

CITY OF MORRO BAY
PLANNING COMMISSION
SYNOPSIS MINUTES

(Complete audio- and videotapes of this meeting are available from the City upon request)

Veteran's Memorial Building
Regular Meeting, 6:00 p.m.

209 Surf Street, Morro Bay
Monday, April 2, 2007

Chairperson Nancy Johnson
Vice-Chairperson Bill Woodson Commissioner Michael Lucas
Commissioner Gerald Luhr Commissioner Gary Ream
Mike Prater, Secretary

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chairperson Johnson called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Lucas led the pledge.

III. ROLL CALL

Johnson asked that the record reflect all Commissioners were present.

Staff Present: Bruce Ambo, Michael Prater, Rachel Grossman and Kimberly Peebles

IV. ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA

There were no changes to the agenda.

V. DIRECTOR'S REPORT/WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

Ambo highlighted the City Council Agenda items from the March 26, 2007 Meeting:

- Reworked letter to CalTrans about the Main and Radcliff Intersection
- Reagendized the appointment discussion to the State Fish and Game Commission
- Heard a presentation from the physician in charge of County Health Department on the January Nitrate incident
- Status report on the updates of the Fire Stations
- Discussion on sending a letter to Department of Fish and Game Commission regarding hunting in the Back Bay

The items highlighted for the upcoming April 9, 2007 Meeting will be:

- Resolution on the Urban Forest Management Plan
- Letter to Department of Fish and Game is coming back to the Council with revisions
- Presentation on right-of-way abandonment policies

Woodson inquired about the Executive Summary of the Parking Management Plan and if they would be receiving a copy yet. Ambo said the document is forthcoming. Woodson also inquired about the ADA ramp at Morro and Dunes and how getting a bulb out at such locations would be a consideration.

Lucas inquired about the potential annexation in the Back Bay and asked if that is in our Sphere of Influence. Ambo addressed his concern.

Johnson asked about the corners that are being converted to ADA ramps and how the corners are being selected. Ambo clarified the selection process that was fueled by the lawsuit. She also inquired about the LS Power/Dynegy buy out of the Power Plant and how it will affect Morro Bay. Ambo gave the Commission a status update.

VI. CONSENT CALENDAR

- A. Approval of minutes from hearing held on March 19, 2007

MOTION: Ream, Woodson 2nd to approve the minutes as presented. VOTE: 5-0.

VII. PRESENTATIONS - None

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

Dorothy Cutter spoke about bulk and scale and encouraged residents to go to www.mbviews.org

Johnson announced Earth Day storm drain marking event in Morro Bay and “Gardens by the Sea”.

Ream reminded everyone about the Celebrate Morro Bay Parade, the Morro Bay Kite Festival and the Planning Commissioners are all coming together to sponsor one of the upcoming “Art Cans”.

IX. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS - None

X. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- A. Site Location: 575 and 591 Embarcadero Road in the WF/PD/S.4 zoning district. Applicant: Smith Held. The applicant proposes to demolish the existing buildings and replace them with two retail stores that would encompass 1,197 square feet and a six-room hotel with public lateral access. This site is located within the original jurisdiction of the California Coastal Commission. (Recommended CEQA Determination: A Mitigated Negative Declaration has been prepared for the project).
Staff Recommendation: Conditionally approve the project
Staff Contact: Rachel Grossman, Associate Planner, 772-6261.

Grossman presented the Staff Report specifically noting the concerns about this project and what Staff is proposing as solutions in the findings.

Staff addressed the following questions and concerns from the Commissioners:

- What is the height of the proposed wrought iron gates
- Is there language that limits the length of stay in the hotel units
- Should the Commission make the pitch of the roof specific in the findings
- Clarification of Lot Coverage
- The height of Marina Square
- If all waterfront projects are required to have a boardwalk for new projects

Johnson asked the applicant or their agent to address the Commission's concerns. The applicant, Smith Held, addressed the Commission specifically addressing the lack of a floating dock with this project, due to the time constraints they are up against with the lease site negotiations. He also noted roof height should be easily adjusted by lowering the interior ceilings and the term of stay is determined in the lease site documents, as approved uses are visitor serving only. The colors being proposed will be similar to Marina Square.

Smith Held along with his designer Mark Allen addressed the following questions from the Commissioners:

- What determines the height and the location of the boardwalk
- If Eelgrass is of significant concern for the boardwalk & why it is not a concern for the revetment work
- Putting the required hydrant someplace other than in the sidewalk area
- What their plan is for the number slips on their lease site
- Height of the parapet and adjusting the size of the electrical room
- The size of the retail space and the viability of such a small space
- A condition in their permit to have their easement agreement with the other owner completed prior to issuance

- The distance between the building and the docks
- Clarification of setbacks
- If the public restrooms would be unisex
- What the applicant's intent was for the 27-foot height
- Concerns about the patios on the boardwalk side of the project
- Making the public benefits obvious and welcoming
- Width of the sidewalk
- Consideration of other parking options

Johnson opened the Public Hearing.

Roger Ewing spoke against the height above 25' and did not feel there was significant public benefit.

Dorothy Cutter expressed her concerns about putting hotels on the waterfront side.

Phil Kispersky spoke favorably about the project but is concerned about the project's height, parking and the lighting.

Johnson closed the Public Hearing seeing no further comments.

During discussion the Commissioners commented on the following items:

- The two public restrooms are a significant public benefit
- The view corridor is also a significant benefit
- The public restrooms should be unisex
- A colored path from the sidewalk thru the corridor to the public boardwalk
- Construction hours reduced to five days a week
- The addition of six parking spaces is an improvement
- Parking should be reserved for motel guests only and should be posted as such
- Suggested putting their parking at the dead end on Driftwood and adding a staircase down to the Embarcadero
- Demolition trucks should be required to have the debris covered and water trucks to prevent dust
- Show the docks and the slips on the plans
- Change the windscreen height for public advantages
- Consider the Northern Chumash Tribal Council Recommendations
- Clear signage denoting the restrooms are for the Public
- Change opening to access way by clipping it to 45 degrees
- Require boat slips now and not as a separate project
- Transition the siding to help make the height look shorter
- Lighting is critical on street side and harbor side of the project
- Using low glare and energy efficient lights are important
- Height should be limited to 25'
- Roof pitch should be required to be 4/12 for minimum of 80% of roof area
- Suggest moving the columns in the parking lot so the parking spaces could be a foot wider
- Dock, boardwalk and the revetment must be part of this project

Prater suggested the project be continued to a later date so that Staff can do the additional Environmental Review and the applicant can revise the project with the Commissioners suggestions.

Ream asked if this project could be approved and conditioned that the dock and boardwalk plan came back to the Planning Commission prior to the building plan approval. Prater confirmed that is an option.

Lucas expressed his concern about piecing the project out and the unknown costs in doing a project that way. Luhr and Johnson concurred with his concerns.

Prater suggested a compromise in adding the condition to submit plans and go thru the approval procedure for the docks and boardwalk so that the building permits were issued together.

MOTION: Woodson, Ream 2nd to continue the project contingent on a plan that would include a floating boat dock with three to five spaces and showing access to that boat dock. As well, we would ask the applicant to consider including in this project:

- A visitor occupancy limit of 30 days
- Revise number 18 on Exhibit B to limit the 25 foot height and require sustaining a 4/12 pitch
- No HVAC appurtenances on the roof
- Articulate the patio windscreen for public access advantages
- Fire hydrant not in the sidewalk
- Commercial area will be Visitor Serving Commercial required
- The sidewalk will be no less than 8 feet at any one point and shall be of 2 different materials which will accentuate access to the boardwalk and public restrooms
- Consider the articulation of the store fronts, the passageway for the public to the boardwalk, all the surfaces and what the major elevations along the buildings and the patio would be
- Noise – Five days work Monday thru Friday
- Demolition truck haulers cover the loads
- Uni-sex bathrooms
- Open up entry – clip corners at 45 degrees
- Neighbors concerned about high intensity lighting
- Water truck on site
- Creative parking solutions
- Encourage all City Council and the other appropriate agencies within the City to cooperate with the applicant so he can meet his deadline of July 1, 2007
- Consider creating a base on the building to tie it closer to the site

VOTE: 5-0.

XI. OLD BUSINESS

A. Current Planning Processing List

Projects submitted for Administrative Approval (not single-family residential unless in MCR)

1. None

XII. NEW BUSINESS - None

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Johnson adjourned the meeting at 8:14 p.m. to the next regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting at the Veterans Hall, 209 Surf Street, on Monday, April 16, 2007, at 6:00 p.m.

Nancy Johnson, Chairperson

ATTEST:

Michael Prater, Secretary