

MINUTES

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE



March 21, 2023

6:03 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 the action taken.

1. ROLL CALL

Vice-Chair Lucy Rojas, Commissioners Ed Acosta, Daniel Dodge, Peter Radin, Brando Sencion, Martha Vega, and Jenni Veitch-Olson were present.

A. MOTION TO EXCUSE ABSENT PLANNING COMMISSIONERS (IF ANY)

MOTION: None

Staff members present were Assistant City Attorney Denise S. Bazzano, Community Development Director Suzi Merriam, Principal Planner Matt Orbach, Assistant Planner Alvaro Madrigal, Administrative Analyst Maria Elena Ortiz, Executive Assistant Celia Castro, 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. NEW BUSINESS

A. NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF PLANNING COMMISSION CHAIRPERSON

1) Nomination Period

Community Development Director Merriam opened the nomination period for the election of Planning Commission Chairperson.

Commissioner Vega nominated Commissioner Dodge.

2) Public Input

None

3) Motion electing Chairperson (roll call vote)

Commissioner Vega expressed her support for Commissioner Dodge becoming Chair.

MAIN MOTION: It was moved by Commissioner Sencion, seconded by Commissioner Radin to appoint Commissioner Dodge as Chairperson:

AYES: COMMISSIONERS: Acosta, Dodge, Radin, Rojas, Sencion, Vega,
Veitch-Olson

NOES: COMMISSIONERS: None

ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS: None

By unanimous decision, Commissioner Dodge was elected Chairperson of the Planning Commission.

B. NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF PLANNING COMMISSION VICE-CHAIRPERSON

1) Nomination Period

Community Development Director Merriam opened the nomination period for the election of Planning Commission Vice-Chairperson.

Commissioner Radin nominated Commissioner Acosta.

2) Public Input

None

3) Motion electing Vice-Chairperson (roll call vote)

MAIN MOTION: It was moved by Commissioner Dodge, seconded by Commissioner Vega to appoint Commissioner Acosta as Vice-Chairperson:

AYES: COMMISSIONERS: Acosta, Dodge, Radin, Rojas, Sención, Vega,
Veitch-Olson

NOES: COMMISSIONERS: None

ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS: None

By unanimous decision, Commissioner Acosta was elected Vice-Chairperson of the Planning Commission.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

A. MOTION APPROVING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 14, 2023, REGULAR MEETING

PUBLIC INPUT

None

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

AYES: COMMISSIONERS: Acosta, Dodge, Radin, Rojas, Sención, Vega
Veitch-Olson

NOES: COMMISSIONERS: None

ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS: None

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. SPECIAL USE PERMIT WITH ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (PP2022-4605), TO ALLOW FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A 1,200± SQUARE FOOT DELI WITH 200± SQUARE FOOT DEDICATED SALES AREA IN A PORTION OF AN INDUSTRIAL BUILDING WITH A COMMERCIAL KITCHEN LOCATED AT 10 HANGAR WAY (APN: 015-111-42), FILED BY APPLICANT AND PROPERTY OWNER, LAURA HOLMQUIST-GOMEZ, AND FINDING THE PROJECT CATEGORICALLY EXEMPT FROM THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA)

1) Staff Report

Staff report was given by Assistant Planner Alvaro Madrigal.

2) Planning Commission Clarifying & Technical Questions

In answering Commissioner Vega, Assistant Planner Alvaro Madrigal stated the operating hours on the staff report show 6:00am – 2:00pm, but the correct operating hours that will be corrected on the special use permit will be from 6:00am – 8:00pm.

In answering Commissioner Vega, Community Development Director Merriam clarified the applicant has to act on the permit within the twenty-four-months.

In answering Commissioner Rojas, Community Development Director Merriam clarified there is no business plan necessary for this permit since there will be no alcohol sales at this location.

In answering Commissioner Sencion, Assistant Planner Alvaro Madrigal clarified the Deli has a permit for catering and is proposing on-site sales with the new Special Use Permit. In further answering Commissioner Sencion, Assistant

Planner Madrigal clarified there would be a designated area to provide food service “to-go” in the establishment.

In answering Chairperson Dodge, Community Development Director Merriam stated staff found the proposed use to be compatible with the surrounding industrial area and adjacent businesses.

3) Applicant Presentation

The presentation was given by property owner Laura Holmquist-Gomez.

4) Planning Commission Clarifying & Technical Questions

In answering Commissioner Rojas, property owner Laura Holmquist-Gomez stated they will be having four shifts for the catering side of the Deli, providing new hiring positions for the community.

In answering Commissioner Rojas, property owner Laura Holmquist-Gomez stated their community engagement is to provide left-over food to any shelters in need, as well as providing for Community programs such as the Teen Challenges Program, Adopt a Family, and food drives.

Chairperson Dodge expressed his support for the Deli becoming a part of Hanger Way.

Commissioner Vega expressed her support for the deli.

In answering Commissioner Veitch-Olson, property owner Laura Holmquist-Gomez stated the level of crime has decreased, the Deli has installed cameras and would like to start a crime watch for the area with surrounding businesses including security to patrol the area.

5) Public Hearing

Chair Dodge opened the public hearing.

Yolanda Maria Fernandez (unavailable audio due to technical issues)

Hearing no further comments, Chairperson Dodge closed the Public Hearing.

6) Appropriate Motion (s)

Commissioner Radin requested the Resolution to be modified with appropriate changes to the text within the Resolution. The change proposed was in the fourth paragraph, the modification to the text clarifies the City did not make any decision or take action in the zoning clearance to allow the owner a five-star catering.

Assistant City Attorney Bazzano agreed with the modification request and shared that the sentence is not necessary for approval.

Community Development Director Merriam shared she agreed with the modification request to the Resolution.

MAIN MOTION: It was moved by Commissioner Radin, seconded by Commissioner Vega, to approve the following resolution subject to the deletion of the sentence cited:

RESOLUTION NO. 02-23 (PC)

RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE, CALIFORNIA, APPROVING A SPECIAL USE PERMIT WITH ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (PP2022-4605) TO ALLOW FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A 1,200± SQUARE-FOOT DELI WITH 200± SQUARE FOOT DEDICATED SALES AREA IN A PORTION OF AN INDUSTRIAL BUILDING WITH A COMMERCIAL KITCHEN UNDER CONSTRUCTION LOCATED AT 10 HANGAR WAY (APN 015-111-42), WATSONVILLE, CALIFORNIA AND FINDING PROJECT CATEGORICALLY EXEMPT FROM THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA)

7) Deliberation

None

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

AYES: COMMISSIONERS: Acosta, Dodge, Radin, Rojas, Sencion, Vega
Veitch-Olson

NOES: COMMISSIONERS: None

ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS: None

B. PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION TO CITY COUNCIL ON ADOPTION OF AN INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION, AND MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT; APPROVAL OF A SPECIAL USE PERMIT WITH DESIGN REVIEW AND ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (APP. NO. 2138) FOR A DISTRIBUTION FACILITY AT 200 MANABE OW ROAD (APN 018-711-33); AND AMENDMENT TO THE MANABE OW BUSINESS PARK SPECIFIC PLAN TO REMOVE TWO INTERNAL STREETS FROM THE LAND USE AND CIRCULATION PLAN

1) Staff Report

Staff report was given by Principal Planner Matt Orbach.

2) Planning Commission Clarifying & Technical Questions

In answering Chairperson Dodge, Principal Planner Orbach clarified the staff recommendation is a recommendation of the Planning Commission to City Council.

In answering Commissioner Rojas, Principal Planner Orbach clarified he received one phone call in addition to the six letters received by agencies and organizations. In further answering Commissioner Rojas, Principal Planner Orbach stated he had one phone conversation with a resident regarding additional information about the project and directed the caller to the City's website.

Principal Planner Orbach stated the Planning Department's procedure is to notify residents through a Public Hearing notice that is mailed out to property owners and residents in surrounding areas and placing physical postings on and in the vicinity around the proposed project site.

In answering Commissioner Rojas, Principal Planner Orbach stated the North Business Park Area, now occupied by FedEx, was potentially going to include an internal street. FedEx exceeded the square foot threshold which required installation of Manabe Ow Road, the bridge over the Watsonville Slough, and the roundabout at the Ohlone Parkway/Manabe Ow Road intersection, so the internal street connecting the North Business Park Area to Loma Vista Drive was never needed or constructed.

In answering Commissioner Rojas, Principal Planner Orbach stated larger companies set up LLCs for specific projects.

In answering Commissioner Acosta, Principal Planner Orbach stated all Public Hearing notices and postings are in English and Spanish.

In answering Commissioner Rojas, Principal Planner Orbach clarified the letter from the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band often requested tribal monitoring construction activities, so the mitigation monitoring and reporting program was modified to include tribal monitoring of construction activities.

In answering Chairperson Dodge, Principal Planner Orbach stated signage is required prior to building permit submittal. He further clarified there will be signage on the front sides of the building and a monument sign on Manabe Ow Road.

In answering Chairperson Dodge, Principal Planner Orbach clarified he has been in contact with representatives from the Watsonville Wetlands Watch due to their early interest in the project, and that coordination led to the installation of native vegetation along the northern portion of the access road adjacent to Watsonville Slough.

In further answering Chairperson Dodge, Principal Planner Orbach stated the Watsonville Wetlands Watch letter mentioned they respected the work the Planning Department has done with them but the applicant would like to go

farther with maintaining and enhancing the regional drainage channel that runs along the western side of the property.

In answering Chairperson Dodge, Principal Planner Orbach clarified the access road is intended to be twelve feet wide and the easement will be larger because it includes the drainage ditch.

In answering Chairperson Dodge, Community Development Director Merriam stated there will be one hundred and two trees planted around the facility including Red Maples, Strawberry Trees, Jacaranda Tree, Crepe Myrtle, Chinese Pistache, London Plane, and Coast Live Oak. She identified several of these tree species as indigenous and/or native species.

In answering Chairperson Dodge, Principal Planner Orbach stated the rail trail does not go on the property and pointed out the access road and associated easement run the length of the south property line adjacent to the rail trail.

In answering Commissioner Vega, Principal Planner Orbach stated, while this project does not create new jobs because it is an existing business within the City of Watsonville upgrading to an appropriately sized facility, there will be additional employment opportunities for the community provided by whatever new business takes over the applicant's current facility on Riverside Drive.

In answering Commissioner Veitch-Olson, Principal Planner Orbach stated the Manabe-Ow Business Park Specific Plan was trying to provide possibilities for development for this area, but market conditions dictate who will purchase the individual properties and develop the project area. Principal Planner Orbach further noted that the specific plan amendment for the removal of two internal streets was not taken lightly and pointed out the project needs to go to City Council to get approval of the changes.

In answering Chairperson Dodge, Principal Planner Orbach stated there will be no additional roundabouts.

In answering Chairperson Dodge, Principal Planner Orbach stated the adopted truck route from the proposed project site leads to the right out of Manabe Ow Road onto Ohlone Parkway and onto West Beach Street, which ensure that semi-trucks would not cross through the nearby residential neighborhoods along Ohlone Parkway. In further answering Chairperson Dodge, Community Development Director Suzi Merriam clarified the designated truck routes are part of the road networks and are designated on the general plan.

In answering Commissioner Vegas inquiry about enforcement of truck routes, Assistant City Attorney Bazzano stated there is signage on the side of the road with Municipal code provisions or State Statutes attached to them and they are usually enforced by police officers and highway patrol. In further answering, Community Development Director Merriam clarified the enforcement is identified in the municipal code.

3) Applicant Presentation

Presentation was given by Pehr Peterson of Reyes Holdings. (Unavailable audio due to technical issues)

4) Planning Commission Clarifying & Technical Questions

In answering Commissioner Veitch-Olson, Mr. Peterson stated the company has a ten-year plan to transition all of their fleet to electric vehicles, starting in 2024 and expected to be achieved by 2034.

In answering Commissioner Rojas, Mr. Peterson stated they do not own the building where their current operation is located on Riverside Drive (SR 129).

In answering Commissioner Vega, Mr. Peterson stated they do not have a clear opening date since it is a twelve-month construction process, and issuance of the building permit is tied to the City approval of roundabout designs as well.

In answering Commissioner Rojas, Mr. Peterson stated the company has a sourcing company for the construction of this project, but ultimately their goal is to use local contractors. (Parts unavailable audio due to technical issues)

In answering Commissioner Acosta, Mr. Peterson stated the bids have to do with the size of trades supporting the concrete floors. (Parts of this answer was in audible)

In answering Chairperson Dodge, Mr. Peterson clarified the project will serve the northern part of California and the two nearest warehouses are located in Santa Maria and San Jose. The project on Manabe Ow Road will provide services in between those locations. In further answering Chairperson Dodge, Mr. Peterson clarified the company pays above living wages.

5) Public Hearing

Hearing no further comments, Chairperson Dodge closed the Public Hearing.

6) Appropriate Motion (s)

MAIN MOTION: It was moved by Commissioner Vega, with the request that the City Council to consider the residents and the neighborhood as part of their deliberations, seconded by Commissioner Acosta, to approve the following resolution:

RESOLUTION NO. 03-23 (PC)

RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE, CALIFORNIA, RECOMMENDING THE CITY COUNCIL ADOPT A SPECIFIC PLAN AMENDMENT (APP. NO. 2138) FOR THE MANABE OW BUSINESS PAR SPECIFIC PLAN

RESOLUTION NO. 04-23 (PC)

RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE, CALIFORNIA, RECOMMENDING TO THE CITY COUNCIL ADOPTION OF A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION (APP. NO. 2138) FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW 155,847 SQ. FT. WAREHOUSING AND DISTRIBUTION FACILITY ON AN 11.5-ACRE SITE LOCATED AT 200 MANABE OW ROAD (APN: 018-711-33); AND RECOMMENDING THE CITY COUNCIL ADOPT CONCURRENTLY A MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM FOR THE PROJECT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT

RESOLUTION NO. 05-23 (PC)

RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE, CALIFORNIA, RECOMMENDING THE CITY COUNCIL ADOPT A RESOLUTION APPROVING A SPECIAL USE PERMIT WITH DESIGN REVIEW AND ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (APP. NO. 2138) TO ALLOW CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW 155,847 SQ. FT. WAREHOUSING AND DISTRIBUTION FACILITY ON AN 11.5-ACRE SITE LOCATED AT 200 MANABE OW ROAD (APN: 018-711-33)

7) Deliberation

Commissioner Rojas inquired about additional outreach to residents prior to the City Council meeting. Principal Planner Matt Orbach clarified additional noticing will be provided to residents prior to City Council meeting regarding this project.

Commissioner Rojas inquired about the meeting date of the City Council meeting regarding 200 Manabe Ow Road. Principal Planner Orbach stated the meeting date is set for Tuesday, April 11.

Commissioner Veitch-Olson inquired about the majority of votes required to pass the motion. Community Development Director Merriam stated only four votes are needed.

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

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

NOES: COMMISSIONERS: None

ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS: None

ABSTAIN: COMMISSIONERS: Radin

7. REPORT OF THE SECRETARY

Community Development Director Merriam gave her report. The shared Emergency Operation Center is responding to the floods that occurred over the week in Monterey County.

Chairperson Dodge inquired about a date schedule for the reopening of Pajaro.

Community Development Director Merriam stated there is no date set for the reopening of Pajaro, further stating Monterey County has more extensive information regarding Pajaro area.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Chairperson Dodge adjourned the meeting at 8:08 PM. The next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 4, 2023, at 6:00 PM

Suzi Merriam, Secretary
Planning Commission

Daniel Dodge, Chair
Planning Commission