

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE



December 7, 2021

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 action taken.

1. ROLL CALL

Chair Veitch-Olson announced that Vice-Chair Dorantes Pulido was absent and recommended an excused absence

Chair Jenni Veitch-Olson and Commissioners Ed Acosta, Gina Cole, Daniel Dodge, Anna Kammer, Lucy Rojas were present. Vice-Chair Veronica Dorantes-Pulido was absent.

Staff members present were City Attorney Alan Smith, Community Development Director Suzi Merriam, Interim Assistant Police Chief Jorge Zamora, Principal Planner Justin Meek, Associate Planner Ivan Carmona, Associate Planner Sarah Wikle, City Interpreter Carlos Landaverry, City Interpreter Angelica Jauregui, Administrative Analyst Maria Elena Ortiz, and Executive Assistant Deborah Muniz.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Veitch-Olson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. PRESENTATIONS & ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

A. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None

B. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE COMMISSION

Commissioner Dodge stated a Redistricting Committee is proposing to split Santa Cruz County and the Salinas valley into different regions particular the state assembly and congressional district. He urged the public to check the City's website and to send in their comments.

Commissioner Cole invited the public to attend Santa's workshop on December 19 from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm at the Veterans of Foreign War on Freedom Boulevard sponsored by the Watsonville Recreation Advocates. The cost is \$5.00 per child and adults are free.

Commissioner Cole thanked all the participants who have supported the Mayor's bike ride during the past year. The Friends of the Parks and Recreation Department has been sponsoring and supporting a monthly Mayor's bike ride and she hopes it will continue in the new year.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

A. MOTION APPROVING MINUTES OF OCTOBER 11, 2021 AND NOVEMBER 2, 2021 REGULAR MEETINGS

MOTION: It was moved by Commissioner Dodge, seconded by Commissioner Cole, and carried by the following vote to approve the Consent Agenda:

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

NOES: COMMISSIONERS: None

ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS: Dorantes-Pulido

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. SPECIAL USE PERMIT WITH ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (PP2021-2533) TO ALLOW A SOCIAL SERVICE ORGANIZATION TO OPERATE IN A MODULAR BUILDING UNTIL MAY 31, 2023 LOCATED AT 680 WEST BEACH STREET (APN: 018-321-06)

1) Staff Report

Staff report was given by Associate Planner Carmona.

2) Planning Commission Clarifying & Technical Questions

None

3) Applicant Presentation

Applicant Heidi Boynton, newly appointed Executive Director for Jacob's Heart, stated it is very important to continue the care they provide to the community at their location. They have provided services for 23 years and serve families in four counties. They are well supported by the community.

4) Planning Commission Clarifying & Technical Questions

In answering Commissioner Dodge, Associate Planner Carmona confirmed that the applicant requested approval of the Special Use Permit until May 2023 and is included in the Conditions of Approval.

In answering Commissioner Cole, Ms. Boynton replied there are 11 full time staff members and as an essential service provider they have been working in the office throughout the pandemic. Due to the pandemic they are unable to provide

their full scope of services. At the present time there are 15 to 20 people at any given time.

5) Public Hearing

Chair Veitch-Olson opened the public hearing.

Renee Skelton, president of the Freedom's Lions Club, spoke in support of Jacob's Heart. She stated Jacob's Heart has allowed them to operate their vision screenings in a small office of the building.

In answering both Commissioner Cole and Commissioner Dodge, Director Merriam replied that staff was not aware of the office space used by the Freedom Lions Club and this issue will be reviewed by staff and handled separately. The main use of the building is for Jacob's Heart.

Hearing no further comments, Chair Veitch-Olson closed the public hearing.

6) Appropriate Motion (s)

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

**RESOLUTION NO. 19-21 (PC):
RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF
WATSONVILLE, CALIFORNIA, APPROVING A SPECIAL USE PERMIT
(PP2021-2533) TO ALLOW JACOB'S HEART CHILDREN'S CANCER
SUPPORT SERVICES, A NON-PROFIT CORPORATION TO OPERATE IN A
MODULAR BUILDING UNTIL MAY 31, 2023 LOCATED AT 680 WEST BEACH
STREET (APN: 018-321-06), WATSONVILLE, CALIFORNIA**

7) Deliberation

None.

8) Chair calls for a Vote on Motion (s)

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

**B. SPECIAL USE PERMIT (APPLICATION NO. 1949) TO ALLOW GROW CO. A
LAWFULLY ESTABLISHED CANNABIS CULTIVATION FACILITY TO EXPAND
ITS CULTIVATION OPERATIONS TO SUITES 1B AND 4 LOCATED AT 9
HANGAR WAY SUITE 2 (APN: 015- 111-17)**

1) Staff Report

The staff report was given by Associate Planner Ivan Carmona.

2) Planning Commission Clarifying & Technical Questions

In answering Commissioner Dodge, Principal Planner Meek explained whenever you have an application you base it on the policies or regulations that are in place at the time. The approval of the housing project and rezoning located to the north of the facility had not yet occurred yet when the application for the cannabis facility was received.

In answering Commissioner Rojas, Associate Planner Carmona stated the project met all the separation requirements per the Watsonville Municipal Code in 2016; however, with the changes to the Cannabis Ordinance in 2020 the site became nonconforming. The separation requirement is now from parcel line to the nearest wall of sensitive use instead of the path of travel.

In answering Commissioner Rojas, Associate Planner Carmona replied only approval of the expansion of Suite 1B and Suite 4 is being requested by the applicant. If the site met separation requirements the project would not require consideration by the Planning Commission; only approval by the Zoning Administrator by a minor modification.

City Attorney Smith added all Use Permits run with the land unless there is a change of use or abandonment of use for a prescribed period of six months and some unique circumstances with the alcohol and cannabis process.

In answering Commissioner Rojas, Associate Planner Carmona stated the Police Department is tasked with monitoring the cannabis facilities and report any nuisances to the Community Development Department. The Police Department did not find any issues with the applicant and met all security standards.

In answering Commissioner Cole, Associate Planner Carmona replied the reason for the location of the nursery is due to less odor and it will help with the cultivation process.

Principal Planner Meek added that the plants grow in different stages in different areas.

3) Applicant Presentation

Bryce Berryessa, applicant, stated the residential units are very close to the facility; however, on his side of the property there is a 6-foot-tall concrete wall which is 18 inches thick and it is 9 feet tall on the residential side. The plants in the nursery are not sprayed with chemicals and have no odor. They use an advanced HVAC and infiltration system to minimize odor and have not had any odor complaints. They will not be coming back to the Planning Commission for further expansions since this expansion will maximize their space.

NOES: COMMISSIONERS: None
ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS: Dorantes-Pulido

C. SPECIAL USE PERMIT (APPLICATION NO. 1318) TO ALLOW THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ON-SALE BEER (TYPE 40 ABC LICENSE) UNDER NEW OWNERSHIP FOR AN EXISTING 1,425 SQUARE FOOT BAR WITH LIVE ENTERTAINMENT LOCATED AT 118 MAIN STREET (APN: 017-681-08)

1) Staff Report

The staff report was given by Associate Planner Sarah Wikle.

2) Planning Commission Clarifying & Technical Questions

In answering Commissioner Dodge, Interim Assistant Police Chief Zamora replied he is not certain how ABC is defining over concentrated areas. This is not a new license and it is not located in a high crime area. Twenty-five years ago, this was a high crime area but that is not the case today.

In answering Commissioner Dodge, Interim Assistant Police Chief Zamora stated the difference is the City does not have the same type of criminal activity they experienced 10-15 years ago.

In answering Commissioner Dodge, Associate Planner Wikle confirmed that the transfer of ownership has a time limit of 20 years.

In answering Commissioner Rojas, Associate Planner Wikle replied the documents in Spanish in the packet were not translated into English. Another department Planner who is bilingual assisted with the scoring and interview process with the applicant.

In answering Commissioner Rojas, Director Merriam explained only certain items are translated such as meetings, notices to the public, public hearing notices but staff reports, application forms, etc. are not translated and the City does not have the ability to provide those services.

In answering Commissioner Cole, Associate Planner Wikle replied she is not familiar with the population that resides at the boarding house located near the bar. Separation requirements do not apply to this license since this is an existing license and just a transfer of ownership.

In answering Commissioner Kammer, Associate Planner Wikle stated an entertainment permit is required for a one-time event; however, for ongoing events a yearly permit can be issued and entertainment permits are issued by the Police Department.

3) Applicant Presentation

Juana Ortiz, applicant, stated the safety and security of the community is a priority and she will work with the neighbors to address any problems. Both her and Jorge who will be the bar manager have worked together in a nightclub in San Jose for two years. Jorge has a lot of experience and knowledge and his family has owned and operated various night clubs and bars. They have already made some cosmetic improvements to the exterior of the building.

4) Planning Commission Clarifying & Technical Questions

In answering Commissioner Cole, Ms. Ortiz replied that her role with the other establishments she has worked at has been the administrative side of the business and Jorge has more experience in operations.

5) Public Hearing

Chair Veitch-Olson opened the public hearing.

Hearing no comment, Chair Veitch-Olson closed the public hearing.

6) Appropriate Motion(s)

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

RESOLUTION NO. 21-21 (PC):

RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE, CALIFORNIA, APPROVING A SPECIAL USE PERMIT (APPLICATION NO. 1318) TO ALLOW THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ON-SALE BEER (TYPE 40) ABC LICENSE UNDER NEW OWNERSHIP FOR AN EXISTING 1,425± SQUARE FOOT BAR WITH LIVE ENTERTAINMENT (EL MALECON INC.) LOCATED AT 118 MAIN STREET (APN 017-681-08) WATSONVILLE, CALIFORNIA

7) Deliberation

Commissioner Dodge thanked the applicant for her presentation. He expressed his concern regarding the historical problems that occurred with the previous establishments located in the same area.

In answering Commissioner Dodge, Associate Planner Wikle replied that the maximum time frame an entertainment permit can be issued is a year; however, the time limit is at the digression of the Police Department. The yearly permit is reviewed yearly and the applicant has to apply yearly.

Chair Veitch-Olson thanked the applicant for all of the tenant improvements and commended them on their application score.

In answering Commissioner Cole, Associate Planner Wikle replied that the applicant has two years from the date the permit is approved to act on it.

Director Merriam stated during the pandemic bars are allowed to be open and the applicant just needs to get a business license and that would begin their permit effectiveness.

8) Chair Calls for a Vote on Motion(s)

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

6. REPORT OF THE SECRETARY

Community Development Director Suzi Merriam gave her report. She announced that a building application for the construction of 50 residential units which includes 20% affordable units was submitted for 558 Main Street. Due to the holidays City offices will be closed to the public from December 23, 2021 through January 2, 2022. The City along with other local jurisdictions have been working on a request for proposal for a county-wide bike share program. They are in the final stages of selecting an operator.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Veitch-Olson adjourned the meeting at 7:58 PM. The next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 18, 2022, at 6:00 PM.

Suzi Merriam, Secretary
Planning Commission

Jenni Veitch-Olson, Chair
Planning Commission