



HAWTHORNE PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES OF DECEMBER 20, 2010

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Chairperson Cole called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm in the City Council Chambers, Hawthorne City Hall, 4455 West 126th Street, Hawthorne, California 90250.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Commissioner Smith led the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: Chairperson James Cole, Jr.
Commissioner Rula Alshanableh
Commissioner Bernard Belonsky
Commissioner Robert Smith

ABSENT: Commissioner Jason Rocca

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS PRESENT:
Gregg McClain, Acting Director of Planning and CD
Christopher Palmer, Planning Associate
Robert Kim, Senior Deputy City Attorney

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Commissioner Smith made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Belonsky, approving the Planning Commission Minutes of January 6, 2010. All voted yes, with Commissioner Rocca not present. The Minutes were approved as submitted.

V. COMPLIANCE WITH GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 54954.2:

Chairperson Cole instructed the Secretary to enter into the Minutes the approval of compliance with Government Code Section 54954.2 regarding the January 20, 2010 meeting.

VI. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

As no one desired to be heard, Chairman Cole closed oral communications.

VII. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. APPLICATION:	Conditional Use 2009CU12
PROPOSAL:	Modification of existing wireless antenna facility

LOCATION: 14692-1/2 Aviation Blvd
APPLICANT: FMHC
PROPERTY OWNER: Southern California Edison

Chairperson Cole opened the Public Hearing to consider Conditional Use 2009CU12 modifying an existing wireless antenna facility on a Southern California Edison transmission tower. Planning Associate Palmer was asked to present the staff report.

Planning Associate Palmer presented the Conditional Use application. He said that the item was continued from the January 6 meeting. The application is a request by FMHC to modify an existing wireless facility on a Southern California Edison tower at 12692-1/2 Aviation Blvd. The original project was approved to allow 4 antennas in 2002. the modification would add three new antennas and three new microwave dishes, as well as a new ground-mounted equipment cabinet. He indicated that staff recommends approval of the project.

The applicant was present for the public hearing due to severe weather and the fact they are based in San Diego.

Chairperson Cole closed the public hearing and asked if the commissioners wished to discuss the item.

Commissioner Smith made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Alshanableh, approving Resolution No. PC 2009-22, a Resolution of the Planning Commission of the City of Hawthorne approving Conditional Use 2009CU12. All present voted yes. The motion was approved.

VIII. MUNICIPAL PLANNING:

Acting Director McClain made a brief presentation on the upcoming draft Housing Element. He explained to the commissioners that the draft would soon be brought to the board seeking their approval to forward the draft to the State for review and comments. A copy of the draft had been given to the commissioners to allow them plenty of time to review the document and have their questions answered in advance of taking any actions.

Acting Director McClain went on to inform the commissioners that in the near future they will be asked to approve a general plan amendment and zoning text and map amendments that will effect the R-4 zone and create a mixed use overlay zone. These actions are directly related to the Housing Element and are necessary precursors to the adoption of the Housing Element later in the summer or early fall.

Chairperson Cole asked to have a pdf version of the draft made available and Acting Director McClain responded that a web-based download site will be established to facilitate that request.

Chairperson Cole asked Acting Director McClain for his second report on the status of the project known as 360° at South Bay.

Acting Director McClain made a brief presentation on the recent progress on the project known as 360° at South Bay. The project has remained idle since 2007 but the applicants, William Lyon Homes, recently met with staff to inform us that construction on certain phases of the project was commencing. The first new buildings on the site will be finished in the summer and new residents will be moving into the site by fall.

Chairperson Cole reminded the Commission that some of the units were sold in 2007 but that the sales were undone by the developer prior to mothballing the project. Mr. McClain confirmed this and went on to explain that in response to changed market conditions, the developer informed staff that they were making modifications to the building exteriors as well as the interior finishes. Upon review of the changes staff made a determination that these changes are still in conformity with what was approved.

Commissioner Belonsky asked for details about the changes. Mr. McClain said all were minor and gave examples such as removing metal awnings and lowering ceiling heights. Commissioner Belonsky indicated that he wanted to see the changes and the other commissioners voiced their agreement. Mr. McClain informed the Commission that the developer had supplied staff with drawings of the new elevations and that he would re-agendize the item for the next meeting and pass on the copies of the drawings.

Chairperson Cole asked if staff would supply the new commissioners, Alshanableh and Rocca with background materials on the project. Commissioner Alshanableh informed Chairperson Cole that they received the project brochures in their packets for this meeting.

Chairperson Cole asked if we still have drawings from the original application. Mr. McClain said the new drawings have before and after elevations on the same page. Mr. McClain added that he will ask a representative from William Lyon Homes to be present to answer any questions. All commissioners voiced approval if the idea.

Commissioner Alshanableh asked about interior modifications being proposed, specifically the hard wood flooring. Mr. McClain said he was not certain of the specifics of interior changes because they are not viewed by staff as permanent. Homeowners will have all the top-quality options available, but instead of being included will be offered as upgrades. Additionally, the owners will be free to make interior changes to flooring as they please, so staff does not consider non-structural changes, nor changes that do not alter the unit size or count significant.

Commissioner Belonsky inquired if the entire project would be built now in phases or would only some be built and the rest scrapped. Mr. McClain answered that it is the intention of the developer to build the first phases immediately and sequentially, and other phases will be built when market conditions make it feasible. He went on to explain that the developer is moving forward despite the continued poor economic conditions to generate cash for the company. No profit will be made on this project, but after recent corporate restructuring of finances, the company claims to be strong but needs cash on hand for other projects. The sale of these units will generate the cash

they need. The remaining phases will probably be developed when sales of higher-end units in the area have better potential.

Commissioner Belonsky asked if the new buyers will be okay with all the construction going on around them. Mr. McClain said it should be obvious to the buyers from the first visit and it will be up to them to know what they are getting into.

Commissioner Belonsky said he was contacted a year ago about renting the units and was told the forecast for the market was likely to be unfavorable for selling well into 2012. Although he sympathized somewhat with their situation, the effort to convert the units to rentals never got far due to community opposition. Commissioner Belonsky said the start of construction now could be related to a condition in their construction loan.

Commissioner Belonsky asked if there was any news on the site of the former RFK hospital. Mr. McClain said there was none.

Commissioner Smith asked about activity in the area north of Imperial Highway on the east side of Hawthorne Blvd. Mr. McClain said he was not aware of any.

Commissioner Belonsky asked if the hotels at the Cockatoo site were opened. Mr. McClain said there are three hotels open now on that site.

IX. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:

None.

X. INDIVIDUAL REPORTS:

None.

XI ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 6:25 pm.

Chairperson James Cole, Jr.
Hawthorne Planning Commission

Date signed:_____

ATTEST:

Gregg McClain
Secretary, Hawthorne Planning Commission