

M I N U T E S

GARDEN GROVE PLANNING COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING

COMMUNITY MEETING CENTER
11300 STANFORD AVENUE
GARDEN GROVE, CALIFORNIA

THURSDAY
JUNE 19, 2008

CALL TO ORDER: The regular meeting of the Planning Commission was called to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Community Meeting Center.

PRESENT: CHAIR PIERCE, VICE CHAIR PAK
COMMISSIONERS BANKSON, BEARD, BRIETIGAM,
KIRKHAM
ABSENT: NGUYEN

Commissioner Nguyen joined the meeting at 7:13 p.m.

ALSO PRESENT: Jason Retterer, Associate Attorney; Susan Emery, Community Development Director; Karl Hill, Planning Services Manager; Erin Webb, Senior Planner; Lee Marino, Senior Planner; Maria Parra, Urban Planner; Chris Chung, Assistant Planner; Grant Raupp, Administrative Analyst; Dan Candelaria, City Traffic Engineer; Collette Morse, RBF Consulting Senior Project Manager; Rob Olson, Senior Transportation Engineer; Leah Price and Courtney Wood, RBF Consulting; Judith Moore, Recording Secretary.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America was led by Commissioner Bankson and recited by those present in the Chamber.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS: None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Commissioner Brietigam moved to approve the Minutes of June 5, 2008, seconded by Commissioner Kirkham. The motion carried with the following vote:

AYES: COMMISSIONERS: BANKSON, BEARD, BRIETIGAM,
KIRKHAM, PIERCE
NOES: COMMISSIONERS: NONE
ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS: NGUYEN
ABSTAIN: COMMISSIONERS: PAK

PUBLIC HEARING: GENERAL PLAN UPDATE
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
APPLICANT: CITY OF GARDEN GROVE
LOCATION: CITYWIDE
DATE: JUNE 19, 2008

REQUEST: The General Plan Update is a comprehensive update of the City's 1995 General Plan. General Plan 2030 includes an update and reorganization of

existing elements, resulting in the following State mandated and optional elements: Land Use Element; Community Design Element; Economic Development Element; Circulation Element; Infrastructure Element; Noise Element; Air Quality Element; Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Element; Conservation Element; Safety Element; and Housing Element. This is the first in a series of public hearings on the General Plan Update and accompanying Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

At this meeting, the public has the opportunity to provide oral testimony and written correspondence. The Planning Commission shall take no actions at this meeting. Written correspondence will continue to be accepted by Planning Staff at Garden Grove City Hall and through email sent to generalplanupdate@ci.garden-grove.ca.us until July 14, 2008. July 14, 2008 is the end of the 45-day public review period. The consultant and staff will review and modify the Draft General Plan and Draft EIR based on the comments and correspondence received during the public review period. A second public hearing, held by the Planning Commission on the Draft General Plan and Draft EIR, is scheduled for July 17, 2008.

Following a Power Point presentation that documented the visions and goals of the General Plan and Environmental Import (EIR), comments were received from both the public and the Planning Commission. Staff stated again that the 45- day review period would end on July 14, 2008 and that all comments must be received by that date to be included in the written "Response to Comments" for the Draft EIR.

Vice Chair Pak asked staff if the input from the May 29th community workshop would be included in the General Plan. Staff replied that the collected comments were under consideration; however, there are no changes in the General Plan at this time.

Chair Pierce opened the public hearing to hear testimony in favor of or in opposition to the General Plan and EIR.

Ms. Robin Marcario approached the Commission and commended staff and the consulting firm on their good work. She also noted that the General Plan citywide flyers, workshop, and website were well done and contained good information; that she commends the preservation of residential neighborhoods as a top priority; that park growth looks to be substantial; that removed trees need to be replaced, and water trucks provided to water the trees so they survive; that mixed use zoning on major arterials is good with regard to traffic circulation; that she supports entertainment on Main Street, which would bring in more tax revenue; and that she loves Main Street's historical significance and potential for the future.

Ms. June Eckert approached the Commission and stated that she is a 20 year Garden Grove resident; that the General Plan looks good; that she is concerned with the depth of the green belt area located in the International West area along Harbor Boulevard, specifically the east side between Blue Spruce along Garden Grove Boulevard to Lampson Avenue; and that she would like to know the impact and type of noise barrier to be located there as a six to eight foot wall would not buffer the noise filtering into the residential area. She also asked if she would lose property if her property was located within 500 feet of the green belt area.

Staff responded that possible future widening of Harbor Boulevard in the International West area may mean taking additional properties and installing a greenbelt between; that the General Plan calls for a Harbor Boulevard International West streetscape plan, however, the depth of the greenbelt is unknown at this time and that there is no time frame available yet for that work.

Mr. Scott Weimer approached the Commission and stated that he and his wife are excited about the General Plan; that the Garden Grove Downtown Business Association has been working on a plan that includes revitalization of the downtown district, specifically Main Street; that the community would like to improve Main Street; that there is a high value on historical preservation; that in 1974, Main Street was declared as a "place of special character and historical interest"; that the revitalization program included the facelift of all the Main Street buildings, upgrades to the infrastructures and architectural enhancements to streets and sidewalks; that there is a unanimous desire for retail shops, trees and flowers, good lighting, signage, adequate parking, nightclubs, restaurants, and sidewalk cafes; that during special events, Main Street is busy; that with more housing, an area should be designated for promoted and protected activity on a regular basis such as theater and live musical performances; that downtown residents and visitors want nearby entertainment opportunities such as nightclubs and theaters as long as they are not disruptive; that the Planning Commissioners could join with the Main Street Parking Commission to make a recommendation to the City for an entertainment zone in the Garden Grove downtown commercial district; that the entertainment plan was presented earlier this year to the Garden Grove Parking and Main Street Commission; that the idea was met with enthusiasm and a formal resolution was written; that this document is an initial vision for proposed downtown rezoning for fresh ideas to unite the community by combining the old with the new; and that the ideas are ambitious, but not unachievable. Copies of the resolution were distributed to the Commissioners for their review.

Commissioner Brietigam commented that the Commissioners needed more specific information.

Mr. Weimer added that a report will be presented to the Parking and Main Street Commission on July 10, 2008.

Commissioner Brietigam asked staff to describe the process if the Garden Grove Downtown Business Association's plan was looked on favorably by City Council.

Staff responded that the General Plan is the overview of the future character of Main Street with broad goals; that to allow certain levels of entertainment as a type of use would be a rezoning; that 'zoning' is what allows changes to create development standards for the areas and type of uses.

Commissioner Kirkham added that any change would begin with staff. Commissioner Beard asked staff if the General Plan contained anything that would prohibit or facilitate an entertainment zone.

Staff replied no, that a broad goal could be added to consider changing zones to allow some entertainment; that other departments would need to review the changes and associated development standards; and that an entertainment concept would need to be reviewed in detail.

Vice Chair Pak asked the consultant if other cities have entertainment zones contained in their General Plans.

Ms. Collette Morse replied that in her experience, none of the General Plans had that category; however, there is flexibility to create designations for the community, either separately or as a part of one that exists already.

Staff added that a policy could be created to consider the Main Street area; that the Planning Commission could raise this issue and make this part of a recommendation to the General Plan that would go on to City Council; that conversely, the Planning Commission could make the recommendation to not include the item in the General Plan; that the City's Economic Development Department's focus is on Harbor Boulevard in order to make those improvements; that competing areas may be created, as the Harbor Boulevard area has been a long time City goal; that there is an ongoing character of Main Street from the 1995 General Plan; and that residential above commercial has recently been added.

Vice Chair Pak asked staff if there is a conflict of residential above commercial, especially with a nightclub that will be reopening.

Staff replied yes, that certain types of commercial are better than others next to residential; and that these types of issues are development standards and a part of zoning, not the General Plan.

Commissioner Brietigam asked staff to describe the process if a problem in the General Plan needs to be addressed. Staff replied that the Planning Commission could request an added policy to the General Plan that would go forward to City Council or, to change the zoning for Main Street, more detailed information and review would be needed and the issue would be brought back at a later date.

Mr. Peter Katz, Vice President of the Garden Grove Downtown Business Association, approached the Commission and commented that entertainment includes all the arts that would create a lively atmosphere for the locals; that Anaheim has tourists, businesses, and residents; that Garden Walk just opened for entertainment; that Garden Grove also has that setting, however, it needs improvement; that a venue for families with children is needed to eat, stroll and browse; that Main Street is a gathering place to enjoy that needs to be lively, especially at night; and that the character of Main Street needs to be developed.

Ms. Cheryl Armstrong approached the Commission and commented that a friend in Fullerton enjoyed living above a café; that Pine Street in Long Beach is larger, however, it is fun; that the Central Garden Grove Neighborhood Association would like to see Main Street be more of a destination; that a method of streamlining the permit process would be good; and that some form of Main Street entertainment would be good for those who will be living there.

Mr. Doug Coleman, who owns a restaurant on Main Street, approached the Commission and stated that he agrees that Main Street issues should be taken on a case-by-case basis; that acoustical music such as a jazz piano player or guitar in a bar would be good to keep people at Main Street; that the Conditional Use Permit process is not consistent; that everyone should have the same rules; that building Main Street is an investment to our community; and that the sewer line replacement was an improvement.

Mr. Hooshang Farahmand approached the Commission and stated that he agreed with the other speakers; that people want simple things in downtown; that downtown should be revitalized and good, not just another Harbor Boulevard or Disneyland; and that we need entertainment.

Ms. Peggy Bergin, a 30-year resident of Garden Grove, stated that she shops elsewhere for items such as cars, clothes, and movies; that the gymnasium is open from 3:00-10:00 p.m., not the hours for student teenagers that are out of school for the summer; that her family would not buy or stay in the city because there is nothing to do; that during the car show, a choice of restaurants is needed; that improvements to Harbor Boulevard since 1995 only include hotels, restaurants and limited parking; that the long term residents have no venues to go to in the city; that the City has to work with what the City has; that small parks would be good; that green space should be lots with play areas for children; and that the General Plan report has nothing to do with what the citizens want.

Chair Pierce added that comments could still be heard at the Planning Commission meeting on July 17, 2008.

There being no further comments, the public portion of the hearing was closed.

Vice Chair Pak commented that he agreed with some resident's comments; that he is a patron of establishments on Pine Street in Long Beach and Fullerton; that a similar street in Anyang, Garden Grove's Korean sister city, is also bustling as an entertainment area; that the General Plan only affects 10 percent of the City, whereas 90 percent will remain the same; that values are what we keep, and vision is for moving forward; that the developments on Harbor Boulevard have brought revenue to the city for the infrastructure; that there is no competition with other districts; that many people bring their investments to Main Street; and that it would be good to put a guideline together to accommodate resident and business owner needs.

Commissioner Beard agreed that it would be good to be supportive of the downtown in the General Plan capacity; that a policy could be added; and that the downtown is a destination of locals.

Commissioner Bankson commented that he is a 40-year Garden Grove resident; and that he is supportive of an improved downtown. He also asked staff to clarify the possible residential development in the Western Avenue area, which is a commercial/industrial area.

Staff replied that should a future transit stop occur in that area, that in the long term, residential may be added; that there is consideration between

several neighboring cities to utilize a light rail transit system; and that a land use policy set in place could capitalize on the rail corridor.

Chair Pierce commented that Main Street continues to change; that changes take time; and that he is supportive of entertainment.

Staff added that at the second General Plan public hearing on July 17, 2008, the Commissioners would make their recommendation to City Council for consideration; that the Commissioners could craft a policy to investigate the entertainment aspects of Main Street; and that the second public hearing would be properly advertised.

MATTERS FROM
COMMISSIONERS:

Commissioner Kirkham asked staff to clarify the invitation that Commissioners received regarding a meeting for the Brookhurst Triangle.

Staff responded that there is a neighborhood meeting on June 30, 2008 to review the preliminary conceptual plans for the Brookhurst Triangle, by prospective development teams; that the Commissioners may attend; that Commissioners will not violate the Brown Act if they remain separate and refrain from discussion; and that a consultant and City staff would be present.

Vice Chair Pak expressed that Garden Grove has the third largest Korean district in the United States; that there is a difference between Korea town in Los Angeles and the business district in Garden Grove; and that entertainment on Main Street would bring the area to life.

MATTERS
FROM STAFF:

Staff added that there would be an ABC Study Session prior to the second General Plan public hearing on July 17, 2008; that for the last year and a half, Garden Grove has been designated as a target City for Orange County; that Cal Berkeley professors have been looking at issues related to ABC Licenses, such as providing objective information and findings to help the City make good decisions regarding the types of licenses, the hours of operation, and where the licenses are located; and that based on the findings, the Police Chief is making recommendations for use in future applications.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 8:31 p.m.

JUDITH MOORE
Recording Secretary