

CITY OF CERES
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES

May 21, 2007

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: Bowman, Del Nero, Meyer, Smith, Williams, Student Commissioner Amino

ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Community Development Director Kenneth H. Craig, Planning Manager Barry Siebe, Engineering Services Supervisor Len Guillette, City Attorney Michael Lyons, Associate Planner Lantz Rey, Admin. Secretary/Planning Tech. Linda Ryno

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairperson Meyer.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. May 7, 2007.

It was moved by Commissioner Del Nero, seconded by Commissioner Bowman, to approve the minutes as presented. Carried 5/0.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION:

None

CITIZEN COMMUNICATION:

None

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AS POSTED (OR AMENDED) AND CERTIFICATION OF POSTING:

It was moved by Commissioner Williams, seconded by Commissioner Smith, to approve the agenda as posted. Carried 5/0.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

None

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

2. 07-07 VTSM; Proposal to subdivide two existing buildings into 21 airspace condominium units at 1920 Foundry Court.

Associate Planner Rey gave a report detailing what a condo conversion is.

The public hearing was opened at 7:06 p.m. Seeing no one in the audience wishing to address the Commission, the public hearing was closed at 7:06 p.m.

It was moved by Commissioner Bowman, seconded by Commissioner Del Nero, to adopt PC Resolution 07-17, approving 07-07 VTSM. Carried 5/0.

3. 04-36 CUP Amendment; Ceres Commerce Center, 1300 block of Mitchell Road.

Planning Manager Siebe gave a presentation.

The public hearing was opened at 7:11 p.m.

Jim Daniels, 907 Maze Blvd., Modesto, explained that, in his opinion, the modified plans do meet the Mitchell Road Corridor Specific Plan guidelines and that, if the Planning Commission didn't have their own copy, he brought enough for everyone. Mr. Daniels further commented that there was a very positive article in the *Modesto Bee* recently on this project and the Ceres Chamber of Commerce was also very supportive.

David Harter, Senior Project Manger, Innovative Structures, presented a PowerPoint presentation and stated that he also felt the design met the Mitchell Road Corridor Specific Guidelines.

Mr. Daniels re-approached the podium again and advised the Commission that his project, which is located in the North Gateway Design District of the Mitchell Road Corridor Specific Plan, meets the criteria for that gateway design district, which according to Mr. Daniels allows for a simpler, less embellished, more rectangular building form.

Chairperson Meyer asked Mr. Daniels about their letter of April 6 in which they stated they would comply with the earlier decision of the Planning Commission.

Mr. Daniels replied that he met with Mayor Anthony Cannella and that it was at Mayor Cannella's urging, that they resubmitted the plans.

Commissioner Williams asked Mr. Daniels if it's not a financial issue, then why did they not do the original plan? Mr. Daniels replied that he believed what they did was more aesthetically pleasing than what the Planning Commission originally approved.

The public hearing was closed at 7:37 p.m.

Commissioner Del Nero asked for clarification that the improvements presented by Innovative Structures is the addition of a trellis and moving the lighting sconces on the building.

Chairperson Meyer agreed and further stated that the applicant did not follow the original request of the Planning Commission to bring something back that was substantially different and that after Mr. Daniels' comments tonight, that cost was not the issue in upgrading the aesthetics.

Director Craig commented "that design and good design is in the eye of the beholder in many respects and that is why it's very important to have clear guidelines as to what it is the City is looking for. I think what you have here is simply an interpretation by the builders and owners that they are in compliance with the Mitchell Road Corridor Specific Plan. I think that they've made some important observations in regards to what the MRCSP says in its body in regards to simple geometry and earth tone colors and things like that and clearly, based on those particular aspects of the MRCSP, you couldn't disagree that the project doesn't comply; it does comply, however, staff's opinion is that there is more to design than just simple geometry. Simple geometry does not preclude adequate articulation and a well-articulated building and so we believe that what we're really looking for is to try to find something that provides that articulation to meet essentially the overall intent of the MRCSP which is of course, to provide this enhanced entry into the City of Ceres and I think what we really have here is just a disagreement on whether or not this building and what they've proposed constitutes a well-articulated building as defined by the City's General Plan and the MRCSP."

Commissioner Smith commented that she drives by the building several times a week and that she wasn't sure that even with the addition of pop-outs that it would improve the appearance of the building, but feels landscaping and pop-outs might help but it's not an either/or. She further commented the MRCSP North Gateway Design District does require aesthetic treatments that reinforce the area's entrance way into the City of Ceres and doesn't think the building meets that policy...

Commissioner Del Nero directed the Commission and staff to page 22 (City Council minutes) in which Councilmember Lane stated he was on the Planning Commission when the project was approved and the Commission was very clear on the importance of having pop-outs on the buildings.

Chairperson Meyer commented that she had hoped the applicant would have made considerable changes and didn't feel the addition of a trellis is better than the originally requested pop-outs.

It was moved by Commissioner Smith, seconded by Commissioner Del Nero, to adopt PC Resolution 07-18, denying the amendment to 04-36 CUP.
Carried 5/0.

PUBLIC MEETINGS:

None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None

MATTERS INITIATED BY PLANNING COMMISSION AND STAFF:

None

REPORTS:

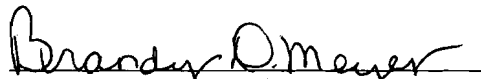
Chairperson Meyer and Commissioners Smith and Williams commented how informative the small lot design field trip of May 18 was.

Director Craig discussed the change in meeting times for the Planning Commission. He commented that while the Mayor has concerns that it might be confusing to the public if the meeting times are different from those of the City Council, the Planning Commission's by-laws allow the Chair to determine what the meeting times will be.

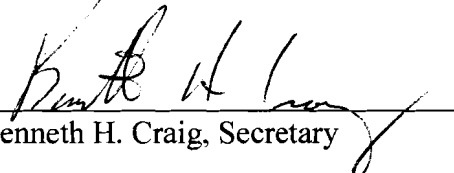
ADJOURNMENT:

The Planning Commission adjourned at 8:03 p.m. to the regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting of May 21, 2007.

APPROVED:


Brandy Meyer, Chairperson

ATTEST:


Kenneth H. Craig, Secretary