



MINUTES

ADJOURNED

JOINT CITY COUNCIL

AND

PLANNING COMMISSION

MEETING

FEBRUARY 1, 2005

An adjourned meeting of the City Council and Planning Commission of the City of Rolling Hills Estates was called to order at 7:00 p.m. at Rancho Vista Elementary School Auditorium, 4323 Palos Verdes Drive North, by MAYOR ADDLEMAN.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Addleman, Mitchell, Seamans*, Zerunyan, Zuckerman

*COUNCILWOMAN SEAMANS arrived at 7:05 p.m.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Bayer, Conway, Killen, Rein, Vanden Bos

CITY STAFF PRESENT: Doug Prichard, City Manager
Stephen Pfahler, Assistant City Attorney
David Wahba, Planning Director

OTHERS PRESENT: Craig Knickerbocker
Rolling Hills Covenant Church
Expansion Committee Co-Chairman

Vergil Best
Rolling Hills Covenant Church
Expansion Committee Co-Chairman

FLAG SALUTE

MAYOR ADDLEMAN led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

INTRODUCTIONS OF CITY COUNCIL/PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS/CITY STAFF AND CHURCH REPRESENTATIVES

MAYOR ADDLEMAN requested the meeting participants introduce themselves to the audience.

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF ROLLING HILLS COVENANT CHURCH REVISED PLANS

Craig Knickerbocker noted that with the initial rejection of the application, it is their intent to make this a better project in an attempt to accommodate everyone's concerns. With the COUNCIL providing a "road map" to follow, he briefly went through each of the 21 points of rejection with a proposed solution for

each one.

Alex Ward, Leo A. Daly Architects, provided a description of the project in its current state as well as the design phase. He noted that all conditions imposed by the COUNCIL have been accepted with an eye towards the appropriate architectural character to fit the project into the City.

Mr. Ward then presented the previous scheme which was denied and compared it to the new proposal which will meet the required lot coverage, landscaping and parking requirements. He noted that they are proposing underground parking below grade so as not to be visible from the street and rebuild the parking lot on the north side to accommodate additional parking as well as a green space buffer. In regards to the style of architecture, he noted that it is still in the planning stages and has not been addressed as yet.

Mr. Knickerbocker noted that they will continue with the CUP for the MWD parking lots.

Tim Scott, 19 Aurora, commented that he did not review what was being proposed. He stated that the Church promised in 1978 not to expand and was hard pressed to believe this request is necessary at this time. He noted that the Church has addressed the aesthetics, however, on the more crucial issues of site utilization, parking and traffic, a question still remains regarding the number of seats being proposed. He believed that crucial issues remain regarding the traffic as it would add to an already congested Palos Verdes Drive North as well as missing information on how large the Church proposes to be and how they expect to "shoehorn" it into a lot of this size. He suggested eliminating all use of open-space property for parking and went on to provide a history of the project. He noted that most of the community would rather have homes on the north campus as it could be a prime residential development. He then noted that the community has spent six years telling the Church that their plans have been unacceptable. Finally, he stated that additional data is needed to address the impacts of this proposal.

Tom Judge, 28 Rollingwood, noted his primary concern is traffic and that the numbers, in his estimation, would total approximately 8,000 additional individuals on the weekend. He commented that it was a problem before and will only increase if the facility expands.

Bob Bennett, 16 Deerhill, conceded that traffic is an issue, but commended the Church on addressing issues brought up by the community and approaching this new project with an open mind. He noted that they have acted like neighbors in responding to the community's concerns.

Mike Russo, 9 Bridlewood Circle, commended the Church as well, but suggested the City look at this project as a whole and include the Naval site and Chandler's. He also questioned the amount of seats proposed in the new sanctuary.

Bridget Carman, 2225 Carriage Drive, thanked the COUNCIL, Planning Commission and Church noting that this project has the potential to greatly impact the community. She noted her concurrence with Mr. Scott's comments in that concurrent uses of the total facility will increase traffic not only on weekends, but seven days a week and would be difficult to control. She stated that she is waiting to see how the CEQA Guidelines will be applied to the Environmental Impact Report. She then noted her appreciation to the Church in addressing the aesthetics in relation to the Larga Vista area and was willing to work together in providing good direction on this project.

Mr. Scott requested the Church respond to Model No. 3 as listed in the booklet in regards to parking.

Douglas Keys, Architect, addressed this issue and noted that this parking will benefit the community as it disperses traffic better. He noted that remote parking lots can be counted toward the parking numbers as there is an existing precedent for this type of proposal, but that the Church is open to discussing this along with a detailed traffic flow study if necessary.

John Maselter, 31 Montecillo Drive, thanked the COUNCIL, Planning Commission and Planning Director Wahba for the extraordinary effort they have put forth for many years of trying to preserve the country atmosphere of the City.

Planning Director Wahba noted that with respect to policy, the subcommittee met and discussed the underground parking structure extending beyond the footprint according to the code and whether or not this would apply to lot coverage. Other issues discussed included the need for direction on landscaping, FAR, General Plan, institutional zoning, reciprocal parking, etc.

Planning Commissioner Killen inquired as to the parking structures below grade and suggested creating a connection to both underground parking lots under Palos Verdes Drive North.

Planning Director Wahba noted that the City would need to determine if this type of parking is acceptable.

Planning Commissioner Conway inquired if a new EIR would be required or if the existing one could be revised. Planning Director Wahba noted that the project may require another EIR if there are extensive changes according to CEQA. He noted that a revised Notice of Preparation (NOP) would be issued for adequate study.

Planning Commissioner Conway inquired if the footprint covers the entire sanctuary.

MAYOR PRO TEM ZUCKERMAN noted that the COUNCIL needs to provide immediate direction on lot coverage and FAR items as they are critical to the Applicant.

Planning Director Wahba noted that in the Church's previous application, this issue was reviewed, but there is need to review the policy direction.

MAYOR PRO TEM ZUCKERMAN asked whether or not there would be merit in knowing what the carrying capacity is and let the Applicant decide what limits there are to utilization.

Planning Director Wahba noted that this is not a typical method, but could be done.

COUNCILMAN ZERUNYAN thanked the audience for attending the meeting and appreciated them coming with an open mind. He noted that the Church is attempting to design a new project and there is no better process than having the public provide a flow of ideas. He invited everyone to comment on this process and noted that one question of primary concern is the number of seats being proposed in the sanctuary.

Mr. Knickerbocker noted that there will be approximately 1,150-1,600 seats proposed with more parking than the last project. He noted that traffic is an issue and this will be addressed in detail. In regards to a previous comment, he preferred to have their project addressed singly rather than consider the Naval and Chandler's sites.

COUNCILWOMAN SEAMANS reiterated that traffic is an important issue as well as occupancy of the property. She inquired as to the square footage and compatibility of each design.

Mr. Knickerbocker noted that they prefer Design No. 3 as it proposes a new sanctuary in the rear parking lot and turns the old sanctuary into a gym and facility room. He noted that the parking structure is conceptual at this point and would consider a tunnel connecting the two campuses.

COUNCILWOMAN SEAMANS briefly discussed the underground parking structure on both sides.

Mr. Knickerbocker noted that all parking options will be considered.

Planning Commissioner Killen noted that if pedestrians and vehicular traffic could go underneath the street, it would provide easy access and allow the closure of turn lanes on Palos Verdes Drive North as well as improve circulation.

MAYOR ADDLEMAN referred to Design No. 3 and inquired if it is possible to put subterranean parking on the north side from the south campus. He noted his calculation of 1,075 spaces and that may mitigate concerns using the north campus for overflow parking.

Planning Commissioner Vanden Bos noted that required parking would be greater than what is being described in the proposal. He encouraged taking the preliminary step of getting a sense of what the current needs are and then working a design around the site.

Planning Commissioner Bayer noted that any foot traffic going across Palos Verdes Drive North would be ill-advised and would like that addressed. She inquired as to the number of members the Church currently has and where they are coming from in regards to traffic patterns. She also noted her appreciation at

how the Church is attempting to work with the community.

Mr. Knickerbocker responded that people will cross Palos Verdes Drive North regardless of any signage. He noted that if all the parking is on the south campus, it would point the parking study in the wrong direction and he would like to rely on experts to address this matter.

Planning Commissioner Killen commented that he would like to see a chart showing the number of existing seats along with how many seats are needed for each car in order to apply a logical percentage which would clearly define this project. He then stated that he would like MWD to leave their land as open space unrelated to the main project so that it stands on its own merits.

Planning Commissioner Conway inquired as to pedestrian access and noted that a vehicular public street or a private vehicular access should have structural integrity and appropriate legal easement for this access.

COUNCILWOMAN MITCHELL noted that her concern is having an excessive amount of conditions placed on the property and would like to see it be self-limiting in regards to capacity. She commented that enforcement could be troublesome and would like to see a "clean project" come before the City. She noted that the MWD property should remain open space.

Brief discussion ensued regarding an underground passageway comparing it to the Rolling Hills Country Club tunnel. He noted that their engineer did look at this and could be worth consideration.

Planning Director Wahba noted that in regards to policy discussions, the subcommittee, which currently consists of MAYOR PRO TEM ZUCKERMAN and COUNCILWOMAN MITCHELL, should meet and suggested appointing two Planning Commissioners to work with the Church.

MAYOR PRO TEM ZUCKERMAN requested closure on determining what the ground rules are for underground parking structures.

City Manager Prichard suggested that if closure is desired, it would be in order to identify policy issues before the Applicant is given guidance. He concurred with appointing two Planning Commissioners to this committee to analyze these issues, but suggested that recommendations be brought back to the City Council through the Planning Commission for a determination on the policy decisions.

MAYOR ADDLEMAN appointed Planning Commissioners Conway and Killen to serve in this capacity.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Approved,

Hope J. Nolan Douglas R. Prichard
Deputy City Clerk City Clerk

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