

MINUTES

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE**

**COUNCIL CHAMBERS
275 MAIN STREET, 4th FLOOR, WATSONVILLE, CALIFORNIA**

December 3, 2019

6:04 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 Jenni Veitch-Olson, Vice-Chair Matthew H. Jones, and Commissioners Anna Kammer, Jenna Rodriguez, and Jenny T. Sarmiento were present. Commissioners Ed Acosta and Phillip F. Tavarez were absent.

Staff members present were City Attorney Alan Smith, Community Development Director Suzi Merriam, Principal Planner Justin Meek, Assistant Police Chief Thomas Sims, Recording Secretary Deborah Muniz, Administrative Assistant II Maria Elena Ortiz, and City Interpreter Carlos Landaverry.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Veitch-Olson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. PRESENTATIONS & ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Drew Rogers, Watsonville resident, inquired about adding bicycle parking at the City Plaza.

4. REPORTS TO PLANNING COMMISSION

A. OVERVIEW OF HOTEL PROJECT AT 1 WESTERN DRIVE (PP2015 & PP2017-335)

1) Project History and Status

Principal Planner Justin Meek gave a brief presentation regarding the approved hotel project at 1 Western Drive.

2) Public Comment

None

3) Planning Commission Questions

Commissioner Jones thanked staff for the information regarding this project, as it answered questions raised at the November meeting.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

A. MOTION APPROVING MINUTES FOR NOVEMBER 5, 2019 MEETING

MOTION: It was moved by Chair Veitch-Olson, seconded by Commissioner Kammer, and carried by the following vote to approve the Consent Agenda:

AYES:	COMMISSIONERS:	Kammer, Rodriguez, Sarmiento, Jones, Veitch-Olson
NOES:	COMMISSIONERS:	None
ABSENT:	COMMISSIONERS:	Acosta, Tavaréz

6. PUBLIC HEARING

A. AN APPLICATION FOR A SPECIAL USE PERMIT WITH DESIGN REVIEW AND ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (PP2018-248) TO ALLOW THE CONSTRUCTION OF THREE ONE-STORY COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS TOTALING 20,000± SQUARE-FEET AND INCLUDING TWO DRIVE-THROUGH FACILITIES LOCATED AT 975-1075 MAIN STREET (APN 018-261-14 & 018-261-29), FILED BY ROD FERMIN WITH BOOS DEVELOPMENT GROUP, INC., APPLICANT, ON BEHALF OF 975 MAIN STREET ASSOCIATES LLC, PROPERTY OWNER

1) Staff Report

Staff Report was given by Principal Planner Justin Meek. Environmental Study overview was given by Steve Noack, Principal, Placeworks Inc.

2) Planning Commission Clarifying & Technical Questions

None

3) Applicant Presentation

Robert Karn, Robert A. Karn & Associates, Inc., spoke on behalf of the applicant, Boos Development Group, Inc.

4) Planning Commission Clarifying & Technical Questions

In answering Commissioner Jones' question regarding the study on the number of daily trips at the intersection of Main Street and Auto Center Drive, Principal Noack stated that it was analyzed, and that he would get back to him later in the meeting with more information.

In answering Commissioner Jones inquiry regarding the addition of a housing component to the project, Mr. Karn stated that to his knowledge, because the project is located in the Thoroughfare Commercial Zoning District, residential housing is not permitted.

In answering Commissioner Sarmiento's inquiry regarding zoning, Director Merriam clarified that the Thoroughfare Commercial zone is principally permitted for commercial uses; therefore, any multi-family residential housing would require a Special Use Permit, which the applicant is not seeking at the moment.

Commissioner Sarmiento expressed concern about the addition of another drive-thru facility in the area, especially when a Starbucks drive-thru was recently approved down the street.

Director Merriam acknowledged Commissioner Sarmiento's concerns, and explained that staff has not been given further direction by City Council regarding drive-thrus; although it is something they can look into in the near future.

Mr. Karn added that their tenants require the drive-thru component to be successful and that the project itself is in accordance with the General Plan and zoning guidelines set forth by the City.

Principal Planner Meek answered Commissioner Kammer's questions in regards to the zoning designation surrounding the property, the project's potential to deter homeless encampments, pedestrian entrances, and pedestrian and bicycle circulation within the project.

Commissioner Kammer asked if the applicant would consider making modifications to the layout of the project, such as moving the bicycle rack area closer to the entrance of the property, as opposed to the back.

Mr. Karn stated they could do that.

In answering Commissioner Kammer's inquiry regarding the drive-thru component, Mr. Karn talked about their business model and the desire to attract well-known tenants, who require the drive-thru component to cater to its customers.

Both Principal Planner Meek and Mr. Karn answered questions from Commissioner Jones regarding the pedestrian paths and signals.

Commissioner Kammer encouraged the applicant to work with Caltrans to install a pedestrian signal button with leading pedestrian phase, over the driveway that crosses Auto Center Drive to make it safer for pedestrians.

Mr. Karn stated that they will add that to their list.

Both Principal Noack and Mr. Karn answered Commissioner Jones' earlier inquiry, and found that based on the traffic study there would be a net decrease of daily trips at the intersection of Auto Center Drive and Main Street.

In answering Chair Veitch-Olson's question regarding the addition of EV charging stations, Principal Planner Meek stated that they currently not reflected in the plans, but in order to meet building code requirements, parking spaces will be designated at the building permit stage.

Commissioner Rodriguez expressed concern regarding potential vehicle congestion spilling onto Main Street, at the points of ingress and egress.

Mr. Karn acknowledged Commissioner Rodriguez' concerns, but mentioned that the traffic study was reviewed and approved by Caltrans, therefore will not be making any modifications to the ingress or egress points of the property.

Commissioner Sarmiento echoed Commissioner Rodriguez' concerns and would like the area to be looked at to make modifications and make it safer for pedestrians.

5) Public Hearing

Chair Veitch-Olson opened the public hearing.

Mayor Pre-Tempore Rebecca Garcia expressed support for the redevelopment of the property, but spoke against the project due to the drive-thru component and environmental impact created by emissions from idle vehicles. She expressed her desire for less drive-thrus and asks that when voting, the Planning Commission take the residents' health into account.

Gina Cole, 756 Hill Avenue, spoke against the project and listed her reasons for doing so.

Nancy Faulstich, 114 Lapis Drive, Regeneración Pajaro Valley Climate Action Director, spoke in opposition to the project due to it being very "car dependent."

Drew Rogers, 42 Constanzo Street, also spoke in opposition to the project, primarily due to the addition of more drive-throughs, and suggested modifications to the project by adding parklets, grassy areas for children to play, and ample bicycle parking.

Mike Gonzalez, 511 Brewington Avenue, raised concern about the hazardous traffic congestion that could accumulate from the drive-thru closest to Main Street.

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

6) Appropriate Motion(s)

Prior to the motion, City Attorney Smith reminded the Planning Commission that their decision-making should be based on whether the project has satisfied the conditions set forth by the City Council and current Municipal and Zoning Codes.

MAIN MOTION: It was moved by Commissioner Rodriguez, seconded by Commissioner Kammer to deny the following resolutions:

- a) **RESOLUTION NO. ____-19 (PC):
RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE, CALIFORNIA, ADOPTING THE MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION (PP2018-248) FOR THE COMMERCIAL REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT, CONSISTING OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF THREE ONE-STORY COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS TOTALING 20,000± SQUARE-FEET AND INCLUDING TWO DRIVE-THROUGH FACILITIES ON A 3.05± ACRE SITE LOCATED AT 975-1075 MAIN STREET, WATSONVILLE, CALIFORNIA (APNS 018-261-14 & -29)**
- b) **RESOLUTION NO. ____-19 (PC):
RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE, CALIFORNIA, APPROVING A SPECIAL USE PERMIT WITH DESIGN REVIEW AND ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (PP2018-248) TO ALLOW THE CONSTRUCTION OF THREE ONE-STORY COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS TOTALING 20,000± SQUARE FEET AND INCLUDING TWO DRIVE-THROUGH FACILITIES ON A 3.05± ACRE SITE LOCATED AT 975-1075 MAIN STREET, WATSONVILLE, CALIFORNIA (APNS 018-261-14 & -29)**

7) Deliberation

Commissioner Kammer reiterated her stance on the project based on the public's comments and discussion with the Commission as she feels the project is very car-centric.

Commissioner Jones thanked the developer for his project, but expressed his desire to see more innovative ideas with projects that could contribute to both economic development and housing.

Principal Planner Meek addressed Chair Veitch-Olson's inquiry regarding the areas on Main Street that are permitted for housing.

In answering Commissioner Jones' question regarding the addition of a housing component to the proposed project, Principal Planner Meek stated

that a use permit would be required, as multi-family housing in that zoning district is not principally permitted.

Community Development Merriam added that a commercial/housing mixed- use would not be allowed under the current General Plan designation, as it would be too dense for this area.

City Attorney Smith and Director Merriam answered Commissioner Jones' question regarding the process for amending the General Plan.

Commissioner Sarmiento recommended that they move forward with the project, with the exception of the drive-thru component, and have City Council address that topic.

Director Merriam answered Commissioner Jones' inquiry regarding the process for making amendments to the General Plan regarding zoning.

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

MAIN MOTION: The above motion carried by the following vote:

AYES:	COMMISSIONERS:	None
NOES:	COMMISSIONERS:	Kammer, Rodriguez, Sarmiento, Jones, Veitch-Olson
ABSENT:	COMMISSIONERS:	Acosta, Tavaréz

7. REPORT OF THE SECRETARY

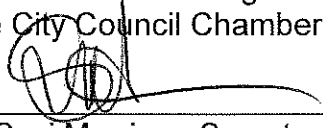
Following the vote from the Planning Commission, Director Merriam announced that the decision is appealable to the City Council.


Director Merriam welcomed Administrative Assistant, Elena Ortiz, back from her leave.

Additionally, she announced that the Cannabis Ordinance item will be presented at the January Planning Commission Meeting.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Veitch-Olson adjourned the meeting at 7:43 PM. The next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 14, 2019, at 6:00 PM in the City Council Chambers.


Suzi Merriam, Secretary
Planning Commission


Jenni Veitch-Olson, Chair
Planning Commission