continue to June 7, 2001.

Continued to June 7, 2001.

B. Gateway Project: Demolish all existing buildings, except Formosa Café and the existing Gas Company facility, and build Phase one of a two-phased new commercial complex. Phase 1 will consist of approximately 337,232 square feet of

retail, office, and restaurant uses along Santa Monica Boulevard and La Brea Avenue. Phase 2 would be contingent upon successful relocation of a Gas Company facility to a suitable site and would consist of approximately 70,000 square feet of sound stages to replace the current gas company facility in the corner of Formosa and Romaine. The proposal includes changing the Zoning designation of the site from a mix of C2C and C3 to C4 and adjusts the General Plan designation to correspond with the proposed new zoning designation. It is also proposed to change the General Plan and Zoning texts to allow the inclusion of a large video screen (i.e. "electronic billboard") in the project. Currently, off-site advertising is only allowed on Sunset Boulevard and only four such video billboards are allowed on Sunset Boulevard, but none is allowed anywhere else in West Hollywood. The applicant is also requesting that the City waive or reduce the Transportation, Public Open Space, and Parking In-lieu Fees. An addendum to the Final Environmental Impact Report has been prepared and will be considered for recommendation for adoption.

Applicant: J. H. Snyder

Location: 7100 Santa Monica Blvd.

Planner: Hassan Haghani

Recommendation: Continue to a date uncertain.

Continued to a date uncertain.

- C. Development Permit 97-20 and Creative Sign Permit 97-09:** A four month extension to allow the continued operation of the large screen video prior to the occupancy of the residential phase of the project.

Applicant: Joseph Shooshani

Location: 8410 Sunset Boulevard

Planner: John Keho

Recommendation: Continue to June 7, 2001.

Continued to June 7, 2001.

- D. Variance 2001-03 and Billboard Permit 2001-21:** Variance to allow a replacement billboard that is taller than the original billboard at this location; and a proposal to convert an existing single-face billboard to a double-face billboard.

Applicant: Melvin Genser Outdoor Advertising

Location: 8300 Sunset Boulevard

Planner: Jack McGee

Recommendation: Conditionally approve the request subject to the findings and conditions in the proposed resolution.

Jack McGee presented the staff report.

Amanda Susskind, Los Angeles, presented the applicant's report.

Public Comment:

1. Hillary Selvin, Los Angeles, on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce and in support of the variance requested by Melvin Genser Advertising.

2. Jerrie Heslov, West Hollywood, spoke in support of the variance.
3. Jack Wishard, Los Angeles, submitted a letter of support and appeared in support of the compromise. He hopes that if there are any problems that Melvin Genser will work with them to solve. Thanked the Commission for their support and urged the Commission to approve the variance.

Amanda Susskind presented a rebuttal.

Action: Move to close the public hearing

Motion: Altschul Second: DeLuccio

Votes: All Ayes.

Action: Move approval of the resolution with by adding the following amendments: 1) No movement or rotation mechanism in the sign or in the pole supporting the sign, 2) Review at Director's level in six months with respect to lighting only, and 3) within the variance itself to eliminate any reference of street trees along Sunset Boulevard along the right of way.

Motion: Crowe Second: Torgan

Votes: All Ayes

Motion passes

Straw Vote on a single Review at Director's level in six months on lighting only.

Votes: Ayes: Altschul, Crowe, Hewitt, Behr, Deluccio

Nays: Torgan

8. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

9. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Torgan - Congregation Kol Ami will honor John Altschul as one of the Men of the Year.

Behr - Congratulated John Altschul.

Crowe - Congratulated John Altschul

Altschul - Former Commissioner Jeff Lambert is President of the California Chapter of the APA.

DeLuccio - Congratulated John Altschul

10. ITEMS FROM STAFF

Hassan Haghani - Announced that the American Institute of Architecture will present a National award for urban design for the Santa Monica Boulevard Master Plan and John Chase is the recipient of the prestigious Pen award for his book, Glitter Stucco and Dumpster Diving.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Action: To adjourn to the next regular meeting of the Planning Commission on Thursday, May 17, 2001, at the West Hollywood Park Auditorium, 647 N. San Vicente Boulevard.

Motion: Crowe Second: Behr
Motion carried by consensus of the Commission.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED THIS DAY OF 6-21, 2001.

CHAIRPERSON: Donald M. DeLuccio

ATTEST:
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR: John Jubeli