

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF
THE TORRANCE REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Torrance Redevelopment Agency convened in regular session on Tuesday, September 12, 2006, at 8:54 p.m. in the City Council Chambers at Torrance City Hall.

ROLL CALL

Present: Members Brewer, Drevno, McIntyre, Nowatka, Sutherland, Witkowsky and Chairman Scotto.

Absent: None.

Also Present: Agency Director Jackson, Agency Attorney Fellows, Agency Secretary Herbers and other staff representatives.

2. AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING

MOTION: Member Witkowsky moved to accept and file the report of the City Clerk on the posting of the agenda. The motion was seconded by Member Brewer and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – August 22, 2006

MOTION: Member Sutherland moved for the approval of the August 22, 2006 minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Member Brewer and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

4. COMMUNICATIONS AND OTHER BUSINESS

A. Recommendation of the Agency Treasurer and Redevelopment Agency Staff that the Redevelopment Agency accept and file the Monthly Investment Reports for the month of July 2006.

MOTION: Member Witkowsky moved to accept and file the monthly investment reports for the month of May 2006. The motion was seconded by Member McIntyre and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

5. HEARINGS

A. Recommendation of the Agency Deputy Executive Director that Redevelopment Agency deny the application and adopt a **RESOLUTION** denying a Modification of previously approved Conditional Use Permits to allow removal of the perimeter berm on Hawthorne Boulevard and the westerly portion of Skypark Drive, landscaping modifications and reconfiguration of the parking lot on property located in the Skypark Redevelopment Project area, in the Planned Development District, in the Hawthorne Boulevard Corridor Specific Plan overlay zone. MOD06-00005

The Public Hearing opened at 8:55 p.m. Redevelopment and General Plan Manager Ted Semaan presented the staff report.

Alex Rose, Vice President of Development for Continental Development Corporation, delivered a presentation on the landscaping modifications.

Craig Leach, CEO Torrance Memorial Medical Center, stated that they were in favor of this project.

David Schneider, landscape architect, spoke about the reduction of the berm, the kinds of trees, shrubs and other vegetation that would be planted in the landscape modifications and the sizes of the trees that would be planted.

Richard Lundquist, CEO Continental Development Corporation, spoke about the width of the landscaping along Hawthorne Blvd. and that a parking structure was not feasible.

Sandi Monda, Torrance, expressed concern about the removal of mature trees.

Frank Rizzardi, Southwood Riviera Homeowners Association, stated that he was not aware that this item was on the agenda for this meeting and was not prepared, but was concerned about the removal of so many mature trees and about increased traffic problems due to the nearby construction of Lowes. He recommended denial.

Mary Ann Reis expressed her approval of the current landscaping, stating that it was one of the prettiest areas of Torrance, shared her concern over the proposed changes, and that she was not in favor.

Janet Payne commented that she understood the need for parking but asked that the trees not be cut down. She questioned if parking spaces would be gained by reserving all parking for visitors only and having employees of the businesses at Skypark be shuttled in from another parking location.

Alex Rose responded to the parking question from Ms Payne by stating that the market dictates close and onsite parking or tenants will go elsewhere. He also stated that the plan called for the planting of 350 trees.

Member McIntyre stated that significant concerns had been raised and suggested that the hearing be postponed to allow for further community input.

Member Witkowsky said that after visiting the site and inspecting the parking and the plans she thought it a wonderful project, that the landscaping was well thought out, that the plan will add necessary parking and increase occupancy. She stated that she sees a win – win situation.

Responding to Member Brewer, Planning Director Gibson stated that there was no finite number for the parking requirement for the proposal and that it would depend upon use and that each project would have to meet code.

Member Sutherland commented that when Rolling Hills Plaza was being built he heard complaints about not enough parking and no landscaping, noting that the plan for Skypark addressed both landscaping and increased parking. He stated that he liked the project on Skypark and Madrona and that in five years the new trees will have grown. He also commented that the old trees along Hawthorne would have to be replaced anyway and that he did not see a problem with progress as long as it wasn't done in a manner that would hurt the City in the long run.

Responding to Member Nowatka, Deputy Agency Director Gibson stated that he did not have exact figures for the added parking spaces but for the majority of the spaces created, the increase would be coming from the reduction of the landscape setback on the Hawthorne Blvd. side.

Member Nowatka also asked for clarification of the number of trees that would be removed and wanted to know if the figure of 324 was correct. Deputy Agency Director Gibson stated that the staff report did contain the number of trees that would be removed.

At 10:00 p.m. Member Witkowsky moved to close the public hearing. Member Brewer seconded the motion that was passed unanimously.

Chairman Scotto commented that the opportunities to gain parking spaces and also conserve water were important considerations. He stated that he was very disappointed that so many mature trees would be taken.

Member Nowatka observed that it was an unusual situation because the planned parking would generate the medical office use of the buildings. He also stated that through his work with SCAG he was concerned about paving over more of the few remaining green spaces within the city and the preservation of open space.

Member Drevno said the open space and trees were important to all of us and asked the developers to get the best trees possible.

Member Brewer stated that he was familiar with the parking problems in the area but directing people was not difficult as the current landscape was distinct and he would send people over to the trees on Hawthorne. He commented that he had seen the landscaping on the Madison side and commended it, but that it was not unique at all and was the same as other landscaping throughout the city.

MOTION: Member Witkowsky made a motion to approve the Modification of previously approved Conditional Use Permit. The motion was seconded by Member Sutherland and passed by roll call vote. Yes: Brewer, Drevno, Nowatka, Sutherland, Witkowsky and Chairman Scotto, No: Member McIntyre.

Staff noted that the resolution of approval would be brought back to the Agency at a later date.

6. REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR AND OTHER OFFICERS

None.

7. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

None.

8. ADDENDUM MATTERS

None.

9. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

None.

10. REQUEST FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

11. ADJOURNMENT

At 10:02 p.m., Member Brewer moved to adjourn the meeting to Tuesday, September 19, 2006 at 5:30 p.m. for an executive session with the regular meeting commencing at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers. Member Witkowsky seconded the motion and there was unanimous approval.