



**CITY OF SANTA MARIA
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES FOR REGULAR MEETING OF
DECEMBER 20, 2006**



Chairman John Everett called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Commissioners Lawnae Hunter, Michael W. Moats, Rodger Brown, Vice-Chair Etta Waterfield, and Chair John Everett

STAFF PRESENT: Community Development Director – Kirk Lindsey
Deputy City Attorney – Wendy Stockton
Senior Civil Engineer – Rodger Olds
Recording Secretary – Kathleen Villegas
Planner II – Brian Halvorson

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD: There was no one present who wished to comment.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

ITEM 1 – PLANNED DEVELOPMENT PERMIT APPLICATION FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF GOOD SAMARITAN FAMILY HOUSING AT 401 WEST MORRISON AVENUE, PD-2006-015, E-2006-056. Review of a Planned Development Permit to allow the construction of a 16,600 sq. ft. two-story housing apartment complex for homeless families which would include a daycare and counseling services in a PD/CPO (Planned Development/Commercial Office and Professional Office) zoning district, Assessor's Parcel No. 123-172-014. The environmental impacts for this project have been reviewed in an addendum to Conditional Negative Declaration, E-98-45. No further environmental review is required. (Project Planner: Brian Halvorson)

ACTION: By motion, approved subject to the conditions as outlined in the Preliminary Draft of the Planned Development Permit as amended. Vote: 5-0.

VOTE: Ayes--Commissioners Hunter, Waterfield, Moats, Brown, and Chair Everett; Noes--None; Absent--None; Abstained--None.

Brian Halvorson presented the staff report, outlining the location and description of the project. He stated that the building setbacks, height restrictions, parking and landscaping requirements had been met, and showed the color rendering of the elevations. There had been a previous EIR for this site; staff prepared an addendum that includes the apartment complex added to the site, therefore no further environmental review is required. Mr. Halvorson concluded his report by stating that staff is recommending approval of the project and was available to answer any questions.

Commissioner Hunter expressed concerns regarding the architectural aspects of the building. She does not want to approve "box" structures just to get affordable housing,

especially when the back of the building faces, or fronts on a street. She understands that cost is an issue, but wants more detail and design on the street side of the building. She suggested shutters, different designs in windows, stone work, or lattices. She would also like to see a nicer door on that side, even if it is only an emergency exit. Commissioner Brown suggested flower boxes in the windows.

The architect, Tom Martinez, 2624 Airpark Drive, responded to the Commission about these concerns. He agreed that alternative window designs could be discussed. He said that with the planter boxes, the expense wouldn't be the problem, it would be the upkeep. The flower boxes would penetrate into the stucco, and who would maintain the plants in them. He also stated that with so many windows, adding shutters would really make the building look cluttered and ugly.

Mr. Martinez stated that one of the reasons they designed the cantilever and recesses was to create interest, and the windows are inset. The plant-on on the bottom of the windows was to add some treatment, as well as the top edge of the wainscoting; adding some details without a lot of additional cost. He agreed that a nicer door is also a possibility, since there is a fence there and no one would mistake it for an entrance. He believes that with the proper landscaping, this building will be much nicer than most low-income housing.

Chair Everett commented on concerns with solid waste, recyclables, and public transportation accessibility.

Rodger Olds responded to Chair Everett by stating that the applicant would have to show where the solid waste would be going, or if they'd have to install another location for another trash enclosure. He also stated that dumpsters could be serviced more than once a week. With regard to public transportation, he stated that there is a strong likelihood that SMAT will put a bus stop there. He's not sure that a bus turnout would be required on Morrison, since it is not a busy, high traffic area, but they would probably put a 65 to 85 foot red curb.

Chairman Everett asked if there was adequate handicapped parking access, why the entry to the building appeared "skewed", and why there was no direct access to the park.

Kirk Lindsey responded to Chair Everett that the ratio for handicapped parking is 1 to 25, and Mr. Martinez pointed out that there are 2 or 3 handicapped parking spaces in the middle of the site, so there will actually be a total of 4 or 5.

Mr. Martinez also addressed Chair Everett's concern about the "skewed" entry by stating that there is a concrete swale to allow proper drainage, so it was easier to move the entry, which allowed for more landscaping in the front of the building.

With respect to the park access, Mr. Halvorson read through the old file from 1998, and stated that there were a lot of complaints from police and the Good Samaritan site about people from the park spilling over onto the site and causing problems. At that time, it was reviewed by Recreation and Parks and Community Developments, and a wrought iron fence was approved.

Mr. Lindsey suggested that perhaps it would be possible to paint trim on the door with the darker color paint. Mr. Martinez stated that this could also be done to the upper story windows. The Commissioners all agreed that these changes would improve the project.

Mr. Halvorson directed the Planning Commission to the green sheets, Condition 3, Storm Drainage Impacts. That condition states “the project shall provide on-site storm water retardation”. Because water retardation is not required, pursuant to the Public Works Department, that condition will be deleted. Mr. Halvorson also reminded the Commissioners that the addendum would need to be approved along with this project.

Mr. Halvorson reiterated the changes discussed, which included gridded windows, lentel feature on the upstairs windows to match the color on the downstairs, adding 24” box trees for the front area facing Morrison; and adding some trim around the door that faces Morrison to match the windows. In addition, the staff would review the lighting with the applicant.

After verifying that the Commissioners had no further questions for the applicant, Chairman Everett opened the floor to anyone else present who wished to speak in favor or opposition of the proposed project.

Raymond Jensen, 501 West Park Avenue, addressed the Commission, and stated that he was strongly opposed to this project. His concerns include increased traffic on Park Avenue, the drug addicts, alcoholics and homeless people loitering in the park and the neighborhood, and the fact that the landscaping has not been maintained. Besides his residence at 501 West Park Avenue, he also owns 505 West Park Avenue. He stated that because of the Good Samaritan campus, his property values have significantly decreased.

Mr. Jensen urged the Planning Commission to review the entire Good Samaritan project, and vote the project down. He suggested that the Commissioners would not approve this project if it was in their neighborhoods.

Following discussions addressing each of Mr. Jensen’s complaints, the Commissioners and Staff made comments and suggestions as listed below:

1. Park Street has been blocked at one end of the street with a special gate that the Fire Department can crash through if necessary.
2. The Good Samaritan staff is very strict with the clients regarding loitering in the area. Not only do they patrol the area, but there is also a Police substation in the area.
3. Mike Alared, the housing coordinator for Good Samaritan stated that, with the exception of three pine trees, all other current landscaping is on a drip system. He further stated that there will be new landscaping once the buildings are complete.
4. Staff will review all records for code compliance issues.
5. Finally, it was suggested that Good Samaritan initiate a community outreach program to build better communications with the surrounding neighborhoods.

Commissioner Brown requested that a report be presented in 90 days to see if these problems have been addressed.

Heather Wear, 423 West Park Avenue, who lives across from the dining hall facility, came forward with her concerns. She stated that the house has been in their family for over 50 years. She understands the need for shelters and housing for low income and at risk families, but they also need to look at the families that have been there for a long time. In the evening they can watch people park on Park Avenue and walk over to the shelter. She

stated that she, personally, has been the victim of the increased crime rate. There are people there trying to fix up their houses and raise families there. She's put up with the traffic and the weeds that are two feet tall; it's not fair to the families that live there and have to stay there. There does need to be dialogue between the neighbors and Good Samaritan.

The Commissioners discussed the possibilities of closing off pedestrian traffic from Park Avenue, including eliminating the 10 parking spaces on the Park Avenue side of the street closure gate. Mr. Alarid is open to suggestions for making things better for the outside neighborhood and stated that he was hired to address these types of issues.

The Commissioners reiterated that these are serious issues and need to involve Code Compliance, Good Samaritan, and the local neighborhoods. They asked that staff or Mr. Alarid report back to the Planning Commission with solutions that would make the area better for everyone.

Commissioner Hunter did state for the record that while these issues are important, they basically have no bearing on the project before them. Wendy Stockton agreed and stated that in an effort to conform to the Housing Element, the City and the community would both benefit from this project passing before the end of the year.

Chairman Everett closed the hearing and called for a motion. Commissioner Brown made the motion to approve the Planned Development Permit for the construction of the Good Samaritan Family Housing at 401 West Morrison Avenue, PD-2006-015, E-2006-056, subject to the conditions as outlined in the preliminary draft of the Planned Development Permit and the addendum to the PD-98-13, and delete Condition 3 on the green sheet, also Item 6 on the green sheet, page 3, will be added as follows, "Additional architectural treatment shall include at least two of the following: framing around windows and doors; awnings, shutters, horizontal bands or wainscoting, or gridded windows, second floor lentels painted bark mulch, trim around southern door, and the first floor lentels painted bark mulch as well, also Condition 7, Site Landscaping, add last sentence "...will include three or four 24" box trees added to the southern building elevation landscaping." Commissioner Moats seconded it, and it passed, 5-0.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m. to a Study Session on December 21, 2006, at 10:00 a.m. in the Community Development Department conference room, 110 S. Pine Street, Santa Maria.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Kirk E. Lindsey
KIRK E. LINDSEY, SECRETARY
CITY PLANNING COMMISSION