

CITY OF SOLVANG  
PLANNING COMMISSION

**APPROVED  
MEETING MINUTES**

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Monday, Nov 2, 2020 – 6:00 P.M.  
Regular Hearing of the Planning Commission  
Council Chambers – Solvang Municipal Center – 1644 Oak Street

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**Commissioners Present:** Scott Gold, Jack Williams, David Brents (zoom)

**Absent:** Justin Rodriguez, Aaron Petersen

**Staff Present:** Laurie Tamura, Planning Consultant  
Xenia Bradford, City Manager  
Chip Wullbrandt, City Attorney

CALL TO ORDER

PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

**1. PRELIMINARY MATTERS:**

**A. Public Comment:**

Don Thompson, Solvang Resident, questions about public noticing of projects re: story poles or signing. Commissioner Williams stated that the story pole ordinance was recommended to the City Council, who did not approve this.

**B. Requests for Continuance, Withdrawals, or Addition of Ex-Agenda items**

None

**C. Conflicts and/or Ex-Parte Communications**

David Brents informed that he toured the Alisal site, Commissioner Williams stated he also toured the site before the October meeting.

**D. Approval of Minutes from October 5, 2020 Meeting**

*Motion made by Commissioner Gold to approve the minutes as presented and seconded by Commissioner Williams. Vote is 3-0.*

**2. PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS**

**A. Hearing on the request of Ken Hunter, for Dark Sky Development, LLC to consider approval of a Development Plan and Tentative Tract Map 30080 for an 11 unit Condominium project in the Design Residential (DR) zone and adopt a Categorical Exemption pursuant to Section 15332 of the guidelines for the implementation of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)**

Laurie Tamura presented the project to the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Gold asked about ADA requirements or elevator access, as well as clarification on the exemption.

Commissioner Gold asked about when the developer can decide how to lease or sell the units. Tamura stated that this tract map recordation allows for the construction of the units, at which time the developer will decide.

Commissioner Williams asked about the low-income unit, how long it must remain in the low-income category. Tamura stated that it will stay for the life of the project.

Eric Vasquez, project owner addressed the Commission on the front yard setback based on guidance from the City. Geri Sandahl, Arris Architects, addressed the Commission on the ADA requirements. There are no elevators as they are not required.

Gloria Desals, Solvang resident, brought up concerns about the distance to her property which is adjacent to the site. Tamura responded with the distance from the border of the building will be about 25 feet. There will also be a retaining wall and fence, as well as landscaping and screening on the developer side of the fence.

Nancy Emerson, Solvang resident, spoke in support of the very low-income unit. She asked if first preference to these units can be given to residents already living or working in Solvang, or in the Santa Ynez Valley. Emerson spoke in favor of the Setback reduction if it would allow for increase in the common areas. She asked about the lighting of the project and would like to see the future design during the branding committee.

Commissioner Gold spoke in favor of the design, and that the issues from the Fire Department had been addressed. Commissioner Brents and Williams also spoke in favor of the design.

Commissioner Williams asked about the Tract Map number to be approved, and the changes to the conditions of approval, particularly the development fees. Tamura referenced the public works letter which does state the fees.

Commissioner Williams asked about who will enforce the CCR's. Wullbrandt responded that they will be submitted for approval by the City Attorney and Planning Director, before they are recorded. Tamura stated that the CC&R's will be the responsibility of the HOA to maintain.

Wullbrandt asked if the Commissioners would like to address the City and Valley preference to the Low-income unit. The Commission supported it, as did the developer.

Elizabeth Breen, President of the Local Association of Realtors, recommended checking with fair housing before putting the local preference condition on the very low income unit. Wullbrandt stated that it would be a marketing preference, not a restriction. This will be stated in the Conditions to state this preference.

*Motion made by Commissioner Williams to approve the project as presented and seconded by Commissioner Gold. Vote is approved 3-0.*

**B. Hearing on the request of Jake Rodriguez of 1420 Mission Drive, LLC to consider the approval of a Development Plan for an 11-unit hotel in the Tourist Related Commercial (TRC) zone and accept the Categorical Exemption, pursuant to Section 15304(e) of the guidelines for the Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)**

Laurie Tamura presented the project to the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Williams asked about the corrections presented, and if they are updated in the motion.

Commissioner Gold supported the design of the project, and that it would be good to fill a historically vacant lot.

Brenda Messer, project consultant, asked about clarifications in the Staff report. Section D has two D-7s, clarification on drainage street, site improvements timing. Tamura addressed these issues will be corrected in the conditions.

Brian Nelson, project architect, addressed the project description lacking the office and laundry room, and would like them added.

Don Thompson, Solvang Resident, had concerns with the design aesthetics of the project, and concerns with the labeling of the project in the Staff Report as vacation rental.

Elizabeth Breen, Solvang Resident, thanked the Commission for continuing the item and addressed communication and corrections made with the developers and City staff. Breen asked about conditions for the Construction crew parking, and how to prevent impacts to the residents during construction, including a construction management plan.

Nancy Emerson, Solvang Resident and representative of We Watch, asked about noise reduction measures for the North Wall. Emerson asked about the definition of a Guest room, and how that impacts parking, and if the parking is sufficient to support employees and guests. If there is not, how will it impact the street parking on the neighborhood. Emerson asked about increased traffic impacts to the surrounding neighborhood.

Brian Nelson, project architect, addressed the comments from the public, including the lighting and employee parking.

Commissioner Williams asked about the labeling of the project as vacation rental, and the architect clarified that it was always intended as a hotel. The conditions of the project will state this as well. Nelson stated that the aesthetic issues brought up by Thompson will be addressed and will need to go before the BDC for approval.

*Motion made by Commissioner Williams to approve the project as presented with the changes to conditions discussed and seconded by Commissioner Gold. Vote is approved 3-0.*

**3. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**A. Calendar for 2021**

Laurie Tamura reviewed the Calendar for 2021. An addition will be made to reference the noticing period before meetings.

**B. Project Review October 2020**

Laurie Tamura reviewed the projects that were under review by the Commission, and a general process update. Xenia Bradford brought up a hotel vs. housing city survey, and the general plan update..

**4. PLANNING COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS**

None.

**5. PLANNING STAFF COMMENTS**

None.

**6. ADJOURNMENT**

*Commissioner Williams adjourned the meeting.*