

MINUTES

ADJOURNED

JOINT CITY COUNCIL

AND

PLANNING COMMISSION

MEETING

FEBRUARY 25, 2004

An adjourned meeting of the City Council and Planning Commission of the City Council of the City of Rolling Hills Estates was called to order at 7:40 a.m. at City Council Chambers, 4045 Palos Verdes Drive North, by MAYOR MITCHELL

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Addleman, Mitchell, Seamans*, Zerunyan, Zuckerman

*COUNCILWOMAN SEAMANS arrived at 8:00 a.m.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Bayer, Conway, O'Day, Rein, Vanden Bos

COMMISSIONER ABSENT: Somers

CITY STAFF PRESENT: Doug Prichard, City Manager

David Wahba, Planning Director

PUBLIC COMMENT

NONE

BUSINESS ITEMS

A. DISCUSSION WITH RESPECT TO 627 DEEP VALLEY DRIVE (FORMERLY KNOWN AS PENINSULA CARWASH)

Planning Director Wahba introduced the proposed plans.

Bruce Soroudi, Owner, 627 Deep Valley Drive, commented that it was his desire to turn his site into a mixed-use project. He indicated the amount of square footage necessary to make the project financially feasible will determine the final number of residential units. He noted that Jan Van Tilburg has created a large courtyard which includes a significant amount of open space, along with a podium to break up the mass in between the two buildings.

Mr. Van Tilburg described the preliminary rendering noting that this plan is proposed to be up to 60 feet high which would be compatible with the slope behind the buildings, the height of both buildings next to the carwash; and the height of the mall. It was noted that the surrounding buildings are up to 72 feet high.

COUNCILMAN ZUCKERMAN noted his concern with respect to the building as the proposal shows it looming over the street and adjacent office buildings to the east. He suggested reducing the density.

MAYOR PRO TEM ADDLEMAN inquired as to the stability of the slope if the project is moved back.

Mr. Soroudi indicated that it is not his intent to build on the slope as it would be cost-prohibitive,

particularly since there have prior problems associated with other nearby sites.

COUNCILMAN ZUCKERMAN then suggested reducing the project by at least 5-10%. Mr. Soroudi noted he would be willing to consider that suggestion.

COUNCILMAN ZUCKERMAN stated his concern is primarily the transition from one building to the next. In general, he believed this to be a good plan and would be a valuable addition to Deep Valley Drive.

Mr. Soroudi then indicated that, if the building were to go above four stories, it would increase the cost of construction significantly.

Discussion ensued regarding the massiveness of the buildings with Commissioner Vanden Bos questioning the east elevation.

In response to moving the building back from the street, Mr. Soroudi noted he would consider that as well, but the courtyard would need to be reduced or eliminated. Additionally, he stated that he would attempt to create a section of open space forcing the buildings back on either side. He noted he could design a "step back" building, and if the retail element was not in place, the height could drop.

COUNCILMAN ZUCKERMAN commented that he would rather see a building compatible with surrounding properties rather than require retail, and perhaps it would be worth exploring in order to maintain the courtyard.

COUNCILMAN ZERUNYAN noted he is more concerned about the mass above the street. He stated that one of the advantages the Applicant has, at this point, is being one of the first projects to incorporate the City's vision. He noted that the process still needs to be worked out.

Discussion ensued regarding the recommendation to direct staff to work with the Applicant in an effort to determine what the final residential density will be to move this project forward.

COUNCILMAN ZUCKERMAN then noted that parking on the bottom level should be eliminated. Mr. Soroudi concurred with this suggestion.

Commissioner O'Day commented that there seems to be conflicting discussions with regards to requiring more or less retail which seems to depend on the applicant.

COUNCILMAN ZUCKERMAN noted that the City does not need more retail, just good retail in order for it to succeed.

COUNCILWOMAN SEAMANS stated this project is one piece of the overall plan and that existing retail will change over time.

COUNCILMAN ZUCKERMAN noted that continuity of retail along Deep Valley Drive opens up many opportunities and provides an incentive for the developer.

Mr. Soroudi then indicated that he has many developments throughout Southern California and was familiar with these types of projects. Additionally, he noted that pedestrian-friendly retail will be successful once the City's vision is established and referred to other larger projects in Santa Monica and Pasadena. He went on to state that he would like the COUNCIL to understand that there are limitations as to what he can do.

Commissioner Conway requested clarification regarding the podium concept. He then noted that the Applicant should make it a priority to eliminate the lower level of parking.

Commissioner Rein commented that he was optimistic about the concept and design. He noted that the City does not have a tool at this time with which to address these issues. Additionally, he suggested softening the front of the building and reviewing this at the next committee meeting.

Mr. Soroudi indicated that these buildings will be condominiums.

It was the consensus of the COUNCIL and Commission that the courtyard concept was acceptable.

Mr. Van Tilburg inquired as to what type of retail is envisioned for this site.

Commissioner Bayer believed it would be up to the architect to submit a design plan. She noted that it was her preference to provide direction rather than design the project as the Applicant should formulate a plan addressing the City's concerns.

Mr. Soroudi requested additional direction for the next step.

Discussion ensued with the following recommendations: 1) Have the Applicant remedy the City's concerns and come back with a revised plan at another joint meeting; or 2) Move forward with the original application.

In addition, Planning Director Wahba noted that an initial study needs to be conducted for this project.

Mr. Soroudi reiterated that time is of the essence. He indicated he would revise the plan and submit an application immediately.

After further discussion, it was the consensus of the COUNCIL and Planning Commission to direct the Applicant to revise and submit an application for review and recommendation by the Mixed Use Subcommittee.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 a.m. to a special joint meeting of the City Council and Planning Commission on Wednesday, February 25, 2004 at 9:00 a.m. at the Norris Pavilion, 501 Indian Peak Road, for the purpose of discussing the proposed Mixed Use Master Plan.

Respectfully submitted, Approved,

Hope J. Nolan Douglas R. Prichard

Deputy City Clerk City Clerk