



UPTOWN PLANNERS
Uptown Community Planning Group
FINAL MINUTES
April 4, 2017

Call to order by Leo Wilson at 6:05

In attendance: Cindy Thorsen, Gary Bonner, Leo Wilson, Roy Dahl, Ken Tablang, Jennifer Pesqueira, Soheil Nakhshab, Mat Wahlstrom, Bill Ellig, Bob Daniel, Maya Rosas, Jay Newington, Dana Hook, Amie Hayes, Michael Brennan, Tim Gahagan, Tom Mullaney

Absent: none

I. Board Meeting: Parliamentary Items/Reports:

A. Introductions

B. Election of Officers

Dahl nominates Leo Wilson for Chair – unanimous vote to approve.

Daniels nominates Tom Mullaney for Vice Chair – unanimous vote to approve.

Jennifer Pesqueira nominates Michael Brennan for treasurer – unanimous vote to approve.

Wahlstrom nominates Roy Dahl for Treasurer – unanimous vote to approve

B. Adoption of Agenda and Rules of Order – Tom Mullaney requests that the India Street SDP be pulled from the consent agenda: Motion by Wahlstrom, second by Ellig to approve the agenda as amended; approved by unanimous voice vote.

D. Approval of March 7, 2017 minutes; Motion by Daniel, seconded by Bonner. Motion approved by 14-0- vote; with Dahl, Hook, Brennan and Chair Wilson abstaining.

E. Treasurer's Report – No changes since last month's report.

F. Chair/CPC Report; Andrew Field from City Park & Recreation Department indicated that the renaming of the West Maple Street Mini-Park to the Waldo Waterman Park would be scheduled for a hearing at the City Park & Recreation Board .

-Correspondence was received from Carol Emerick regarding grading issues in Florence Canyon, and Jim Frost in opposition to the Rock "n" Roll Marathon letter of support.

- Subcommittees: Dana Hook announced that Public Facilities Subcommittee will be meeting on May 20th in the Guild Room of St. Paul's Cathedral; Amie Hayes announced the Rees-Stealy historic review has been continued by the City's Historic Resources Board;

-Community Planners Committee discussed reforms proposed by city council members to the community planning group procedures; including additional training, and ways to encourage more the provision of more affordable housing. The idea of combining community planning groups into fewer large groups has been abandoned.

II. Public Communication: ; no one made non-agenda public comment.

III. Representatives of Elected Officials:

Brittany Bailey from City Council member Christopher Ward's office indicated Councilmember Ward has sponsored an equal pay ordinance for women. It will go before the City Council Rules Committee that week; Councilmember Ward is also involved in addressing the issue of homelessness in the city.

Mark Zambon from Congresswoman Susan Davis' office stated Davis had recently had a town hall meeting at which an estimated 600 people attended. Congress has been involved in the budget approval process, and Davis was concerned over many of the budget cuts proposed by the President, particularly those involving health care.

Nick Serrano from State Assemblyman Todd Gloria's office spoke in favor of SB1, a state transportation funding measure. He also announced a scholarship opportunity for Latino students.

IV. Consent Agenda: None

V. Projects: Action Items:

- VI. 2810 INDIA STREET SDP ("STAY SDP") – Process Three – Middletown – Site**
Development Permit to demolish existing shed and construct a 3-story hotel; with subterranean parking totaling 39,294 sq. ft. The 0.35-acre site is located at 2801 India Street; *DRB Motion by Wilson; seconded by Nakhshab: Recommend approval of the project and placement on consent agenda, with the following conditions: (1.)Quality finishes be used for exterior walls; (2.)There be appropriate landscaping; Passed 2-0.*

Presentation made about the project by the applicant, Dana Blasi.

Design Review Subcommittee Chair Nakhshab moved the recommendation of the subcommittee. Nakhshab stated the project had come before his subcommittee two times; at both meetings neighborhood residents attended. Nakhshab indicated the project would be excellent addition to the neighborhood, in an area that needed revitalization.

Chair Wilson, who attended the subcommittee meetings, spoke in support of the project the project, stating it would serve as a "gateway building" at the south entry to Middletown. Wilson indicated the applicant was agreeable to both conditions in the subcommittee motion.

In response to an inquiry by Dahl, the applicant stated the project required only two deviations, and otherwise conformed to code and would not have had to come to Uptown Planners: The deviations were: (1.) the elevator shaft exceeded the applicable height limit, and (2.) the applicant wanted a one foot setback along one wall, instead of the three foot setback required by code.

Terry Fenwick, an adjacent property owner, spoke in favor of the project. He indicated even though it affected his views, the modular nature of the design preserved much of his view. Ian Epley supported the project, and pointed out it had more parking than presently existed because of the removal of unnecessary curb cuts. There also would be more on-site parking than required by code. A north side adjacent property owner objected to the building of a 30-foot wall along the south side of his property, as it would impair his view. Nancy Moors denounced the project, comparing it to Hillcrest 111 being imposed upon Hillcrest.

Board member Mullaney spoke in support of the project, stating it would be the first building people see leaving the I-5 freeway, and would present a complimentary first impression of the community. Dahl complimented the applicant for going through the discretionary review process for what were two minor deviations from code.

Nakhshab made the motion to approve the Design Review Subcommittee recommendation; which was approved by a vote of 16-0-1, with non-voting Chair Wilson abstaining.

Special Police Report

Officer Ricardo Pinon, of the San Diego Police Department, spoke about the Vision Zero pedestrian safety enforcement effort. The police have identified the 500/600 blocks of University Avenue as a location of a high number of pedestrian and bicyclist accident facilities. The police stepped up enforcement on these blocks, focused on violations of pedestrian right of way at sidewalk crossings. Besides writing traffic citations, the police also did an educational outreach to drivers regarding pedestrian and bicyclist safety, and reported to city engineering any issues impacting public safety at the intersections. Board member Brennan indicated the intersection of Park and University had also had many fatalities. Board member Rosas inquired how the public could report a dangerous intersection; Pinon relied the public could contact him. Ann Garwood inquired if the police were also citing bicyclists for violation of traffic laws.

Pinon also spoke the recent homeless outreach efforts by the police in Uptown. A total of 129 homeless individuals were contacted, of which 11 agreed to entry into homeless service programs.

VII. Letters of Support: Action Items:

1. **ROCK “N” ROLL SAN DIEGO MARATHON AND HALF MARATHON** -- Presentation by Natalia Mendez, Competitor Group Community Relations coordinator, about: 1) race day information and review of route and any changes 2) overview of road closures and alternate routes 3) and request for a letter of support. Event will be held on June 4, 2017

Presentation made by Natalia Mendez, event coordinator, about the event, which will take place on June 3 and June 4, 2017.

Board member Newington indicated he opposed a two day event, but could support a one day event. Dahl recommended alternative routes and start locations that would have less impact on the adjacent communities. Wahlstrom and Wilson brought up the issue of the 50-foot noise buffer recommendation made by the Balboa Park’s West Mesa Subcommittee, which is current under consideration for implementation by the city. It has not been adopted, so would not apply to this event. The issue of turning sound speakers away from residential areas was also brought up.

Motion by Wahlstrom, seconded by Bonner, to approve the letter of support for the Rock ‘n’ Roll Marathon and Half Marathon; motion passed by a 15-0-2 vote. Non-voting chair Wilson and Newington abstaining.

VIII. Information Items: Projects: None

IX. Planning Staff/Subcommittee Reports – Potential Action Items

1. **Potential Appeal to Hearing Officer of the Hillcrest 111 Project:** Tom Mullaney presented his request that the board of Uptown Planners authorize a potential appeal of the Hillcrest 111 project to the Planning Commission, should the project be approved without the modifications to the project recommended by Uptown Planners at its February 7, 2017 meeting.

Mullaney pointed out the Hillcrest 111 project was on a Process Two track, which meant a city planning staff member would decide whether to approve it. Mullaney stated that, given the size and controversy about the project, the decision on its final approval should be made by

the Planning Commission at a public hearing. He reminded the board the project along Robinson Avenue has no set back or step back, and rises 92-feet straight up above a four-foot sidewalk and four-foot dirt strip south of the street.

A letter from Marcela Escobar-Eck on behalf of the applicant in opposition to Mullaney's request had been received and distributed to the board prior to the board meeting.

Jim Ivory, from Greystar, the project applicant, spoke in opposition to the request to authorize an appeal. Ivory pointed out that the project would be reviewed by multiple city staff from various disciplines, each focusing on particular aspects of the project. The applicant would have to address the issues raised by all the discipline reviewing staff prior to the project being approved. Having to also go to the Planning Commission would create an additional unnecessary step. Ivory pointed out the project would provide nine affordable housing units for low income individuals, and that the project provided more parking than required by code. Ivory also stated the site was underutilized, and that proposed project, and proposed deviations, was allowed by code and affordable housing incentive programs.

Public Comment:

Speaking in favor of the appeal:

-Ann Garwood thought building was too tall, as existing buildings on Seventh Avenue were only two stories. Garwood also felt it was dangerous to have no setback/step back on Robinson Avenue, as a pot or something else falling off a ledge could hit someone on the ground.

-Diedre Lee said the building too tall, and would set a bad precedent if approved.

-Rich Gorin supported the appeal, as he felt Uptown Planners procedurally needed to support its recommendation as the project went through the review process.

Nancy Moors said the city had ignored the wishes of the community during the plan update process, and needs to listen to community planning group and other stakeholders in the community.

-Pam Slater stated there was not enough public notice about the project; and if the Hillcrest community knew about it there would be strong opposition.

-Terry Fenwick, a Middletown resident, indicated the project would result in a lack of sunlight on the street, as had happened Downtown after many of the tall buildings were built.

-Rick D. supported the appeal, stating it was important for its credibility that Uptown Planners advocate for its recommendations at the city.

Speaking against the appeal:

-Ian Epley reminded the board that it was advisory only, and that Hillcrest was a neighborhood in transition, and the zoning allowed the building. Epley stated that Uptown Planners was not being ignored, instead there was disagreement.

Board Comments:

Thorsen, Wahlstrom, Gahagan spoke in favor of the appeal. Nakhshab, Brennan, Dahl spoke against it. Pesqueira felt the building might be too massive for the location where it was sited. Newington saw both sides, but leaned towards supporting the appeal.

Ellig posed several questions, which Daniel also inquired about; two of which were made to the applicant. One was if the applicant had incorporated any of the recommendations of Uptown Planners into its project? Ivory responded it was possible that a solar component would be added to the project, but stated that public parking could not be added, and there would be no changes made to setback or step backs. Regarding informing the public about the project, Ivory indicated the applicant had fully complied with the city's noticing requirements. Ken Williams from Uptown News responded to the question if his newspaper had publicized the project by responding it had done a feature story on the project.

In a discussion of the procedure that would be followed should the board approve the potential appeal, Mullaney informed the board it had only 12 business days to appeal, so the chair would have to fill the appeal in an expedited manner. This was why there needed to be prior authorization by the board. Chair Wilson indicated if the board decided to approve the appeal, he would file it, but the board would need to decide at a future meeting how it would present the appeal, and who would speak on behalf of Uptown Planners. If there was a question if an approval of the project complied with this motion, a special meeting would need to be called during the appeal period to decide if the appeal should be filled.

Motion by Mullaney, seconded by Thorsen: that Uptown Planners authorizes the chair to file an appeal of the Hillcrest 111 project, if the project that is approved without the modifications which were recommended by Uptown Planners at its February 7, 2017 meeting.

Motion approved 9-5-2; voting in favor Newington, Gahagan, Wahlstrom, Daniel, Bonner, Ellig, Hayes, Thorsen, Mullaney; voting against:: Dahl, Hook, Brennan, Tablang, Nakhshab' abstaining Pesqueira and non-voting chair. Rosas recused and did not participate in the discussion of the item.

Meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Minutes transcribed by Michael Brennan, Secretary; finalized by Leo Wilson