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**TORRANCE PLANNING COMMISSION – JUNE 17, 2015**

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At 8:42 p.m., the meeting was adjourned to Wednesday, July 15, 2015 at 7:00 p.m.

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF  
THE TORRANCE PLANNING COMMISSION**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Torrance Planning Commission convened in a regular session at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, June 17, 2015, in City Council Chambers at Torrance City Hall.

**2. SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Tsao.

**3. ROLL CALL/ MOTIONS FOR EXCUSED ABSENCE**

Present: Commissioners D'anjou, Gibson, Herring, Skoll, Tsao, Watson and Chairperson Polcari.

Absent: None.

Also Present: Planning Manager Lodan, Sr. Planning Associate Santana, Associate Civil Engineer Symons, Plans Examiner Noh, and Assistant City Attorney Sullivan.

**4. POSTING OF THE AGENDA**

Planning Manager Lodan reported that the agenda was posted on the Public Notice Board at 3031 Torrance Boulevard on Thursday, June 11, 2015.

**5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – None.**

**6. REQUESTS FOR POSTPONEMENTS**

Planning Manager Lodan relayed the applicant's request to continue Agenda Item 12C, CUP15-00007, ZON15-00001, DIV15-00003: Michael Roth, to July 15, 2015.

**MOTION:** Commissioner D'anjou moved to continue Agenda Item 12C to July 15, 2015. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tsao and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Chairperson Polcari announced that the hearing will not be re-advertised because it was continued to a date certain.

**7. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #1 – None.**

\*

Chairperson Polcari reviewed the policies and procedures of the Planning Commission, including the right to appeal decisions to the City Council.

**8. TIME EXTENSIONS- None.**

**9. SIGN HEARINGS- None.**

**10. CONTINUED HEARINGS**

**10A. CUP15-00009, ZON15-00002, DIV15-00004, WAV15-00006: ANASTASI DEVELOPMENT (WILLIAM GARRETT)**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Conditional Use Permit to allow a 16-unit residential condominium development, in conjunction with a Zone Change from C-5 (Conditional Commercial District) to RP (Residential Professional District), a Tentative Tract Map to consolidate the existing parcels and for condominium purposes, and a Waiver of the RP Zone height limit, on properties located in the C-5 Zone at 23625-23649 Arlington Avenue. This project is Categorically Exempt from CEQA per Guidelines Sections 15332 – In-Fill Development, and Final Environmental Impact Report State Clearinghouse No. 2008111046 – 2009 Torrance General Plan Update.

**Recommendation:** Approval.

Sr. Planning Associate Santana introduced the request.

Commissioner Skoll announced that he was recusing himself from consideration of this item because he is currently a vice president of the Southeast Torrance Homeowners Association and his residence, while not within the 500-foot notification area, is very close to the project. He exited the dais.

Commissioner Watson reported that she drives by this location frequently and is aware of the area. She disclosed that she received a couple of communications from people offering their opinions about the project, however, this will not prejudice her decision this evening.

Commissioner Herring, Commissioner Gibson and Commissioner Tsao disclosed that they had each viewed the site, but did not speak with anyone.

Robert Stringfield, Anastasi Development, voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval. He briefly described the proposed condominium project, noting that it was designed to be consistent with the adjacent residential neighborhood. He reported that the hearing was continued two weeks ago so the developer could meet with a neighborhood group, but they unable to set up a meeting.

Commissioner Herring asked why the meeting did not take place. Mr. Stringfield explained that neighbors set up the meeting for last Wednesday on short notice and the developer's architect was not available because he lives in Palm Springs and the developer offered to reschedule the meeting for this Monday or Tuesday, but it did not work out.

Joan Thompson, 236<sup>th</sup> Place, reported that she serves as chair of the Neighborhood Watch and residents on her block are very committed to maintaining a safe neighborhood. She asked for a show of hands of those who have concerns about this project (estimated 20-25 people). She stated that concerns include traffic safety, noise, quality of life, and the safety of children biking and walking to and from school. Submitting a photo to illustrate, she explained that parking is a particular concern because her street is inundated with overflow parking from nearby apartments and safety is also an issue because there have been 21 traffic accidents at the intersection of 237<sup>th</sup> Street/Arlington Avenue over the past five years. She also expressed concerns about privacy impact, noise from trash bins and water conservation issues. She related her understanding that open space requirements are being met by expanding balconies, which may comply with the letter of the law, but not the intent. She stated that neighbors welcome improvements to this corner, but they feel this project is too dense, and suggested that something similar to the condominium development built on the site of the Narbonne Market would be more appropriate for this neighborhood.

In response to Commissioner Gibson's inquiry, Ms. Thompson confirmed that she is a teacher, and Commissioner Gibson disclosed that she knows Ms. Thompson from West High.

Commissioner Herring requested clarification regarding her concerns about parking, and Ms. Thompson explained that it appears there is no room to park in front of garages, so those who are unable to fit their vehicles in their garages will be parking on the street.

Pat Alexander, 236<sup>th</sup> Place, expressed concerns that there has been no mention of water-conserving features being incorporated into this project, such as water-saving devices and drought tolerant landscaping, and questioned whether storm drains and sewers have adequate capacity to handle this development. She voiced her opinion that the project should be downsized to eight units.

Derek Lies, 236<sup>th</sup> Place, expressed concerns that the project would add 32 to 64 more vehicles to neighborhood streets disrupting the quality of life for residents and creating a safety hazard for their children. He urged that the primary access to the development be relocated to Arlington rather than side streets. He also expressed concerns about the project's impact on parking, which is already in short supply, and voiced objections to the height of the project, which is out of character with the neighborhood.

Noting that he lives adjacent to the proposed project, Todd Jameson, 236<sup>th</sup> Place, expressed concerns that he will be inundated with noise from trash bins, which will be located right next to his property line, as well as noise from vehicles going in and out of the complex. He echoed concerns about the project's impact on traffic and parking. He related his belief that a design similar to the development on the Narbonne Market site was more suitable because it has 3-story units in front and 2½ story units in back to better blend with adjacent residences, each of the units has its own trash bins, rather than one large common bin, and access to the property is from Arlington.

Commissioner Herring asked if the project would be acceptable if the trash bins were moved and the entrance/exit relocated to Arlington Avenue.

Mr. Jameson responded that his concerns about noise from traffic would be alleviated but he felt that noise from trash bins would still be an issue.

Ramoncito Alenterra, 237<sup>th</sup> Street, noted that he also lives adjacent to the project and called for the following changes to the design: 1) Reduce the number of units from 16 to 8; 2) Relocate the entrance/exit to Arlington; 3) Move trash bins to the Arlington side of the property; and 4) Build an 8-foot high wall to act as a buffer and protect the privacy of adjacent residents.

Planning Manager Lodan advised that the plans call for a 6-foot high block wall and that can be increased to 8 feet, if a Waiver is incorporated into the approval.

John Bailey, president of Southeast Torrance Homeowners Association, questioned whether the many plumbing fixtures in this project will comply with new low-flow requirements. He noted that the staff report mentions that staff plans to continue to work with the applicant to improve the design so it is more in line with newer developments and urged the Commission to continue the hearing until the design is finalized and neighbors have a chance to review it.

Chairperson Polcari stated that the developer's lack of community outreach was very evident at this hearing and it was clear that neighbors are irritated and upset. He proposed continuing the hearing so the developer could meet with the homeowners group, something he believes should have taken place before this meeting was scheduled.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Gibson moved to continue the hearing to July 15, 2015. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Watson and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Skoll).

Planning Manager Lodan announced that there will be no additional notification because the hearing was continued to a date certain.

Commissioner Skoll returned to the dais at this time.

11. **WAIVERS** – None.

12. **FORMAL HEARINGS**

12A. **MOD15-00003 (CUP78-00077): GRAFFINO INC DBA BETTOLINO KITCHEN (RIVIERA PLAZA LLC)**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Modification of a previously approved Conditional Use Permit (CUP78-00077) to allow the transfer from a Type 41 to a Type 47 liquor license at an existing restaurant on property located in the C-1 Zone at 211 Palos Verdes Boulevard. This project is Categorically Exempt from CEQA per Guidelines Section 15301 – Existing Facilities.

**Recommendation:** Approval.

Sr. Planning Associate Santana introduced the request.

Sean Liguore, representing the applicant, voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval. He reported that the company is taking over an existing restaurant and would like to change to a Type 47 liquor license. He noted that they have operated another restaurant in Torrance for 21 years where alcohol is served without incident.

Commissioner Gibson disclosed that she is a good friend of Mr. Liguore and has dined at his restaurant, but this would have no bearing on her decision.

In response to Commissioner Watson's inquiry, Mr. Liguore confirmed that the restaurant was formerly known as Gina Lee's.

Commissioner Herring asked about the difference between Type 41 and Type 47 liquor licenses, and Mr. Liguore explained that a Type 41 license only allows the sale of beer and wine and a Type 47 license allows the sale of hard liquor in addition to beer and wine so the restaurant will be able to offer cocktails. He reported that he plans to open the restaurant within the next month.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Herring moved to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Watson and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Herring moved to approve MOD15-00003, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gibson and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Sr. Planning Associate Santana read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 15-046.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Tsao moved to adopt Planning Commission Resolution No. 15-046. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gibson and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

**12B. CUP15-00010: GARRETT HANES (JOHN THOMPSON)**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Conditional Use Permit to allow the operation of a classic car storage and restoration facility, with spray booth, and limited sales on property located in the M1-PP one at 3115 Fujita Street. This project is Categorically Exempt from CEQA per Guidelines Section 15301 – Existing Facilities.

**Recommendation:** Approval.

Sr. Planning Associate Santana introduced the request.

Garrett Hanes, applicant, reported that this will be a high-end storage/restoration facility for million dollar cars and people will be admitted on an appointment-only basis. He explained that the business requires a very discreet, private location for security purposes and this facility meets these requirements. He voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval, but indicated that he did have a concern about Condition No. 8.

Responding to questions from the Commission, Mr. Hanes reported that he has been in business for almost 30 years, but wants to move from his current location in an industrial center in the L.A. strip (Torrance mailing address) because it has become rundown and it's not conducive to his business and the new location is also convenient because he lives in Torrance.

Commissioner Gibson asked about the facility's capacity, and Mr. Hanes reported that there will be storage for 22 cars, the restoration area can accommodate 4 or 5 cars, and 1 or 2 cars will be on display in the showroom. He noted that the showroom has no street exposure and the showing of cars will be by appointment only.

In response to Commissioner Gibson's inquiry, Planning Manager Lodan confirmed that the Conditional Use Permit does allow for the sale of vehicles.

Commissioner Herring disclosed that he knows Garrett Hanes and he's been by the property, but that would not influence his vote this evening.

Commissioner Skoll asked about security.

Mr. Hanes reported that he just received a bid of \$29,000 to install a state-of-the-art surveillance system. He noted that he has security-related concerns about Condition No. 8, which requires the relocation of the fence/sliding gate to allow for open parking spaces and ADA access. He explained that relocating the fence so the entrance to the building is outside the fence would defeat the purpose of the fence, which is to secure the premises, and there is no need for open public parking because people are admitted on an appointment-only basis.

Planning Manager Lodan noted that Condition No. 8 includes the phrase “to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director,” which will allow staff the latitude to work with the applicant to find a mutually agreeable solution. He advised that the gate was never permitted and from staff’s perspective, it’s in an inappropriate location because vehicles entering the property block the street, however, he believes there’s a way to relocate it without compromising the site’s security.

Mr. Hanes agreed to work with staff on this issue.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Herring moved to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tsao and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Skoll moved to approve CUP15-00010, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner D’anjou and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Sr. Planning Associate Santana read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 15-047.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Skoll moved to adopt Planning Commission Resolution No. 15-047. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Herring and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

**12C. CUP15-00007, ZON15-0001, DIV15-00003: MICHAEL ROTH**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Conditional Use Permit to allow a three-story, six-unit residential condominium development and to all a Floor Area Ratio of 0.7, in conjunction with a Zone Change from A-1 (Light Agricultural District) to R-3 (Limited Multiple-Family Residential District), and a Tentative Tract Map for condominium purposes on property located in the A-1 Zone at 17502 Van Ness Avenue. This project is Categorically Exempt from CEQA per Guidelines Sections 15332 – In-Fill Development, and Final Environmental Impact Report State Clearinghouse No. 2008111046 – 2009 Torrance General Plan Update.

Item was continued to July 15, 2015.

**12D. ZON12-00002, EAS12-00002: CITY OF TORRANCE**

Planning Commission consideration for adoption of a Mitigated Negative Declaration and approval of a Zone Change from A-1 (Light Agricultural District) to P-U (Public Use District) for APN 4087-037-902, as part of the North Torrance Well Field (NTWF) Project. The NTWF Project consists of developing one additional ground water well (Well #11) within undeveloped right-of-way between Yukon Elementary School and the west side of Yukon Avenue (APN4087-037-901); a site access road and utility easement along the southern property line of Yukon Elementary School at 17815 Yukon Avenue (APN4087-037-900); and one additional ground water well (Well #10), a 3-million gallon water storage reservoir, water treatment facilities, and booster pump station on a presently vacant sit (APN4087-37-902) bounded by the I-405 Freeway to the west and south, Yukon Elementary School to the east and Southern California Edison right-of-way to the north. Additionally, a total of approximately 9,000 feet of associated pipelines will be installed from the well sites to Yukon Avenue and in Yukon Avenue between existing Well #9 at McMaster Park (APN4087-033-900) to 182<sup>nd</sup> Street and the demolition of existing deficient water pumping/storage facilities at McMaster Park at 3624 Artesia Boulevard, Torrance, CA 90504.

**Recommendation:** Approval.

Sr. Planning Associate Santana introduced the request.

John Dettle, Engineering Manager, Public Works Department, voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval and provided an overview of the North Torrance Well Field Project. He explained that the project will provide for the annual production of an additional 3,000 acre-feet of water, noting that an acre-foot of water equals the size of a football field covered with water one foot deep. He reported that the City currently buys 82% of its water from the MWD (Metropolitan Water District) and this project along with the Goldsworthy Desalter Expansion Project will bring the amount of imported water down to 50%.

Responding to questions from the Commission, Mr. Dettle reported that the water tank will be constructed of re-enforced concrete wrapped with continuous wire and it is designed to be failure proof. He indicated that the well will go down approximately 900 feet and will draw water from 500-700 feet. He explained that the North Torrance area is the only area in Torrance with good water quality, because central Torrance has a saltwater plume underneath it, which was created when the basin was pumped down very low allowing ocean water to seep in, and groundwater in the south part of Torrance has a high level of organics so it looks like tea and has an unpleasant odor. He noted that the desalter project is remediation for the saltwater plume so it does not count toward the City's pumping rights. He confirmed that the project was reviewed and approved by the Water Commission.

Commissioner Herring asked about the difference between a desalter and a desalination plant.

Mr. Dettle reported that they are different names for the same thing. He explained that there are various methods to remove salt from water and the City's desalter uses reverse osmosis, a process by which water is pushed through a membrane that stops the salt and allows only the good water to go through.

In response to Commissioner Gibson's inquiry, Mr. Dettle confirmed that the City owns the property involved.

Chairperson Polcari asked about the timeline for the project, and Mr. Dettle reported that construction will begin this summer and is scheduled to be completed by 2017.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Watson moved to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tsao and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Skoll moved to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration and to recommend approval of ZON12-00002. The motion was seconded by Commissioner D'anjou and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Planning Manager Lodan noted that the project will be forwarded to the City Council for final approval because it involves a Zone Change.

Chairperson Polcari asked to be notified when the matter goes to Council.

**12E. MOD15-00004 (CUP11-00009): MONKISH BREWING CO, LLC (THE CAPELLINO COMPANY)**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Modification of a previously approved Conditional Use Permit (CUP11-00009) to extend the hours of operation and services at an existing brewery with tasting room on property located in the M-2 Zone at 20311 Western Avenue. This project is Categorically Exempt from CEQA per Guidelines Section 15301 – Existing Facilities.

**Recommendation:** Approval.

Sr. Planning Associate Santana introduced the request and noted supplemental material consisting of correspondence received after the agenda item was completed.

Henry Nguyen, president of Monkish Brewing Co., voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval. He reported that his brewery was the first to open a tasting room in Torrance and it has operated for three years without any issues. He explained that in order to further expand his business, he would like to extend the hours of the tasting room, allow mobile food vendors to operate on the site during tasting room hours, and have the ability to host special events. He noted that the craft brewery industry has grown considerably since he first opened and it has brought a lot of attention to Torrance.

Commissioner Gibson recalled that there were problems in the past with mobile food vendors operating without a license and health permits.

Planning Manager Lodan advised that there was a problem a couple of years ago, but since that time the City has instituted a broad-based program to facilitate the licensing of mobile food vendors and businesses are allowed to have events featuring food trucks a maximum of 26 days per year. He noted that the proposed CUP would allow the applicant to exceed this limit and have food trucks on a more regular basis.

Commissioner Skoll questioned whether staff expects other breweries to ask for the same thing, and Planning Manager Lodan reported that a number of people have expressed an interest in incorporating food trucks into their entitlements.

In response to Commissioner Skoll's inquiry, Mr. Nguyen explained that he does not intend to have food trucks each time the tasting room is open, but he requested the extended hours so he does not have to return to the Commission in the future. He noted that the Belgium-style beer he brews is made to be paired with food and food enhances the tasting experience. He confirmed that all beer must be consumed within the brewery.

Lloyd Brown, Torrance, thanked the Commission for helping make Torrance a craft beer destination, noting that his letter of support was included in the supplemental material.

**MOTION:** Commissioner D'anjou moved to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Herring and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

**MOTION:** Commissioner D'anjou moved to approve MOD15-00004, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Skoll and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Sr. Planning Associate Santana read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 15-048.

**MOTION:** Commissioner D'anjou moved to adopt Planning Commission Resolution No. 15-048. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tsao and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

13. **RESOLUTIONS** – None.

14. **PUBLIC WORKSHOP ITEMS** – None.

15. **MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS**

15A. **PLANNING COMMISSION ELECTIONS**

**MOTION:** Chairperson Polcari moved to elect Commissioner D'anjou as Chairperson for FY2015-16. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tsao and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Gibson moved to elect Commissioner Watson as Vice-Chair for FY2015-16. The motion was seconded by Chairperson Polcari and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

15B. **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR WEEKLY SUMMARY REPORTS**

Planning Manager Lodan noted that the Community Development Director Weekly Summary Reports for May 28 and June 5, 2015 were distributed to the Commission.

16. **REVIEW OF CITY COUNCIL ACTION ON PLANNING MATTERS** – None.

17. **LIST OF TENTATIVE PLANNING COMMISSION CASES**

Planning Manager Lodan noted that the July 1, 2015 Planning Commission meeting has been cancelled due to the 4<sup>th</sup> of July holiday.

18. **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #2**

18A. Commissioner Herring wished all fathers a happy Father's Day.

18B. Commissioner Gibson requested that the meeting be adjourned in memory of former City Councilman Dick Rossberg, noting that he served as a mentor for her and will be greatly missed.

18C. Commissioner Skoll related his understanding that the City was in the process of drafting a new sign ordinance and asked if it will come to the Planning Commission, and Planning Manager Lodan stated that he expects it will be reviewed by the Commission since signage is within the Planning Commission's purview.

18D. Commissioner Skoll expressed concerns that the vacant lot where the new Costco is going to be built has become unsightly.

Planning Manager Lodan reported that construction on the new Costco will begin in July and they hope to open in time for the Christmas season.

**18E.** Commissioner Gibson commended Chairperson Polcari for doing a great job chairing Commission meetings and thanked him for his service.

**18F.** Commissioner D'anjou stated that it was an honor and a privilege to serve as Chairperson Polcari's vice-chair.

**18G.** Commissioner Watson also commended Chairperson Polcari, noting that he was particularly good at moving meetings along.

**18H.** Commissioner Watson stated that she was impressed that Torrance, which has a reputation for being slow to react to new trends, has craft breweries and food trucks and commended the City for being very proactive in planning for the future as evidenced by the new water well(Item 12D), which was in the works well before the current drought.

**8I.** Commissioner Tsao thanked Chairperson Polcari for his leadership.

**8J.** Chairperson Polcari noted that he had reservations when he agreed to serve as chair, but ended up enjoying it very much. He thanked his fellow Commissioners and City staff for their support.

**19. ADJOURNMENT**

8:42 p.m., the meeting was adjourned to Wednesday, July 15, 2015 at 7:00 p.m.

***Adjourned in Memory of Dick Rossberg***

Approved as submitted July 15, 2015 s/ Rebecca Poirier, City Clerk
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