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TORRANCE PLANNING COMMISSION – AUGUST 6, 2014

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At 8:25 p.m., the meeting was adjourned to Wednesday, August 20, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

August 6, 2014

**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, August 6, 2014 in City Council Chambers at Torrance City Hall.

2. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Watson.

3. ROLL CALL/ MOTIONS FOR EXCUSED ABSENCE

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

Absent: None.

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

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, August 1, 2014.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Commissioner Skoll moved to approve the June 4, 2014 Planning Commission minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gibson and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

MOTION: Commissioner Skoll moved to approve the June 18, 2014 Planning Commission minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gibson and passed by unanimous roll call vote, with Chairperson Polcari abstaining.

MOTION: Commissioner Skoll moved to approve the July 16, 2014 Planning Commission minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gibson and passed by unanimous roll call vote, with Commissioner Watson abstaining.

6. REQUESTS FOR POSTPONEMENTS

Planning Manager Lodan reported that staff was recommending that the public hearing for Item 12C, ZON14-00003, GPA14-00003, DIV14-00008: Chandler Ranch Properties, be opened and then continued to August 20, 2014 because some to the entitlements were not listed on the meeting agenda.

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.

Item 12 C was considered out of order at this time.

12C. **ZON14-00003, GPA14-00003, DIV14-00008: CHANDLER RANCH PROPERTIES, LLC/ BRI, LLC CHANDLER PERRIS, LLC**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a “City Boundary Modification” between Torrance and Rolling Hills Estates to allow the annexation/de-annexation of 41 acres, a Zone Change and General Plan Amendment to designate the annexed land to P-1 Zone, Public/Quasi-Public/Open Space Land Use Designation, in conjunction with Tentative Parcel Map 72793 to consolidate multiple parcels into one, on properties located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1/R1-PP/A-1 Zone. The environmental clearance for this project has been completed by the lead agency, Rolling Hills Estates, which certified a 2011 Final Environmental Impact Report (SCH#2008011027) for the project and later adopted a 2014 Addendum pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21166, determining that none of the triggers that would have required further environmental review had occurred. The City of Torrance is acting as responsible agency pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15096.

2014. **MOTION:** Commissioner Gibson moved to continue the hearing on this item to August 20, The motion was seconded by Commissioner Watson and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Planning Manager Lodan noted that the hearing will be re-advertised with the corrected project description.

10. **CONTINUED HEARINGS**

10A. **CUP14-00003: CHUCK MING KWAN (SANDRA WILLIAMS)**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Conditional Use Permit to allow the operation of a take-out only restaurant on property located in the C-2 Zone at 2140 Artesia Boulevard, #G. This project is Categorically Exempt from CEQA per Guidelines Section 15301 – Existing Facilities.

Recommendation: Approval.

Planning Assistant Yumul introduced the request.

Chuck Kwan on behalf of his brother, Chuck Ming Kwan, applicant, reported that this item was continued at the last meeting so the matter of who would be responsible for site improvements could be resolved and the landlord has agreed to complete the improvements so the applicant no longer has any objections to the conditions on approval. He noted that the applicant formerly operated a Chinese restaurant, Fu Shing, for 16 years, which he would like to reopen at this new location.

Chairperson Polcari invited public comment, and no one came forward to speak.

MOTION: Commissioner Gibson moved to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Skoll and passed by unanimous voice vote.

MOTION: Commissioner Skoll moved to approve CUP14-00003, 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.

Planning Assistant Yumul read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 14-034.

MOTION: Commissioner Skoll moved to adopt Planning Commission Resolution No. 14-034. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gibson and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

11. **WAIVERS** – None.

12. **FORMAL HEARINGS**

12A. **CUP1400017: AVIS RENT A CAR SYSTEM, LLC (SARKIS KASSARDJIAN)**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Conditional Use Permit to allow the operation of an automobile rental business on property located in the H-PR Zone at 20125 Hawthorne Boulevard. This project is Categorically Exempt from CEQA per Guidelines Section 15301 – Existing Facilities.

Recommendation: Approval.

Planning Assistant Yumul introduced the request.

Don Pierce, representing Avis Rent A Car System, reported that this site was a rent-a-car operation for 15-16 years before being converted to a carwash a couple of years ago and now that the carwash has gone out of business, Avis would like to reopen a car rental at this location to serve leisure and business clients. He voiced his agreement with the conditions of approval, noting that the property owner has agreed to make the necessary improvements to the landscaping.

In response to Chairperson Polcari's inquiry, Mr. Pierce confirmed that Avis recently opened another location at Sears in Del Amo Fashion Center.

Commissioner D'anjou questioned whether the eight required parking spaces include parking for rental vehicles, and Planning Manager Lodan advised that there is separate parking for inventory and the eight spaces are for employees and customers.

Chairperson Polcari invited public comment, and no one came forward to speak.

MOTION: Commissioner Gibson moved to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Watson and passed by unanimous voice vote.

MOTION: Commissioner Griffiths moved to approve CUP14-00017, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Watson and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Planning Assistant Yumul read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 14-038.

MOTION: Commissioner Griffiths moved to adopt Planning Commission Resolution No. 14-038. The motion was seconded by Commissioner D'anjou and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

12B. MOD14-00004, CUP14-00008, DIV14-00005: TERRY ODLE – MG2 (ROCK LOMITA LLC)

Planning Commission consideration for approval of an Addendum to FEIR SCH#2007121119, and for approval of a Modification of a previously approved Conditional Use Permit (CUP07-00016) at 2740 Lomita Boulevard. The applicant proposes to modify the previously approved project to reduce the amount of medical office square footage down to 71,000 square feet and to provide for the development of 71,000 square feet of medical office and a 161,500 square-foot Costco warehouse club with a 20-position fueling station and carwash on the project site. Costco would vacate the 148,000 square-foot existing warehouse that it currently occupies adjacent to the project site. The applicant also requests the approval of a Conditional Use Permit to allow the construction and operation of the relocated Costco and all its related uses – fueling station, carwash, tire center, food service and onsite alcohol tasting – and a Division of Lot to allow a three-lot subdivision on the property, which is located in the M-2 Zone. The environmental clearance for this project is the 2010 Environmental Impact Report certified for the prior project approved at the site in 2010. The City staff has determined that pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21166, none of the triggers that would have required further environmental review have occurred. An Addendum has been prepared pursuant to CEQA Guideline Section 15164 to document this finding.

Recommendation: Approval.

Planning Assistant Yumul introduced the request.

Commissioner Skoll noted that the numbers listed in the staff report (page 4) for the various kinds of parking do not add up to the total number of parking spaces listed in the summary chart (page 4). Planning Manager Lodan later clarified that the number of spaces listed for low-emission vehicles should be 65 instead of 75.

Jennifer Murillo, director of real estate development for Costco, stated that Costco plans to build a bigger warehouse on a larger site with more ancillary services to better serve its membership, which has grown significantly since Costco originally located in Torrance in 1998. She voiced her agreement with the recommended conditions of approval.

Commissioner Skoll related his understanding that the Torrance Costco is number one in sales, and Ms. Murillo reported that a Costco in Hawaii holds that distinction, however Torrance is in the top 20.

Commissioner Skoll reported that he thoroughly reviewed the written material associated with the project and his only concern was the parking. He related his experience that the handicap parking at the existing Costco was inadequate.

Terry Odle, MG2, project architect, advised that the plans call for 25 handicap parking spaces and only 17 are required.

Commissioner Skoll requested clarification of the parking allocated for low-emission vehicles per Condition No. 20.

Mr. Odle reported that there will be 16 electric vehicle (EV) charging stations and 65 parking stalls will be designated for low-emitting, fuel efficient and carpool/vanpool vehicles in accordance with Cal Green Building Code requirements, which are more restrictive than the requirements listed in Condition No. 20.

Planning Manager Lodan indicated that staff had no objection to eliminating Condition 20 since parking for low-emission vehicles is covered by the Cal Green Building Code.

Commissioner Skoll asked how parking restrictions would be enforced.

Ms. Murillo advised that Costco does not have the authority to ticket or tow non-qualified vehicles that park in these stalls, however, enforcement has not been an issue at the Huntington Beach Costco built in 2012, which is subject to the same requirements. She noted that the number of charging stations at the existing Costco was reduced because they were not heavily utilized although this could change as electric vehicles become more popular.

Mr. Odle noted that low-emission parking is not in the most desirable location and there are conventional parking stalls just as close to the building.

Commissioner Skoll reiterated his concern about insufficient handicap parking.

Ms. Murillo explained that parking at this location exceeds Code requirements so regular stalls could easily be converted to handicap parking should there be a need. She recommended that anyone who experiences a problem report it to Member Services.

Assistant City Attorney Sullivan confirmed that the Cal Green Building Code includes no provisions for enforcing parking restrictions. He reported that there have been confrontations over existing EV vehicle charging stations in City parking lots and new charging stations will include a mechanism for charging a fee for their usage.

Sr. Planning Associate Santana reported that the City is currently obtaining bids for the installation/operation of EV charging stations in various public parking lots throughout Torrance, which will feature a card-swiping device for collecting fees via a membership club or credit/debit cards. He noted that the City Council has directed staff to encourage the installation of EV charging stations in private parking lots so EV owners can obtain a "top-off" charge, but it is up to the property owners to decide whether or not they wish to charge a fee.

Commissioner Skoll asked about employee parking, and Ms. Murillo advised that there are typically 3 shifts of 80 employees each, however there may be closer to 90 at this Costco due to its size and employees are usually required to park behind the building.

Mr. Odle clarified that some employees bike to work and others carpool so they will not be taking up 80-90 parking spaces.

Commissioner Skoll questioned how many stalls would be designated for vanpools/carpools, and Mr. Odle explained that they are included in the 65 parking stalls designated for low-emitting, fuel efficient vehicles.

Commissioner Griffiths expressed concerns that there was nothing to prevent Costco shoppers from parking in the parking for the office buildings once they are developed.

Ms. Murillo advised that there will be a reciprocal easement/access agreement when the office building parcel is sold, which she believes will benefit both Costco and the office buildings because they have different peak hours. She noted that parking for the office buildings complies with the more stringent parking requirements for medical offices even though the offices may not all be medical.

Commissioner Watson noted that several new buildings have been constructed along Lomita Boulevard since the EIR for the site was completed in 2010, including hospital and medical buildings, and questioned whether additional traffic generated by them was taken into account.

Casey Bergh, traffic consultant for Costco, reported that updated traffic counts were performed in 2014 and the traffic analysis was based on those counts. He confirmed that there will be a new signalized entry on Lomita Boulevard and that the project's impact on the intersection of Crenshaw Boulevard/Lomita Boulevard was included in the analysis.

Commissioner Gibson asked about bike racks, and Sr. Planning Associate Santana reported that there will be a total of 44 bike racks for employees and customers.

In response to Commissioner Griffiths' inquiry, Planning Manager Lodan reported that approval for alcoholic beverage tastings was encompassed in these entitlements so Costco can go forward with them as soon as ABC (Alcoholic Beverage Control) approval has been obtained.

Commissioner D'anjou asked about remediation of the site.

David Prior, representing the Rockefeller Group, owner of the subject property, reported that soil remediation has been completed and a "No Further Action" closure letter has been issued and remediation of groundwater is ongoing and will continue until a NFA closure letter is issued. He noted that the site was formerly occupied by Teledyne and an aviation manufacturer.

Ms. Murillo explained that there will be monitoring wells on the site until a closure letter has been issued and this is covered in Costco's agreement with the seller of the property.

In response to Commissioner D'anjou's inquiry, Ms. Murillo confirmed that gas tanks will be removed from the existing Costco property when it vacates the site.

Commissioner Skoll questioned whether the gas station will sell diesel fuel.

Chris Ferco, representing Costco, reported that diesel will be available at each of the 20 fueling dispensers.

Chairperson Polcari invited public comment, and no one came forward to speak.

Ms. Murillo thanked staff for their assistance with this project.

MOTION: Commissioner Gibson moved to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Griffiths and passed by unanimous voice vote.

Sr. Planning Associate Santana recommended that Condition No. 20 be revised to cover EV charging stations.

MOTION: Commissioner Skoll moved to adopt the Addendum to the Final Environmental Impact Report. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gibson and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Planning Assistant Yumul read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 14-040.

MOTION: Commissioner Skoll moved to adopt Planning Commission Resolution No. 14-040. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gibson and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

MOTION: Commissioner Skoll moved to approve MOD14-00004, CUP14-00008 and DIV14-00005, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff, with the following modification:

Modify

No. 20 That 2 percent of the total parking required shall be accommodated with Level 2 electric vehicle charging infrastructure and signed accordingly to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gibson and passed by unanimous vote.

Planning Assistant Yumul read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution Nos. 14-041, 14-042 and 14-043.

MOTION: Commissioner Skoll moved to adopt Planning Commission Resolution Nos. 14-041, 14-042 and 14-043 as amended. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gibson and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

12C. ZON14-00003, GPA14-00003, DIV14-00008: CHANDLER RANCH PROPERTIES, LLC/ BRI, LLC CHANDLER PERRIS, LLC

Considered out of order, see page 2.

13. RESOLUTIONS - None.

14. PUBLIC WORKSHOP ITEMS – None.

15. MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

15A. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR WEEKLY SUMMARY REPORTS

Planning Manager Lodan noted that the Community Development Director Weekly Summary Reports for July 10, July 18 and July 24, 2014 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 reviewed the agenda for the August 20, 2014 Planning Commission meeting.

18. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #2

18A. Charles Deemer, Talisman Avenue, stated that he had questions about Item 12C and asked about its status.

Planning Manager Lodan reported that the item was continued to the August 20 meeting and invited Mr. Deemer to contact staff about his questions.

18B. Commissioner Gibson requested an excused absence for the August 20 meeting as she will be in North Carolina.

Commissioner Griffiths, seconded by Commissioner Watson, so moved, and voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

18C. Commissioner Skoll noted that he neglected to mention at the last meeting that he and Commissioner D'anjou attended a meeting of the ExxonMobil Community Advisory Panel on July 16 at which the new Refinery Manager was introduced and there was also a presentation on community health concerns by a doctor who works at the Torrance Refinery.

19. ADJOURNED

At 8:25 p.m., the meeting was adjourned to Wednesday, August 20, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

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Approved as submitted August 20, 2014 s/ Rebecca Poirier, City Clerk
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