



CITY OF RIDGECREST

100 West California Avenue
Ridgecrest, CA 93555

DRAFT MINUTES

MEETING OF THE CITY OF RIDGECREST PLANNING COMMISSION

City Council Chambers

Tuesday, June 24, 2008 at 7:00 p.m.

Commissioners: Chair, Mike Biddlingmeier, Vice-Chair, Jerry Taylor, Commissioners, Lois Beres; Howard Laire, and Nellavan Jeglum

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ROLL CALL

Present: Chairman Biddlingmeier, Commissioners Taylor, Laire, Jeglum and Beres.

Staff Present: City Planner Matthew Alexander, Public Services Director Jim McRea, Economic Development Project Manager Gary Parsons, Administrative Secretary Danielle Valentine.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was moved by Commissioner Beres and seconded by Commissioner Laire to approve the Agenda. The Agenda was approved as submitted.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was moved by Commissioner Laire and seconded by Commissioner Jeglum to approve the Minutes of 27th May, 2008. The Minutes of 27th May were approved as submitted.

6. PUBLIC COMMENTS OF ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

None.

**7. PUBLIC HEARINGS:
ONTINUED:**

7.a Code Enforcement Pre-Abatement Hearing

Jansen Animal Hospital- 405 E. Ridgecrest Blvd

CONTINUED FROM MAY 27th and JUNE 10th PC Agenda

Planner Alexander advised that this hearing would be continued at the request of the Code Enforcement Officer. He advised that the Code Enforcement Officer was in negotiation and hoped this item would not end up in front of the Commission

A motion was moved by Vice-Chairman Taylor and seconded by Commissioner Laire to Continue Item 7.a. Item 7.a. was continued.

AYES: Biddlingmeier, Taylor, Laire, Jeglum, Beres

NAYES: None

ABSENT:None

7.b GPA/ZC-08-01 and TTM 6992: GPA and ZC for the easterly 5.37 acres of the projects 7.8 acres from a zoning of General Commercial (GC) to Single Family Residential (R-1) and a General Plan of Commercial (C) to Low Density Residential (LD) and a 24 lots subdivision on the 5.37 vacant acres located at the NE corner of Richmond St. and Upjohn Ave. (AMG Assoc.) **CONTINUED FROM TO MAY 27th PC Meeting**

City Planner Matthew Alexander made a presentation to the Commission including graphics. He noted there were single family residences in the general proximity. Mr. Alexander said that the request was that the westerly portion of the site adjacent to Richmond remain in the commercial designation and the other 5.3 acres was proposed to be a 20 unit subdivision.

Mr. Alexander noted that the documentation before the Commission included a letter from the Fairgrounds highlighting their concerns. He said that complications had been come up in regards to the Development Agreement spoken about at the last meeting and Gary Parsons – Economic Development Manager – was here to speak about those complications.

Mr. Parsons said that he had been working with the developer to make sure that the street improvements would be done – should a residential lot be developed prior to the commercial development. He said that this included both the streets being developed at the time of the residential development – consistent with City standards, and temporary fencing on the property line.

Commissioner Jeglum said she was not in favor of the project given its proximity to the Fairgrounds – and the impact that would have on the fairgrounds ability to do business. Chairman Biddlingmeier said he agreed with those comments. Commissioner Jeglum said she felt it was not fair to the Fairgrounds ability to do business.

Commissioner Beres said she knew people who lived in the area and did not have negative comments to make in regards the noise. She said she didn't think the few houses would make much difference and she liked the project – she felt it was good use of the land.

Chairman Biddlingmeier asked the Commission to step back and look at the area – would it be more viable to keep the area commercial given the other areas that could be infilled.

Commissioner Taylor said he was “struggling” – he could see both points of view. He said he hoped that there would be a compromise – i.e. seeing the street developed and some residential development without impacting the Fairgrounds.

Commissioner Laire said he too had mixed feelings and was undecided. He said he would like to see the street developed but was also sensitive to the Fairgrounds.

Chairman Biddlingmeier said there were truncated streets “all over town” not just this area and whilst it would be nice to fix it he was not in support of this project. Commissioner Jeglum spoke about the original zoning being Commercial – due to the proximity to the Fairgrounds.

Chairman Biddlingmeier opened the floor for Public Comment:

Deryl Whitten – Cornerstone Engineering, offered a couple of observations. He said the Kern County Fairground was surrounded on two sides by residential development and they had not impacted the Fairground. He said this piece of property had R-1 and R-3 developments close by and therefore it was consistent with other development around it. He said the 8 foot block wall was a typical mitigation of noise between a freeway and residential area. He referred to a disclosure being included for any potential buyers. He said “this town is going to have 600 new residents turning up next year and nothing is happening”. Further, he said everybody was sitting on the sidelines waiting to see what happens and right now he believed the City was not in a good position to serve those people.

Chairman Biddlingmeier said if Mr. Whitten was hearing 600 that would be awesome but it was not what he was hearing. Further, he said that we had to have people in town to buy homes and referred back to the number of approvals that had already been made. He said he couldn't see a clear need to do the project right now – with everything else that had been approved and sitting in some kind of development phase right now. He said he took exception to the comment that the City was not ready and the Planning Commission had not done their job.

Commissioner Jeglum referred to the General Plan Amendment and the proposed mixed use overlay and the possibility of doing a development at a future date via a Conditional Use Permit. She said she did not feel it was an inappropriate move to leave the area zoned Commercial at this time.

Mr. Whitten asked for clarification on that process and it was confirmed what was being discussed at GPAC with further clarification that there could be concerns with this development via the overlay process .

Chairman Biddlingmeier pointed out that the graphics of the sound study misplaced the tract and that further the figures in the report did not match with the Caltrans report for same area and was a little misleading.

Mr. Parsons said that the 4th July fireworks was appreciated by residents he knew who lived nearby the Fairgrounds. Further, he said that the site did not render itself in size to an economic development project as a fully commercial site – and if kept commercial would not be developed during this current development phase.

Kristen Wierick – AMG Associates – addressed the Commission. She said that from a macro point of view the development made sense from a continuity standpoint and also made sense from the sense of the depth of a commercial site saying there was not sufficient need for a 7 acre commercial site at this location.

Ms. Wierick said that in a December meeting the proposal came before the Commission as a discussion item and had been well-received with some requests to work on issues – which AMG had done. Further, she pointed out that the P.A.M. properties on kitty-corner had not had to meet any of the same mitigations. However, she said they did not mind and were sensitive to the Fairgrounds being in place first and had therefore properly mitigated and if the Commission felt the project was not properly mitigating she would like to hear the Commissioner's concern and address those. She hoped to mitigate with the Fairgrounds to make everyone comfortable.

Commissioner Taylor said he agreed with Ms. Wierick's comments.

Kathy Lewis – 1500 Radamacher – said she was a local realtor and had researched information in regards to the local market. She said that eight commercial properties existed – one vacant, two office-related and a very large office complex on Norma Street. She said the only pending project was a C-1 project. She said her opinion was that the project could be beneficial to the local market – saying users were enquiring in regards to commercial lots of this size. She said she saw it as a one story mini-village and had herself lived on Richmond Road and knew that residents were familiar with the Fairgrounds. She said that she felt the home lots would sell fairly quickly if available.

Public Comment closed at 7:47 p.m.

Chairman Biddlingmier asked Commissioners for their comments at 7:47 p.m.

Commissioner Beres said she appreciated what AMG had done following indications from the Planning Commission in December – saying they had done everything they had been asked to do.

Commissioner Jeglum said she apologized as she did not realize at the time of the December Planning Commission hearing that the project had come before the Planning Commission on a previous occasion and the reasons for the project being turned down. She spoke about an instance she had witnessed of buyers purchasing a home near a school - knowing it was near a school and conceptually the impact that had on them but that once school returned for the year, their experience versus the concept of those impacts caused them to be unhappy.

Commissioner Laire said that the developer had done what they had been asked to do and that he liked the project.

Vice-Chair Taylor commented that if the Fair Board did not want the development they should have written a stronger letter. He said he was concerned that people would not read the disclosure at time of purchase and he did not believe that the property was undevelopable if left commercial.

Chairman Biddlingmeier said he supported Commissioner Jeglum – he did not think the time was right to create another development in order to fix a road. He believed that enough developments had been created and he would like to see some come to fruition. He said he would like to protect the Fairgrounds – an asset to the Community.

Chairman Laire made a motion and Commissioner Beres seconded a motion to approve Resolution 08-08 as written. Resolution 08-08 was approved.

AYES: Laire, Taylor, Beres
NAYES: Jeglum, Biddlingmeier
ABSENT: None

NEW ITEM

- 7.c **SPR-08-06** a request to construct a 3,860 sq. ft. building at 1500 N. McLean St in the Ridgecrest Business Park CS (Service Commercial) Zone for PackWrap Business Center, law office and office space. APN 033-070-04 (Boster)

City Planner Alexander made a brief presentation to the Commission providing details of the site plan saying staff recommended approval.

Vice-Chairman Taylor said he thought the project looked good and thank goodness it wasn't a metal building.

Commissioner Beres said she felt it was exactly what the Commission was looking for in the business Park.

Commissioner Laire said he agreed.

Chairman Biddlingmeier opened the floor for public comment at 7:57 p.m.

Kathy Lewis – 1500 Radamacher – realtor – said she felt it was a great site plan and she felt the City could do with more incentive for such projects.

Vice Chairman Taylor made a motion and Commissioner Seconded a motion to approve Resolution 08-09 as written. Resolution 08-09 was approved.

AYES: Biddingmeier, Taylor, Laire, Jeglum, Beres
NAYES: None
ABSENT: None

8. **DISCUSSION ITEMS**
None.

9. **COMMISSIONER ITEMS**
None.

10. STAFF ITEMS

Power Point Presentation by Staff on a “Livable, Walkable, Healthy Community” – was covered off at GPAC.

11. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

July 8th PC meeting: No items for the agenda – no meeting necessary

July 22th PC meeting:

1. **GPA/ZC-08-02, PM 11869, TTM 7184:** GPA and ZC for the westerly 6.20 acres of Parcel 4, Parcel Map 10073, a 11.38 ac. parcel from a zoning of (R-1) Single Family Residential and a General Plan of (LD) Low Density Residential to a Zoning of (CG) General Commercial and a General Plan of (C) Commercial and a two lot PM 11869 and a 22 lot TTM 7184 located at the NE corner of So. China Lake Blvd and Dolphin Ave. (Tokay Dev)
2. **Site Plan Review SPR-08-03 Galleria at 1000 N. China Lake Blvd– VIMCO Dev.** A hotel and retail complex consisting of 2 three story hotels totaling 66,000 sf with 126 rooms and 2 one story retail/food centers totaling 31,000 sf on 4.87 acres with two future 1 acre restaurant sites located on Service Commercial (CS) zoning, 700 ft north and east of China Lake Blvd and Drummond Ave on PM 11664.. APN 033-050-11
3. **Site Plan Review SPR-08-05 Galleria At Civic Center 131 S. China Lake Blvd– VIMCO Dev.** A 48 unit motel and 4,800 sf retail complex consisting of a 2 story building on .67 acres located on General Commercial (CG) zoning, APN 478-101-02,03,04
4. **Site Plan Review SPR-08-07 Galleria At Miguel Ct, 553 S. China Lake Blvd– VIMCO Dev.** A 38 unit motel and 7,500 sf retail complex consisting of a 2 story building on 1 acre located on General Commercial (CG) zoning, APN 480-010-06

11. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.