



MINUTES
CITY OF NORCO

CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING
CORONA-NORCO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
LEARNING CENTER SOUTH -- 2820 CLARK AVENUE -- NORCO, CA 92860
JANUARY 23, 2012

1. CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Bash called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
2. ROLL CALL: Mayor Kevin Bash, **Present**
Mayor Pro Tem Kathy Azevedo, **Present**
Council Member Berwin Hanna, **Present**
Council Member Herb Higgins, **Present**
Council Member Harvey C. Sullivan, **Present**
3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Council Member Sullivan
4. CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING – PUBLIC COMMENTS WILL BE HEARD THROUGH THE PUBLIC HEARING PROCESS:
 - A. **Appeal Hearing:** Resolutions 2011-(41-45) –Tentative Parcel Map 36392; Master Site Plan 2011-07; Master Site Plan Phase 1 (Site Plans 2011-08, 10) Master Site Plan Phase 2 (Site Plans 2011-09,11); Master Site Plan Phase 3 (Site Plans 2011-12, 13) (Alere Property Group). A Request for Approval to Construct an Industrial/Warehouse/Commerce Park Consisting of 1,573,891 Square Feet in Six Buildings Over Three Phases on 86.93 Acres Located Generally between Pacific Avenue and Mountain Avenue and Second Street and First Street and on the East side of Mountain Avenue South of Second Street.

The Planning Commission heard the above listed items at its August 10 and September 14, 2011 meetings resulting in its denial of Site Plans 2011-07, -08, -09, -10, -11, -12, and -13; and denial of Tentative Parcel map 36392. The reasons for denial are based on findings that the project is not consistent with the policies of the Gateway Specific Plan because, in its entirety, it is too intense of a land use given its location adjacent and across the street from residential agricultural land uses. The Planning Commission also concluded that the traffic analysis was not comprehensive enough in determining impacts and mitigations to the corridor between the Second Street/Hammer Avenue intersection and the freeway interchange and the corresponding corridor along Hidden Valley Parkway. The Alere Property Group (the "Applicant") filed an appeal to the City Council on September 19, 2011 regarding the decisions made by the Planning Commission on the referenced project. Therefore, a public hearing was noticed for a Special City Council meeting on January 23, 2012, at which time the City Council will hear and consider the Applicant's appeal.

City Manager Groves introduced the public hearing and provided a brief overview and history of the public actions taken on the proposed project to the City Council for informational purposes.

Planning Director King provided an overview of the size, architect and location of the proposed project site, noting the requirements of the Gateway Specific Plan. An illustration of the project was presented in its entirety. He stated that reasons for the Planning Commission's denial were based on findings that the project is not consistent with the policies of the Gateway Specific Plan because in its entirety, it is too intense of a land use given its location adjacent and across the street from residential agricultural land uses. Planning Director King further highlighted specific sections from the staff report as distributed to the City Council.

Representatives of the Alere Property Group (the "Appellant") presented information relating to the proposed project. They briefly summarized the Norco Ranch Commerce Park proposal; background of the Alere Property Group; reasons for the appeal, noting its conformance with the Gateway Specific Plan; project design elements and City improvements proposed; examples of industrial development adjacent to residential areas in other cities; crime rate and security; maintenance of the streets and trails, noting an agreement that would be entered into with the City; and technical information regarding air, noise and traffic. The Appellant stated that the traffic study was prepared in conformance with the required guidelines and was reviewed for potential impacts. They added that mitigation measures, as a result, were found to be consistent with the Gateway Specific Plan, noting that the intersections that are deficient today will have improvements completed based on the project requirements.

The Appellant stated that at this time no tenants have committed, but there are high level tenants interested. They commented on the economic benefits to the City with approximately 696 new good paying permanent jobs (average income noted at \$42,000 annually for warehouse employees in 2009) with \$30 million in annual income added to the area. Also noted was the direct economic benefit of City project fees that would be paid in the amount of \$6.6 million and the annual property taxes they would pay in the amount of \$1.3 million when fully build out and accessed.

The Appellant asked for the City Council's support for the project, as it is consistent with the zoning and the Gateway Specific Plan, citing the benefits it would bring to the City (land use element conventional; well thought out site plan that restricts truck access to the industrial zones; the design is both tasteful and functional and will save riding trails; project is fully mitigated for traffic, air and noise; site would be safe and secure with very little City service demands; and provides an economic benefit by providing good paying jobs, City fees and tax revenues).

Mayor Bash OPENED the public hearing, indicating that proper notification had been made and asked for the appearance of those wishing to speak.

The following individuals spoke in opposition of the project:

Sharon Higman

Patricia Overstreet

Linda Dixon

Ed Dixon

Donna Johnson

Nancy Gilmore

Nancy Cryslar

Maryse Koegel

Su Bacon

Mike Thompson

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Diane Collins
Larry Palmer
Danny Azevedo (speaking for the Norco Horsemen's Association)
Judy Lambert
Dan Lambert
Rachel Lopez
Bob Nicas
Jody Nicas
Sandy McClure
Wayne Steffner
Jeannie Hallgrimson
Terri Baker
Marva Anselm
Bill Anselm
Denise Lynn Sutherland
Teresa Wages
Susan Yasui
Manfred Wrembel
Wendy Hartley
Gary Cervantes
Keith Kamstra
Pat Hedges
Glen Hedges
Kathleen Kay
Denise Shoemaker
Bill Green
Susan Leming
Barbara Powell
Robert Richardson
Ed Clark
Bob Cuervo
David Wilson
Brenda Boring
Geno Stephenson
Alan Schuetz
Benjamin Conrado
Lisa Butler
Robert Carr
Mark Anderson
Rudy Granville

The following individuals spoke in support of the project:

Woody Harpole
Lorne Whittle
Rob Guy
Robert Swindell
Greg Dellenbach

RECESSED: 8:00 p.m. – The City Attorney requested that no dialogue with the City Council take place during the recess regarding the public hearing item.

RECONVENED: 8:17 p.m. – The public comment period continued with the completion of the appearance of the above-noted speakers.

Mayor Bash CLOSED the public hearing.

Council Member Higgins thanked all in attendance for speaking for and against the project and a summary of his comments is provided as follows:

- He listened to those living across the street from the proposed project; adding that he would not want to live across the street from this project.
- Property owners have rights and have a right to sell their property and make money.
- Likes what the proposed project will do, but it will not financially benefit the City that much.
- Commented on prior projects completed by the City, such as the Auto Mall, noting that they were heavily financially relied on.
- The Planning Commission's goal is to review specific plans to see if the development fits and he relies heavily on the Planning Commission to make that determination. The Planning Commission said no because in their understanding of the Gateway Specific Plan, it did not fit.
- He also reviewed the Gateway Specific Plan and came to the conclusion that this proposed project does not work, noting that the Egg Ranch was grandfathered into the Specific Plan and never conditioned as a Specific Plan use.
- He will vote in response to the statements received from the people that live next to the proposed project.

Council Member Sullivan thanked all in attendance and a summary of his comments is provided as follows:

- Does not disagree with a lot of what was said, adding that he heard some things about ruining City streets and does not believe that there are any problems with Hidden Valley with the truck traffic on that street.
- If the proposed project is approved, all of the infrastructure would be brought up to standards and truck traffic would not damage the streets.
- Some said this is not the highest and best use for the site, noting that it is hard to bring in retail to Norco and that is not a good use for that site.
- Commented on disturbance to the neighbors, noting that the Appellant went into great lengths to protect the horses and the neighbors.
- Commented on the Egg Ranch being there for a long time, noting the support Mr. Eisen has historically been to the community. He added that Mr. Eisen is 95 years old and has a right to sell his property.
- All the Appellant is asking for is site map and tentative track map approval. If approved, the Appellant could solicit some of the good tenants as presented and then we can get down to the conditions and restrictions.
- Pacific Avenue would look better if this project was approved, adding that he would not have a problem living next to the proposed project.
- Commented on the diesel exhaust and particulates in the air, noting that they were less than a car and we don't know how many trucks there will be.

- The City Council needs a real good reason to turn it down, noting that the Planning Commission's denial of the project as being too intense was not a good reason to turn it down as it is not part of the Code. He added that he is not going to vote no if it meets or exceeds the City's regulations, noting that he took an oath to abide by the laws of this land.
- Commented on the air quality in Norco and how it has improved, noting his concern regarding the particulates found in the dust from the animal waste in back yards.
- Will Rogers Quote –“You've got to go out on a limb because that's where the fruit is.”

Council Member Hanna thanked everyone for coming and a summary of his comments is provided as follows:

- Received confirmation from Planning Director King that it is a driveway, not a private street in the proposed plans for the project, noting it was just mislabeled.
- Performed his own traffic study, noting the times it took him to get from one location to another with the truck traffic as an example of the problems that will be caused by all of the extra truck traffic in town. He further commented on the problems with cut-through traffic in Norco.
- The first issue is all the extra traffic, the other issue is the health issues brought up which are a big concern. He further commented on the diesel fumes that settle in his back yard from the truck traffic on Interstate 15 Freeway and Sixth Street.
- Another concern that raised a red flag is the bridge that would need to be built from the trucking unit to the commercial unit. He wondered who would pay for it, adding that the City cannot pay for it. Nor can the City pay for any improvements to the Second Street freeway ramps.
- The residents have property rights to protect their homes.

Mayor Pro Tem Azevedo thanked all in attendance and a summary of her comments is provided as follows:

- Noted how proud she is to be from Horsetown USA, adding that what makes us special are the people and she will do everything in her power to maintain Horsetown USA.
- In her struggle to maintain the City, she does not see a truck distribution center to be in the strategic plan vision.
- Commented on the Appellant's presentation, noting that she took offense in comparing Norco to other cities as Norco is so unique compared to other neighborhoods.
- Agrees that clearly this is not in compliance with the Gateway Specific Plan.
- The true economic engine is the Auto Mall and she is concerned what this project would do to them.
- Silverlakes will be a solution to the destination plan for Norco.
- The neighbors have property rights and she believes that a project more in compliance would work.
- Not in support of the proposed project, as it will jeopardize Horsetown USA and its goals.
- Jobs don't benefit the City in balancing the budget. There will be a lot of jobs at Silverlakes that will be conducive to Norco residents.
- She feels the same as all who spoke in opposition of the proposed project and will be voting against this project.

Mayor Bash thanked everyone for respecting all of the speakers and also thanked the Appellant for their presentation. A summary of his comments is provided as follows:

- Has lived in Norco over 50 years and sat through many meetings where promises were made that were not fulfilled. He added that he learned the hard way through experience.
- If we were looking for a truck depot, this is what he would support, as they do a good job.
- Commenting on the money given by Mr. Eisen for Norco's cityhood, noting what an amazing man he is.
- Disputes some of the figures presented by the Appellant and concurs with the Planning Commission. He added that he does not want to look back in the future and realize that all the money is gone.
- This is just not the project for us. He further apologized to Mr. Eisen, noting that he cannot approve this project.

M/S Higgins/Azevedo to uphold the Planning Commission's denial of the project. The motion was carried by the following roll call vote:

AYES: AZEVEDO, BASH, HANNA, HIGGINS

NOES: SULLIVAN

ABSENT: NONE

ABSTAIN: NONE

5. **ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business to come before the City Council, Mayor Bash adjourned the meeting at 9:40 p.m.

BRENDA K. JACOBS, CMC
CITY CLERK