



MINUTES

CITY OF HUNTINGTON PARK PLANNING COMMISSION

Regular Meeting
Wednesday, January 16, 2013
6:30 p.m.

Chairman Carvajal called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Present: Commissioners Juan Anaya, Laura Herrera, Eddie Benitez, and Chairman Eddie Carvajal; Absent: Commissioner Veronica Lopez (declared excused). Also present: Senior Planner Albert Fontanez, Assistant Planner Juan Arauz, City Attorney Joseph Larsen, and Recording Secretary Genny Ochoa.

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Vice Chair Herrera, seconded by Commissioner Anaya, to approve the minutes of the regular meeting held on December 19, 2012. The motion carried as follows: Ayes: Commissioners Anaya, Benitez, Herrera, and Chairman Carvajal; Noes: None; Absent: Commissioner Lopez.

Public Appearances

None.

Continued Public Hearings

None.

Public Hearings

A. CASE NO. 1960-CUP: Request by Permit Place/Sheryl Brady for approval of a Conditional Use Permit for an existing legal non-conforming check cashing establishment and to allow money advance services at 2885 Florence Avenue within the General Commercial (C-G) Zone.

Assistant Planner Juan Arauz reviewed staff's Administrative Report, which included the Administrative Comments and Analysis, and Recommendations. Mr. Arauz stated that expanding the current use to include money advance services would be inconsistent with the Municipal Code as the use does not meet the distance requirements to commercial establishments selling alcoholic beverages. Mr. Arauz added that the subject site does not meet the parking requirements as established by the Municipal Code, providing only four of twelve required parking spaces. Mr. Arauz

state that the existing business is currently non-compliant with the City's sign standards. Mr. Arauz further stated that staff recommended that the Conditional Use Permit allowing money advance services be denied and added that said denial would not hinder the current check cashing business, which may continue to operate as a non-conforming use.

Senior Planner Fontanez stated that in 2007 the City Council adopted the Conditional Use Permit requirement and development standards for check cashing, money transfer, currency exchange, and money advance uses to address concerns of the proliferation of these types of uses in the City. Development standards included distance requirements between the proposed use and businesses selling alcoholic beverages, religious uses, schools, and banks.

Chairman Carvajal declared the public hearing open and called for anyone wishing to speak for or against Case No. 1960-CUP. Ms. Sheryl Brady (Permit Place, 13400 Riverside Dr., #202, Sherman Oaks, CA 91423), representing the applicant/owner (Mr. Juan Rendon), came forward to speak in favor of the approval of Case No. 1960-CUP. Ms. Brady stated she did not support staff's recommendation for denial of the request. Ms. Brady further stated that the business has been in operation since 2004 and has not had any problems with law enforcement -- in contrast to that, the applicant has repeatedly assisted law enforcement with surveillance videos of other purported crime activity within the area. Ms. Brady stated that the applicant planned to conform with all signage requirements and requested that the Commission overturn staff's recommendation by approving Case No. 1960-CUP.

Mr. Juan Rendon (The Check Cashing Place, 2885 E. Florence Ave., Huntington Park), applicant/owner, came forward to speak in favor of his request for the Conditional Use Permit. Mr. Rendon stated that he was requesting approval to only add a needed service to an existing check cashing business. Mr. Rendon added that many customers travel by bus and do not need to use the parking provided on the subject site. Mr. Rendon stated that the business was equipped with a 24-hour surveillance camera system and an armed security guard. Mr. Rendon requested that the Planning Commission approve Case No. 1960-CUP.

A discussion followed regarding particulars of money advance services and transactions. City Attorney Joseph Larsen briefly explained that the current use is legally non-conforming and expansion of the establishment would constitute an "illegal" nonconforming use.

Motion by Commissioner Anaya, seconded by Chairman Carvajal, to APPROVE STAFF'S RECOMMENDATION TO DENY CASE NO. 1960-CUP AND ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 1960 DENYING A REQUEST FOR A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT FOR A CHECK CASHING AND PAYDAY LOANS ESTABLISHMENT at 2885 E. Florence Avenue. The motion carried as follows: Ayes: Commissioners Anaya, Herrera, Benitez, and Chairman Carvajal; Noes: None; Absent: Commissioner Lopez.

Senior Planner Fontanez announced that the Commission's decision may be appealed with the City Clerk's office within 15 calendar days.

New Business

None.

Information Items

Vice Chair Herrera reported likely illegal activity, (drug sales/manufacturing and prostitution) at the Huntington Motel located at 2871 E. Florence Avenue. After a brief discussion, Chairman Carvajal directed staff to research if the motel operates under a City-granted entitlement and determine if non-compliance of conditions was present and to refer to the Police Department for further investigation.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Chairman Carvajal adjourned the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

Chairman

ATTEST:

Secretary