



# MINUTES

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## CITY OF HUNTINGTON PARK PLANNING COMMISSION

**Special Meeting**  
**Wednesday, July 2, 2014**  
**6:30 p.m.**

Chairperson Herrera called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. Present: Commissioner Eddie Benitez, Vice Chair Juan Anaya, Commissioner Eddie Carvajal and Chairperson Laura Herrera. Absent: Commissioner Veronica Lopez (declared excused by Chairperson Herrera). Also present: Planning Manager Albert Fontanez, Assistant Planner Juan Arauz, Planning Intern Rodrigo Pelayo, City Attorney Alisha Patterson, and Recording Secretary Genny Ochoa.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Motion by Commissioner Benitez, seconded by Vice Chair Anaya, to approve the minutes of the special meeting held on June 11, 2014, as presented. The motion carried as follows: Ayes: Commissioner Benitez, Vice Chair Anaya, Commissioner Carvajal, and Chairperson Herrera; Noes: None; Absent: Commissioner Lopez.

### **Public Appearances**

None.

### **Continued Public Hearings**

A. CASE NO 2014-01-CUP/DP – CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT/ DEVELOPMENT PERMIT: Request for a Conditional Use Permit and Development Permit to construct and operate a public charter school and 36 affordable dwelling units on a privately-owned property located at 6100 Carmelita Avenue; and the adoption of an associated Mitigated Negative Declaration under the California Environmental quality Act (CEQA).

Planning Manager Fontanez stated that staff had distributed to the Commissioners eight copies of letters from local parents in support of the proposed project. Mr. Fontanez reviewed staff's report which included the Project Analysis, Site Plans, Recommendations, and Conditions of Approval. Mr. Fontanez stated that the project consisted of the following main points:

- i) Demolition of five vacant apartment units
- ii) Construction of a 2-story public charter elementary school for 400 K-5 students
- iii) Construction of 36-unit, three-story apartment building above a 2-level parking structure with 100 parking spaces for school and residential uses.

Mr. Fontanez summarized project details including:

- The subject site is comprised of two parcels formerly owned by the City's (now dissolved) Redevelopment Agency and sold to a private developer
- Two LAUSD schools (Huntington Park Elementary School and Nimitz Middle School) as well as the City's Freedom Park and Community Center are within the immediate vicinity of the project site
- The first level of the parking structure will be at semi-subterranean level and the second at grade level
- A "private one-way road" will separate the residential use and the school/parking structure and will provide vehicular access to the site as well as a student drop-off and pick-up area
- A Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) was prepared which determined that through mitigation measures, potential air quality, noise, and transportation and traffic impacts could be reduced to levels considered less than significant.
- Review of the school floor plans and housing floor plans and parking plans
- Housing will consist of 12 1-bedroom, 12 2-bedroom and 12 3-bedroom units with affordable housing opportunities for school staff and teachers, as well as the general public
- The Density Bonus granted for affordable housing will require the units to be maintained at affordable rates for 30 years
- The charter school will include 17 classrooms, a multipurpose room and conference room, a library, faculty room and administration office area, as well as a serving kitchen and storage and utility areas
- Proposed parking will comply with the City's school and residential parking requirements; when school is not in session, residents and visitors will be able to utilize the school's designated parking
- A community meeting on May 21, 2014 addressed the residents' concerns regarding increased traffic and reduced on-street parking availability who were informed that parking and traffic impacts could be reduced through mitigation measures

Mr. Fontanez reviewed the Conditions of Approval, specifically:

Condition No. 11a: the Project Design shall include security measures for the traffic/pedestrian control by before- and after-school monitors;

Condition No. 15: the required 8-foot block walls along the south and east property lines will serve as sound barriers;

Condition No. 28: the City may request staggered school start and end times to reduce traffic congestion associated with nearby schools; and recommendation to modify the condition to include that the applicant shall make an effort to coordinate school schedules with the schools;

Condition No. 35a: the applicant will be required to submit a plan for adequate off-street parking if complaints from residents are received regarding unauthorized parking on nearby properties

Condition No. 44: a Tentative Parcel Map or Lot Line Adjustment application consolidating the two parcels

Mr. Fontanez clarified that the project was not 100% affordable housing as indicated in staff's report, but would have an affordable housing component requiring a density bonus covenant and agreement providing that 5 to 10 percent of the units remain affordable to very low or low income households for not less than 30 years. The agreement shall be recorded with Los Angeles County prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy. Mr. Fontanez recommended that the conditions of approval be modified by adding a condition stipulating the density bonus agreement requirements.

Mr. Fontanez stated that based on the evidence present, staff recommended the adoption of the MND associated with the proposed project, and the approval of Case No. 2014-01-CUP/DP subject to the modified conditions of approval as recommended by staff.

Chairperson Herrera asked affordable housing qualification requirements for the teachers. Mr. Fontanez stated that the teachers would be given first right to live in the apartment complex.

Chairperson Herrera declared the public hearing open and called for anyone wishing to speak for or against Case No. 2014-01-CUP/DP.

The following individuals came forward to speak in favor:

1) Alexis Gevorgian, (AMG & Associates, 16633 Ventura Blvd., Ste. 1014, Encino, CA 91436), applicant/property owner: Mr. Gevorgian thanked and complemented staff for an "amazing" presentation of the proposed project and stated that after meeting with the community, he wanted to develop a different project by providing student pick-up and drop-off on a one-way street through the school. Mr. Gevorgian stated that the project was not over-developed and the development would be proportional on the site. Mr. Gevorgian further stated that the project included benefits for teachers to live on site. Mr. Gevorgian added that the project included a parking monitor plan.

2) James Wilcox (CEO, Aspire Public Schools): Mr. Wilcox expressed his excitement to bring another charter school to a community that needs the quality education that Aspire provides. Mr. Wilcox stated that 100 percent of Aspire high school graduating students had been accepted by four-year colleges. Mr. Wilcox thank the City for its partnership and requested approval of the project.

3) Michael Pinto (Principal, Osborne Architects): Mr. Pinto gave a brief overview of the project's layout and design concept.

4) Norma Santiago (Aspire parent): Ms. Santiago stated that the charter school was a good school for the children.

5) Yolanda Garcia (parent): Ms. Garcia stated that the Commission would ensure a better future for the children by approving the proposed school.

6) Gabriela Martinez (parent): Ms. Martinez stated that the proposed school would relieve overcrowding at the existing charter school.

7) Salia Hernandez (parent): Ms. Hernandez requested approval of the project.

8) Elizabeth Diaz (parent): Ms. Diaz stated that charter schools are great schools and that the proposed charter school would provide a safe school for the children. Ms. Diaz added that the proposed school would alleviate the overcrowded conditions at Aspire Maria Lugo Academy (AMLA).

The following individuals came forward to speak against Case No. 2014-01-CUP/DP:

1) Amparo Mendoza (employee of Nimitz Middle School): Ms. Martinez reported that school officials (LAUSD) did not receive notification of the proposed project and added that the proposed school would generate excessive traffic in the area. Ms. Martinez asked for help from the City in the communication process. Ms. Mendoza stated that the Police Department and LAUSD did not provide enough parking or police enforcement and expressed concern with drug sales in the surrounding residential area.

2) Raquel Toscano (parent) stated that that she was not against education, however, the proposed school site was not suitable for another school because of the proximity of the other nearby schools.

3) Kerry Porter (3900 E. 61<sup>st</sup> St., Huntington Park), resident, stated that he lives across the street from the proposed project and that the area already has parking issues and too much traffic congestion.

Ms. Yvonne Correa, (City resident), came forward and suggested the use of the City's Combi transit system by students/parents to help alleviate traffic congestion in the area.

On behalf of the developer, Mr. Fontanez expressed appreciation for the concerns expressed to the Commission. Mr. Fontanez stated that the proposed school was a model school with a unique on-site drop-off and pick-up area, staggered schedules, and a parking ratio of 3:1.

With no one else coming forward to speak for or against Case No. 2014-01-CUP/DP, Chairperson Herrera declared the public hearing closed.

Mr. Phil Martin (Phil Martin & Associates, Inc., 3002 Dow Ave., Ste. 122, Tustin, CA 92780), City consultant for the preparation of the MND, stated that three forms of notification of the MND were made. Mr. Martin briefly summarized the traffic impact analysis which included traffic impacts during peak hours. Mr. Martin stated that the implementation of mitigating measures, including staggered school schedules, would adequately mitigate potential impacts to less than significant levels. Mr. Martin added that an analysis to convert Carmelita Avenue from a two-way street to a one-way street

found that street parking would be eliminated and would not solve the potential for increased traffic.

Keith Rutherford (VA Consulting, 46 Discover, Ste., 250, Irvine, CA 92618), traffic consultant, stated that with his 30 years of experience in traffic studies he supported the findings of the traffic study for the proposed project, specifically the traffic impacts during morning and afternoon peak hours.

After a discussion, staff recommended and the Commission approved to modify Conditions No. 26 and 28 to read as follows:

26. All interior walls shall be designed in accordance with the **Department State of Architect and California Department of Education** standards for schools with interior multipurpose rooms and physical education facilities as applicable.  
(Modification in **bold** text)
  
28. That the City, in its discretion, may request the school operator to shift/stagger school start and end times in order to reduce traffic congestion associated to Nimitz Middle School and Huntington Park Elementary School. **The applicant shall make a reasonable effort to coordinate with Nimitz Middle School and Huntington Park Elementary School to avoid traffic congestion associated with overlapping start and end times and special events.**  
(Added text in **bold**)

and, **add** the following condition as Condition No. 58 and renumerate the conditions of approval accordingly:

- 58. That the applicant shall inter into a density bonus covenant and agreement that shall be prepared by the City of Huntington Park and recorded with the County of Los Angeles to ensure that a minimum of 5 to 10 percent of the units remain affordable to very low or low income households for a period not less than 30 years. Such agreement shall be recorded prior to the issuance of the Certificate of Occupancy.**

Motion by Commissioner Carvajal, seconded by Commissioner Benitez, to APPROVE CASE NO. 2014-01-CUP/DP, subject to Conditions No. 1-59, as modified. The motion carried as follows: Ayes: Commissioner Benitez, Vice Chair Anaya, Commissioner Carvajal, and Chairperson Herrera; Noes: None; Absent: Commissioner Lopez.

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

*Chairperson Herrera declared a recess at 8:19 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 8:28 p.m.*

## **Public Hearings**

A. CASE NO. 2014-03 CUP – CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT: A request by Jose Duran for a Conditional Use Permit to expand an existing restaurant with the on-sale of alcoholic beverages at 6103 Pacific Boulevard, in the DTSP (Downtown Specific Plan) Zone.

Assistant Planner Juan Arauz reviewed the Administrative Report, which included the Municipal Code Requirements, Required Findings for a Conditional Use Permit, Project Analysis, and Recommendation. Mr. Arauz stated that in February 2012, the applicant was granted a Conditional Use Permit for on-site sales of alcoholic beverages in conjunction with a restaurant and that he now proposed to expand the restaurant by adding seating area, a restroom, and a dance floor. Mr. Arauz further stated that the proposed project was exempt from meeting the off-street parking requirements pursuant to City Council Resolution No. 2010-62, which exempts the first 2,000 square feet of a structure or a proposed structural expansion from meeting the required off-street parking standards when the project is within 500 feet of the DTSP and is within 500 feet of a public parking lot. Mr. Arauz stated that staff recommended the approval of Case No. 2014-03 CUP, subject to the Conditions of Approval outlined in staff's report.

Planning Manager Albert Fontanez stated that the applicant would be required to obtain a dance and entertainment permit from the City's Finance Department which would ultimately be considered for approval by the City Council.

Chairperson Herrera declared the public hearing open and called for anyone wishing to speak for or against Case No. 2014-03 CUP. Mr. Jose Duran (1603 Hart St., Van Nuys, CA 91406), applicant, came forward to speak in favor of the request. Mr. Duran stated that he was in the restaurant business and had restaurants in the cities of San Pedro, South Gate, and Los Angeles. Mr. Duran requested approval of the Conditional Use Permit.

James Allnut, representing the property owner, came forward and spoke in favor of Case No. 2014-03 CUP.

With no one else coming forward to speak for or against Case No. 2014-03 CUP, Chairperson Herrera closed the public hearing.

Motion by Commissioner Carvajal, seconded by Commissioner Benitez, to APPROVE CASE NO. 2014-03 CUP, subject to the Conditions of Approval, as outlined in staff's report. The motion carried as follows: Ayes: Commissioner Benitez, Vice Chair Anaya, Commissioner Carvajal, and Chairperson Herrera; Noes: None; Absent: Commissioner Lopez.

Mr. 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**

None.

**Staff Comments**

None.

**Planning Commission Comments**

Commissioner Carvajal thanked City staff for the pothole repairs he requested in front of 3376 Flower Street.

Chairperson Herrera reported that the signal lights at each corner of the Salt Lake Avenue and Florence Avenue intersection were extremely dim and difficult to determine the color displayed, creating a traffic and pedestrian hazard. Mr. Fontanez stated that he would report her concerns to the City's Public Works Superintendent.

The Commission requested that the "welcome" signs throughout the City, specifically the sign located at Florence Avenue and Salt Lake Avenue, be preserved by the City.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business, Chairperson Herrera declared the meeting adjourned at 8:43 p.m.

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Laura Herrera, Chairperson

ATTEST:

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Albert G. Fontanez, Secretary