

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE



December 06, 2022

6:02 PM

In accordance with City policy, all Planning Commission meetings are recorded on audio and video in their entirety and are available for review in the Community Development Department (CDD). These minutes are a brief summary of action taken.

1. ROLL CALL

Vice-Chair Lucy Rojas, Commissioners Ed Acosta (Arrived at 6:05pm), Daniel Dodge, Anna Kammer, Brando Sencion, and Jenni Veitch-Olson were present. Chairperson Veronica Dorantes-Pulido was absent.

A. Motion to excuse absent Planning Commissioners (If any)

MOTION: It was moved by Commissioner Dodge, seconded by Veitch-Olson, and carried by the following vote to excuse Chairperson Veronica Dorantes-Pulido.

AYES: COMMISSIONERS: Dodge, Kammer, Rojas, Sencion,
Veitch-Olson
NOES: COMMISSIONERS: None
ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS: Acosta, Dorantes-Pulido

Staff members present were Assistant City Attorney Denise S. Bazzano, Assistant Chief of Police Thomas Sims, Community Development Director Suzi Merriam, Principal Planner Justin Meek, Associate Planner Sarah Wikle, Administrative Analyst Maria Elena Ortiz, Executive Assistant Celia Castro, Permit Technician Valentina Avila, and City Interpreter Carlos Landaverry.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Vice-Chair Rojas led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. PRESENTATIONS & ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

A. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None

B. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE COMMISSION

None

4. CONSENT AGENDA

A. MOTION APPROVING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 1, 2022 REGULAR MEETING

PUBLIC INPUT

None

MOTION: It was moved by Commissioner Kammer, second by Commissioner Senci3n, and carried by the following vote to approve the Consent Agenda:

AYES: COMMISSIONERS: Acosta, Kammer, Rojas, Senci3n
Veitch-Olson

NOES: COMMISSIONERS: None

ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS: Dorantes-Pulido

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- A. SPECIAL USE PERMIT WITH ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (PP2022-50), FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A BREWERY AND TAPROOM (TYPE 23 ABC LICENSE) WITH LIVE ENTERTAINMENT AND FOR THE TRANSFER OF AN ON-SALE BEER AND WINE LICENSE (TYPE 41 ABC LICENSE) TO NEW OWNERSHIP FOR AN EXISTING RESTAURANT WITH BEER AND WINE SALES, LOCATED AT 410 RODRIGUEZ STREET/30 WEST BEACH STREET (APN 018-641-08), FILED BY VIDA JUICE, INC., APPLICANT, ON BEHALF OF PROPERTY OWNER, PAJARO WALL STREET INN, LLC AND FINDING PROJECT CATEGORICALLY EXEMPT FROM THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA)**

1) Staff Report

Staff report was given by Associate Planner Sarah Wikle.

2) Planning Commission Clarifying & Technical Questions

Commissioner Dodge inquired about live entertaining permit and on-site security requirements. In response, Associate Planner Sarah Wikle confirmed that a live entertainment permit may be issued for multiple events on an annual bases and that a security company would need to be vetted by the Police Department and obtain a business license.

Commissioner Dodge inquired about the condition of the parking garage across the street. Community Development Director Suzi Merriam clarified a meeting was held with the City Manager regarding the safety of the conditions of the parking garage.

In answering Commissioner Dodge about calls for service, Assistant Chief of Police Thomas Sims clarified that calls of service are an important part of a projects evaluation and do not limit current applicant to get a license. In response to a follow up question about how the number of calls is defined, Assistant Chief

of Police Thomas Sims notes all calls are evaluated in the geographical area and determine if it's a product of business that is currently there or not, and if not, this does not limit current applicant to obtain permit.

In answering commissioner Sención regarding the business's hours of operation, Associate Planner Wikle clarified the hours of operation were provided by the owner and that they comply with the alcohol ordinance. In response to a follow-up question, regarding security on-site during community events, Associate Planner Wikle noted that security would not be required for a community event, yet typically is needed for live entertainment and dancing events. Assistant Chief of Police Thomas Sims further clarified they will work with management to determine the needs of the event some may require security to be present while others will not.

In response to Commissioner Kammer inquiry about whether the restaurant is current in operation and serves alcohol, Associate Planner Wikle noted that the previous owners had a beer and wine sales permit in 2019, which is being transferred over to the new ownership.

In answering Vice-chair Rojas questions regarding the review of sensitive uses, Associate Planner Sarah Wikle clarified that the alcohol ordinance defines sensitive uses as public parks, schools and other sensitive uses where families or children may be present, within three hundred feet of the site. Associate Planner Sarah Wikle further explained that this buffer requirement would apply to a type 41 of on sale beer and wine, where minors are allowed and alcohol is sold with food and is not a convenience store. However, breweries are exempt from this as they are low risk outlets for ABC's and city code purposes.

In response to Vice-chair Rojas question about the patio, Associate Planner Wikle, clarified that the patio will be used for the restaurant purposes and sales of beer and wine.

3) Applicant Presentation

Presentation was given by applicant Felipe Ornelas.

4) Planning Commission Clarifying & Technical Questions

Commissioner Sención inquired about the proposed hours of operation from 7:00a.m. to 10:00p.m. In answering, applicant Felipe Ornelas clarified they would like to serve breakfast as needs arise. Community Development Director Suzi Merriam clarifies hours of operation are required in the conditions of approval and recommend applicants ask for maximum, because if hours need to be extended the Planning Commission has to review again.

Vice-Chair Rojas inquired that the business plan mentions Buena Vista has donated to various causes and has partnered with or invested in the community. In answering, Applicant Felipe Ornelas clarified their location in Santa Cruz was very limited and their community presence was very little. He further explained,

they have donated their beer, money or gift certificates to give back to the community. Applicant Felipe Ornelas mentioned they participated in Wine and Roses, and Fork to Table in Watsonville.

In answering Vice-Chair Rojas regarding the pilot brewery, and teaching others, applicant Felipe Ornelas stated that they partnered up with a team from Salinas and allowed them to use their brewery and techniques for growth and knowledge. Applicant Felipe Ornelas believes helping one another expands the growth of breweries.

5) Public Hearing

Vice-Chair Rojas opened the Public Hearing.

Ken Thompson mentioned he has been an intern at Vida Juice they have mentored him as a future business owner. He is in favor of the new establishment.

Adrian Miguel Angel Reynoso Ortega stated he is in support of Vida Juice, and believes there is more to the community than agriculture. Breweries bring in financial support for the community, jobs, places to relax, keeps income local. Vida Juice has a vision of where the location wants to go and Vida Juice does not lack experience.

Mireya Gomez Contreras Deputy Director of Arts Santa Cruz County supports the potential and economic development that Vida Juice can bring over time and can have an area for parents to wait for their children. She commented that Chuck and Felipe sound to be thoughtful and responsible to these new ideas, and are coming together for the community.

Jerry Garcia spoke in favor of the brewery, and shared his excitement to see Felipe and Chuck's dream come true and have outside sources coming to support the community.

Josh Muller spoke favorably about the item.

Martha Victoria Vega, resident of District 2, shared her support in favor and thanks Felipe and Chuck for investing in the community, and knows it will bring revenue to the city.

Richard Martinez Executive Chef spoke favorably about the item.

Hearing no further comments, Vice-Chairperson Rojas closed the Public Hearing.

6) Appropriate Motion (s)

MAIN MOTION: It was moved by Commissioner Dodge, seconded by Commissioner Kammer, to approve the following resolution:

RESOLUTION NO. 18-22 (PC)

RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE, CALIFORNIA, APPROVING A SPECIAL USE PERMIT WITH ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (PP2022-55) TO ALLOW FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A 4,317± SQUARE-FOOT BREWERY AND TAPROOM (TYPE 23 ABC LICENSE) WITH LIVE ENTERTAINMENT IN AND FOR THE TRANSFER OF AN ON-SALE BEER AND WINE LICENSE (TYPE 41 ABC LICENSE) TO NEW OWNERSHIP FOR AN EXISTING 3,580± SQUARE-FOOT RESTAURANT AND 1,351± SQUARE-FOOT OUTDOOR PATIO AREA WITH BEER AND WINE SALES LOCATED AT 410 RODRIGUEZ STREET/30 WEST BEACH STREET (APN 017-641-08), WATSONVILLE, CALIFORNIA AND FINDING PROJECT CATEGORICALLY EXEMPT FROM THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA)

7) Deliberation

Commissioner Kammer spoke in support of the item in the various way it will help the community.

Commissioner Veitch-Olson spoke favorably about the item.

Commissioner Dodge spoke in support of the item and welcomed the applicant to the community and community events.

Commissioner Sención spoke in favor about the item and the business package they have to offer.

Commissioner Acosta spoke favorably about the item.

Vice-Chairperson Rojas thanked the applicant for being there and shared her excitement for what this brewery has to offer the community.

8) Chair calls for a vote on motion(s)

AYES: COMMISSIONERS: Acosta, Dodge, Kammer, Rojas,
Sencion, Veitch-Olson

NOES: COMMISSIONERS: None

ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS: Dorantes-Pulido

Prior to the hearing of item 5.B, the Planning Commission recessed at 7:13 p.m.

The Planning Commission meeting resumed at 7:18 p.m.

B. PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION TO CITY COUNCIL FOR ADOPTION OF A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION AND APPROVAL OF A PLANNED DEVELOPMENT OVERLAY DISTRICT, SPECIFIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND SPECIAL USE PERMIT WITH DESIGN REVIEW TO ALLOW THE

CONSTRUCTION OF 1,072 SELF-STORAGE UNITS AND MANAGER'S APARTMENT ON A 4.4± ACRE SITE LOCATED AT 70 NIELSON STREET (APN 015-111-49)

1) Staff Report

Staff report was given by Principal Planner Justin Meek.

2) Planning Commission Clarifying & Technical Questions

Commissioner Veitch-Olson inquired about vehicular access off Nielson Street. In answering Commissioner Veitch-Olson's inquiry, Principal Planner Justin Meek clarified that there is a main entrance for patrons visiting the site and a secondary entrance for providing emergency access, if needed.

Commissioner Dodge inquired about the Watsonville 2005 General Plan. In answering Commissioner Dodge's inquiry, Principal Planner Justin Meek confirmed that any land use decisions would be based on the 2005 General Plan and not the 2030 General Plan.

In response to Commissioner Dodge's inquiry about the purpose of a PD Overlay District, Principal Planner Justin Meek clarified that it is considered an overlay or combining district with the underlining zoning district and would change the site's zoning to IP/PD. PDs are often applied to residential projects to allow for flexible design standards. For this project, the applicant requests a reduction in the City's parking standards for mini-warehouses, because applying them would result in 150+ spaces. Since many of these spaces were not in use, the applicant has applied for a planned development for the purpose of modifying the required number of parking spaces for the project.

In response to Commissioner Dodge's inquiry about the site, Principal Planner Justin Meek confirmed that the site was developed as a parking lot for use by the former business across the street and has not been used since the industrial use was closed many years ago.

In response to Commissioner Dodge's inquiry about airport issues and how the project would fit in the community, Principal Planner Justin Meek noted the applicant believes there is a market for additional storage units and that this is a reason why he would like to invest in this property.

In response to Commissioner Dodge's questions concerning the specific development plan and drainage, Principal Planner Justin Meeks clarified the site along Freedom Boulevard is lower than the street level. Principal Planner Justin Meek further noted that the amount of new impervious surface area compared to the existing impervious surface area would be less by about 10,000 square feet.

In response to Commissioner Dodge's inquiry concerning the effect of the minimum required number of parking spaces would have on the overall size of the project, Principal Planner Justin Meek confirmed that without the parking

reduction, the applicant would have had to provide the 150+ parking spaces. This would result in a significant change to the project, as the applicant would have to propose fewer units to make room for the required number of parking spaces.

Vice-Chair Rojas inquired about whether the indemnification provision is related the building process only or in perpetuity for covering any liability for any incident that could occur. In response, Principal Planner Justin Meek clarified that it is in relation to the project approval, not necessarily in perpetuity to the operation of the project itself. Principal Planner Justin Meek further noted, were this project to be approved, and were the Pilots Association or any other entity wish to challenge the project, they would do so in court and the applicant would defend the City. Assistant City Attorney Denise S. Bazzano confirmed this statement and added that an indemnity provision is a standard condition of approval.

In response to Vice-Chair Rojas question concerning how long the parking lot has been unused and what other projects might be viable at the site, Principal Planner Justin Meek confirmed the site has been vacant for many years and that he had not heard of other applicants coming forward to proposed projects for the site. He further stated that since the site is in airport safety zones 2 and 5, it would be hard to propose a project that has office space or light industrial type development because one would not be able to build a building of any significant size to utilize the premise. In further answering, Principal Planner Justin Meek noted one of the reasons why staff supports this project is due to the significant limitations on what could be done with this land because of its proximity to the airport. As mentioned previously, mini-storages are conditionally permitted uses in industrial zones, but that does not mean the City would support them in all areas of the City. Principal Planner Justin Meek noted this is why he spoke to the general plan policies regarding whether or not the project aligns with economic development, which call for more job generating and higher intensity land uses in industrial zones. Principal Planner Justin Meek commented that [type of development] is not appropriate for this site.

3) Applicant Presentation

Presentation was given by applicant Ed Boersma, who thanked the Commissioners in advance for their consideration of this project and appreciation for staff and in particular Justin Meek for his professionalism and thoroughness. Mr. Boersma introduced Developer, Ted Crocker, who has done numerous developments in Watsonville over the years. Mr. Boersma note that Mr. Crocker and his brother are pioneers in the self-storage industry and have been pilots at the Airport, which provides a unique perspective for this site and the challenges it faces. Further clarifying the need for self-storages in the community, Mr. Boersma commented that they have prepared professional market studies confirming that Watsonville is uniquely underserved. Mr. Boersma further noted that the community is paying fifty percent higher rates for storage in Watsonville than they do in San Jose. This project will help alleviate this condition by bringing more supply to the community.

Ed Boersma stated there is a reason why we see self-storage near airports, because it is the appropriate use there, noting its low intensity and stating it is the lowest traffic generating use. Mr. Boersma commented that he and Ted Crocker have 40 years of experience in the [self-storage] industry. Mr. Boersma noted that the proposed facility will likely have anywhere from three to five tenants at a given time, less than the intensity calculations that were prepared for the project. The applicant concluded by noting that he accepts the conditions of approval.

4) Planning Commission Clarifying & Technical Questions

In response to Commissioner Dodge's question about why the applicant has chosen the City of Watsonville, Ed Boersma noted that Ted Crocker constructed his first storage unit in Watsonville and would like to provide another storage unit to serve the community. Market studies show Watsonville is an underserved community, which results in high rents that make it attractive to develop self-storage here.

Commissioner Acosta spoke favorably about the item, and agreed it is a good site for a storage unit.

In response to Commissioner Veitch-Olson's question about security concerns and measures that would be implemented, Ed Boersma noted that the property will have video surveillance, a resident manager onsite, and gated access control.

Vice-Chairperson Rojas inquired about information on job creation, contributions the business will make to the community, and how the project would impact the community positively. In answering, Ed Boersma shared there will be some jobs during construction but not many during the operation of the facility. Self-storage facilities tend to create two to three jobs—i.e., a manager, relief manager, and maintenance worker. Mr. Boersma commented that while the project would not create a high intensity of jobs, given the safety concerns with regard to the airport, this is a positive. Mr. Boersma noted that they would make provisions for the police department, fire department, and the boys and girls club to get a complimentary unit—i.e., Ted Crocker tries to be community minded in those regards.

In response to Vice-Chairperson Rojas inquiry about using local business and labor during construction and ongoing maintenance, Ed Boersma stated the general contractor, who is based in the Bay Area, would seek local sub-contractors for many of the trades and ongoing maintenance.

5) Public Hearing

Vice-Chairperson Rojas opened the Public Hearing.

Ryan Ramirez, Santa Cruz County resident, private pilot and tenant at the Airport, and member of the Watsonville Pilot Association (WPA), stated that, "I

have to agree that the storage facility at this location is perfect for being near the airport.” Mr. Ramirez expressed opposition to the project based on the letter the WPA’s attorney William Parkin sent on December 5, 2022. Mr. Ramirez stressed that the “WPA is very invested and very serious in ensuring the enforcement of the prior two judgements against the City regarding the development in the Airport Influence Area.” Mr. Ramirez noted that the WPA is currently in litigation with the City regarding the approval of the townhouse project at 547 Airport Boulevard, and that the WPA is prepared to do the same regarding the storage facility. Mr. Ramirez commented that a lawsuit should not be necessary, as a storage facility is appropriate for the site. However, Mr. Ramirez stressed that the “WPA wants the City to come in compliance with federal law, state law, and with the two priors Superior Court judgements and that specifically is for the City to apply the California Airport Land Use Handbook into its mandatory provisions, into its general plan, which it has not done yet.”

Martha Victoria Vega, Watsonville resident, spoke favorably about the project. Ms. Vega mentioned the Watsonville Pilot Association is always opposed to any project, and believes there needs to be a balance between the airport and property owners to be able develop their land. Ms. Vega noted that the WPA blocks the development of needed housing. Ms. Vega expressed opposition to an impending lawsuit on the project.

Ted Crocker, property owner, commented that he has built hundreds of projects around California and other states. Mr. Crocker shared background on selecting the site and stated that he is anxious to get started and thinks the City will be proud of the project.

Hearing no further comments, Vice-Chairperson Rojas closed the Public Hearing.

6) Appropriate Motion (s)

MAIN MOTION: It was moved by Commissioner Dodge, seconded by Commissioner Acosta, to approve the following resolution:

RESOLUTION NO. 19-22 (PC)

RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE, CALIFORNIA, RECOMMEND THE CITY COUNCIL ADOPT A RESOLUTION APPROVING A PLANNED DEVELOPMENT OVERLAY DISTRICT, SPECIFIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND SPECIAL USE PERMIT, DESIGN REVIEW AND ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (APP. NO. 1656) TO ALLOW THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE CROCKERS LOCKERS PROJECT OF 1,072 SELF-STORAGE UNITS WITH A MANGERS APARTMENT ON A 4.4± ACRE SITE LOCATED AT 70 NIELSON STREET, WATSONVILLE, CALIFORNIA (APN 015-111-49)

RESOLUTION NO. 20-22 (PC)

RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE, CALIFORNIA, RECOMMENDING THE CITY COUNCIL ADOPT A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION (APP. NO. 1656) FOR THE CROCKERS LOCKERS PROJECT ON A 4.4± ACRE SITE LOCATED AT 70 NIELSON STREET, WATSONVILLE, CALIFORNIA (APN 015-111-49); AND RECOMMENDING THE CITY COUNCIL ADOPT CONCURRENTLY A MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM FOR THE PROJECT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT

7) Deliberation

Commissioner Dodge noted that this is not a final decision but a recommendation of approval to City Council. Commissioner Dodge further commended that the the FAA letter provides supportive evidence in supporting approval of the motion to recommend approval to City Council.

Commissioner Veitch-Olson thanked Principal Planner Justin Meek for his work on this project to ensure the City follows all of its due diligence and thanked Mr. Crocker for his continued investment in the community. Commissioner Veitch-Olson states this is a collaborative and creative solution to a vacant parking lot.

8) Chair calls for a vote on motion(s)

AYES: COMMISSIONERS: Acosta, Dodge, Kammer, Rojas,
Sencion, Veitch-Olson
NOES: COMMISSIONERS: None
ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS: Dorantes-Pulido,

6. REPORT OF THE SECRETARY

Community Development Director Merriam gave her report. She thanked everyone for their services this year and hopes to see them all in January. Wishes everyone a safe and happy holidays.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Vice-Chairperson Rojas adjourned the meeting at 8:18 PM. The next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 10, 2023, at 6:00 PM

Suzi Merriam, Secretary
Planning Commission

Vice-Chair Lucy Rojas, Chairperson
Planning Commission