



**CITY OF SANTA MARIA  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
MINUTES FOR REGULAR MEETING OF  
MAY 16, 2007**



**SANTA MARIA PLANNING  
COMMISSION  
OFFICIAL COPY  
DATED: JUNE 6, 2007**

Chair Waterfield called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Commissioners Adrian Andrade, Rodger Brown, Tom S. Lopez, Vice-Chair Michael W. Moats and Chair Etta Waterfield.

**STAFF PRESENT:** Planning Division Manager – Peggy Woods  
Senior Deputy City Attorney II– Wendy Stockton  
Senior Civil Engineer – Rodger Olds  
Recording Secretary – Kathleen Villegas  
Planner III – Benjamin Kimball  
Planner II – Brian Halvorson

**BY MOTION, APPROVED PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES OF MAY 2, 2007, AS WRITTEN, VOTE: 4-0-1 (Commissioner Andrade absent).**

*Note: Commissioner Andrade arrived after the minutes were approved.*

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

**ITEM 1 - CONSENT CALENDAR:** The consent calendar is approved with one motion. These items are read only on request of Commission members. Should anyone, including members of the public, wish to discuss or disapprove any item, it must be dropped from the blanket motion and considered as a separate item.

- a. **ONE YEAR TIME EXTENSION FOR THE TENTATIVE MAP FOR ASUNCION, TRACT 5819, LOCATED IN THE 400 BLOCK OF WEST STOWELL ROAD.** Review of a one year extension of time request in which to record a nine (9) lot residential subdivision, in a R-1 (Single Family Residential) zoning district, Assessor’s Parcel No. 117-250-023. The project is a class 32 categorical exemption. No further environmental review is required. (Project Planner: Greg Stones)

**ACTION:** By motion granted a one year time extension.

- b. **PLANNED DEVELOPMENT PERMIT FOR BLOSSER COMMERCIAL #2 TO BE LOCATED AT 715 SOUTH BLOSSER ROAD, PD-2007-001, E-2007-004.** Review of a Planned Development Permit for the construction of a 34,281 sq. ft. industrial building that would include 7,051 sq. ft. of office and 27,230 sq. ft. of warehousing to be located in a PD/CM (Planned Development/Commercial Manufacturing) zoning district. Assessor’s Parcel No. 117-190-058. This project qualifies for a class 32 categorical exemption. No further environmental review is required. (Project Planner: Brian Halvorson)

**ACTION:** By motion continued this item to the June 6, 2007, public hearing.

**VOTE: 4-0:** AYES: Commissioners Andrade, Moats, Brown, Waterfield; NOES: None; ABSTAINED: None; ABSENT: None.

*Note: Commissioner Lopez stepped down due to a potential conflict.*

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**PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

**ITEM 2 - PLANNED DEVELOPMENT PERMIT FOR DAVID SOLA TO CONSTRUCT AN INDUSTRIAL BUILDING, 1323 WHITE COURT, PD-2006-023, E-2006-080.**

Review of Planned Development Permit to allow the construction of a 2,000 square foot industrial building in a PD/M-2 (Planned Development/Heavy Manufacturing) zoning district, Assessor's Parcel No. 117-600-022. This project is a Class 32 Categorical Exemption from the California Environmental Quality Act. No further environmental review is required. (Project Planner: Benjamin A. Kimball)

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

**VOTE:** Ayes--Commissioners Andrade, Brown, Lopez, Moats and Chair Waterfield; Noes--None; Absent—None; Abstained--None.

Benjamin Kimball presented the staff report, citing the location and displaying the site plan. The proposal is a Planned Development Permit to construct a 2,000-square-foot industrial building to be located near the center of the site, with a large paved parking area and outdoor storage area for trucks, as well as perimeter fencing. Mr. Kimball noted that the project meets parking needs and landscaping requirements. The landscaping proposed in the front of the building will be in the area that will also serve as a storm water retention basin.

Mr. Kimball displayed the floor plan of building and exterior elevations. He stated that the trellis was added to the exterior elevation to make the site look more aesthetically pleasing, and screen the otherwise blank wall. Mr. Kimball stated that the project meets all the zoning requirements for parking, building height, landscaping, and screening. Staff did add a special condition of approval, on page 3 of 24 of draft Planned Development Permit, which states that climbing vines be planted along the fence to add to the visual interest of the fence around the perimeter of the site. Mr. Kimball concluded his presentation by stating that he would be happy to answer any questions.

In response to Chair Waterfield, Mr. Kimball stated that the vines would be planted on the inside of the fence, and grow to the outside. Nothing is proposed to be planted on the outside of the fence since it is on the property line.

Commissioner Lopez expressed a concern regarding parking in the cul-de-sac. Mr. Kimball noted that there have been no complaints regarding parking in the cul-de-sac received by staff.

Dave Cross, Fletcher Cross & Associates, 801 S. Broadway, agent for Mr. and Mrs. Sola, addressed the Planning Commission. He responded to Commissioner Lopez by stating that they worked with staff throughout this project, and from where the building is situated on the site, the trellis seemed to be the best way to break up the building and provide some aesthetic value. Mr. Cross stated that they went back and forth to get the right trellis to accomplish that, and he thinks that aesthetically, it will look good. Mr. Cross noted that they also added quite a bit of landscaping to enhance the site.

Benjamin Kimball noted that this building is different from the others surrounding it because it is relatively small with only a 50-foot building frontage. Some of the other buildings on the street have offices on the front, so they are enhanced as such. This proposal does not include an office, and it does not have any sidewalk orientation. Mr. Kimball added that the building also has a significant setback from sidewalk. Staff took those considerations in mind when recommending architectural treatments, and Mr. Kimball stated that the proposed trellis is fairly substantial with 8"x8" posts.

In response to Commissioner Andrade's concerns over the street parking, Rodger Olds of the Engineering Division commented that street parking would be taken care of by an enforcement

of rules already in place. Mr. Olds stated that he would let the Traffic Engineer know, who would work with the Police Department to ensure that the parking is adequately addressed at this location.

With no further comments, Chair Waterfield closed the hearing and called for a motion. Commissioner Andrade made the motion to approve the Planned Development Permit for David Sola to construct an industrial building, 1323 White Court, PD-2006-023, E-2006-080, subject to the conditions as outlined in the Preliminary Draft of the Planned Development Permit. Commissioner Moats seconded it, and it passed, 5-0.

**ITEM 3 - PLANNED DEVELOPMENT PERMIT FOR ARCO AM-PM (BEN NIKFARJAM) TO ESTABLISH AN ARCO RETAIL CENTER, SOUTHWEST CORNER OF BLOSSER AND BATTLES ROADS, PD-2006-027, E-2006-065.**

Review of a Planned Development permit application to allow the establishment of a new retail center with gasoline, new retail, and self-serve car wash in a PD/CC (Planned Development/Convenience Center) zoning district, Assessor's Parcel No. 117-770-055. This project was adequately reviewed under a Subsequent EIR for the Blosser-Southeast Specific Plan. Therefore no further environmental review will be required.

**ACTION:** By motion, approved subject to the conditions as outlined in the Preliminary Draft of the Planned Development Permit as amended; Vote: 4-1.

**VOTE:** Ayes--Commissioners Andrade, Brown, Moats and Chair Waterfield; Noes—Commissioner Lopez; Absent—None; Abstained--None.

Benjamin Kimball presented the staff report. He stated that the proposal is for a new commercial center at the southwest corner of Blosser Road and Battles Road, and the site is currently vacant. The Planned Development Permit would allow construction of a self-service gas station, a 2,400 square foot mini mart, a 2,517 square foot car wash, and a 3,275 square foot retail building. The site is largely surrounded by vacant land, although some is currently being developed by residential development. There is an existing 8-foot masonry wall on the western and southern side of the site. The proposal includes two vehicular access ways, one on Battles Road and the other on Blosser Road. Per the recommendations of the Blosser-Southeast Specific Plan, the buildings are oriented closer to the roads with the parking in the rear.

Mr. Kimball continued the presentation by giving a description of the site layout. He added that substantial landscaping is being proposed, with the majority on the street frontages where it will be most visible. The applicant has included an arbor and patio area on the corner for passive recreational space, with a proposed fountain, which provides visual enhancement to the site as well as a functional place for customers to use. Mr. Kimball stated that the parking requirements have been met. He also stated that the building elevations are a neo-Spanish Mediterranean-style with stucco exteriors, tile roofs, and stone veneer bases. There are also ornamental features on the street-side, including tower elements, and trellises with vines to give a nice visual effect.

Mr. Kimball pointed out a couple of special conditions of approval: On the Planned Development Permit, page 6 of 28, Condition 36, requires climbing vines be on the trellises; and Condition 37, trash enclosures. There are two enclosures on the Battles Road side on the site, and the condition will ensure that the enclosures be designed and painted to match the existing building and have climbing vines to make them look nice. Mr. Kimball concluded his presentation by stating that he was available to answer any questions.

In response to Commissioner Andrade, Ben Kimball explained that Condition 31 of the green sheets was included just in case oil is found and it needs to be addressed before permits are issued. He stated that while there is a history of oil in the general area, staff doesn't have any specific information as to whether there is any contaminated soil on this site.

In response to Commissioner Andrade, Ben Kimball explained that as discussed at the study session, the City generally discourages grass because of water conservation purposes. The original conditions did not have grass. However, at the study session, the Commission expressed interest in having grass, so staff left it open to allow the applicant to plant grass. Mr. Kimball stated that it is a standard condition that if lawn is planted, it would need to be maintained.

Commissioner Lopez asked staff to review the logic of the layout of the site, with the buildings in front and pumps in the rear.

Mr. Kimball responded to Commissioner Lopez by stating that many things play into how to design a site. The intent of the Blosser-Southeast Specific Plan was to create a nice-looking effect with more buildings on the roadway. The Specific Plan considers parking is a less attractive use. Buildings serve as a screen for parking, and make the area more attractive. Mr. Kimball stated that the Specific Plan was written to address that type of aesthetic issue.

In response to Chair Waterfield, Mr. Kimball explained that the landscape plan will address the threat of graffiti with trellises and climbing vines on the walls facing the street.

Commissioner Brown agreed with Chair Waterfield's concerns over seeing backs of buildings facing the street. Commissioner Brown observed that the gas station at Blosser Road and Main Street is much closer to the street than this proposed project would be. He commented that with good growth on the trellises, they would serve to soften the face of the building wall.

The applicant, Alex G. Cuevas, project manager, 55 E. Huntington Drive, Suite 250, Arcadia, CA, addressed the Commission. Mr. Cuevas stated that they are also concerned with graffiti, which is why they worked with staff concerning the landscaping to make it almost impossible to paint on the walls. Mr. Cuevas added that the type of paint that will be used will help to eliminate some of the problems. He also stated that they are not opposed to putting grass at the site, and stated that they will work with staff on the landscaping.

The Commissioners, staff and the applicant discussed details of the project, including the location of the air/water stations, the propane tank enclosure, fuel deliveries, the carwash setbacks, articulation of the east elevations along Blosser Road, the possibility of including windows in the east elevations, the canopy supports, and landscaping details.

Mr. Cuevas commented that their landscape plan is very detailed. He stated that it was not their original intention to have grass, but that suggestion came up at the study session. Mr. Cuevas stated that their landscape architect worked closely with the City and incorporated City recommendations.

Mr. Kimball noted that the municipal code is very detailed about landscaping standards, along with plants and their maintenance. The Code specifies living, organic material, so artificial turf would not be allowed.

Mr. Kimball further stated that he understood that the Planning Commission's direction at the study session was to have grass throughout the landscaping area, as shown on the elevations, and not covering the entire area with groundcover.

After further discussion of grass versus artificial turf, Commissioner Andrade commented that the City has developed policies about saving water. In keeping with the policy that City Council has developed, he believes that artificial grass would be the better way to go. Water shortage is a problem that needs to be recognized. Commissioner Andrade thanked the applicant for cooperating with the Planning Commission in making a very nice project.

Mr. Kimball read into the record two special conditions of approval to address issues just discussed: Community Development Department Special Conditions, page 7 of 28 of the green sheets: insert Condition No. 38, "Additional architectural treatment. The proposed architectural

columns and arches on the east side of the proposed fast food/retail building shall project a minimum of 12 inches from the plane of the exterior of the eastern building wall.”

Condition No. 39, “Exterior windows. Windows shall be added to the east side of the proposed fast food/retail building.”

Upon Commissioner Andrade’s questioning if a tenant would not want windows there, Wendy Stockton suggested adding the words “if acceptable to the tenant or applicant” to the end of proposed Condition No. 39, so that it would read: “Additional Windows. Windows shall be added to the east side of the fast-food/retail building if acceptable to the tenant or the applicant.”

With no further comments, Chair Waterfield closed the hearing and called for a motion. Commissioner Moats made the motion to approve the Planned Development Permit for Arco AM-PM to establish an Arco Retail Center, southwest corner of Blosser and Battles Roads, PD-2006-027, E-2006-065, subject to the conditions outlined in the preliminary draft of the Planned Development Permit, and the two additional conditions as articulated by staff. Commissioner Andrade seconded it, and it passed, 4-1-0 (Lopez opposed).

**ITEM 4 - 2006 GENERAL PLAN ANNUAL REPORT, SP-2007-007.** Review of recommendation to the City Council regarding filing of the General Plan Annual Report for the 2006 calendar year.

**ACTION:** By motion recommend that City Council receive the 2006 General Plan Annual Report and direct the City Clerk to file said report with the Office of Planning and Research, the Department of Housing and Community Development, and the Santa Barbara County Grand Jury. Vote: 4-1.

**VOTE:** Ayes--Commissioners Brown, Lopez, Moats and Chair Waterfield; Noes—Commissioner Andrade; Absent—None; Abstained--None.

Bill Shipsey presented the staff report. He stated that the Annual Report informs City Council and the Planning Commission about the Community Development Department’s progress towards the implementation of the City General Plan. It outlines the work program for the current year, and provides the opportunity to adjust the Department goals for the year. Staff’s recommendation is to receive the report, and send it to the City Council with recommendation that the report be filed with the State of California in accordance with State law. He concluded his report by stating that he was available to answer any questions.

In response to Commissioner Lopez, Mr. Shipsey explained the benefits of GIS throughout the City departments, and commented that anything that can be cited on a map can be used in GIS. Currently, the City has hired two people to give technical assistance and eventually the objective is to have information posted on the internet. People will be able to find answers to their own questions once the information is on-line.

Commissioner Andrade inquired as to the status on the construction of the bikeway path to Guadalupe. Mr. Shipsey replied that in terms of the path on the levy, the bikeway connection to Guadalupe from Suey Crossing to Blosser Road is completed. The rest of the proposed bikeway is out of the City’s jurisdiction, and would take a large grant to make the connection to Guadalupe and then finally to the ocean. Mr. Shipsey explained that staff does focus on bikeways where the City has right-of-ways, especially in the north and south connection that runs along the railroad corridor that will be going in concurrently with developments between Battles Road and Betteravia Road.

Mr. Shipsey further explained that the bikeways are on areas of public property; they do not go over private property. There will continue to be gaps in the bikeways until the properties come forward with projects that provide the means to exact the dedication of the right of way.

Commissioner Moats remarked that riding on the levy bike path is difficult because of the rocks, and he commented on the danger of crossing McCoy Lane on the bike trail.

In response to Commissioner Moats, Rodger Olds stated that a project is currently under review at McCoy Lane and Depot Street, and as part of that review, staff is looking at how to align the multipurpose trail, either at the railroad tracks or at the intersection of McCoy Lane and Depot Street. Mr. Olds stated that this issue has been discussed at the traffic committee meeting, and he was given direction to look into options to see what would be appropriate there.

In response to Commissioner Lopez, Bill Shipsey explained the current internship program that the Community Development Department has. Presently, the Department has two internship positions. The Department is also working with Cal Poly students on two projects. One of the projects is a study of the Broadway corridor as it leads into the downtown area, and the other project is a graduate level project related to the Bradley East annexation area. Mr. Shipsey commented that he can see only positive outcomes from this partnership.

In response to Commissioner Andrade, Bill Shipsey explained the process behind arriving at the numbers in Table D, Final Building Inspections, Units by Income Group by Year (2001-08), in the Annual Report.

The Commission and staff discussed Table D as well as housing concerns in Santa Maria.

Pedro Paez Navarro, 315 West Harding, Santa Maria, addressed the Commission, and spoke on the need for affordable housing.

In response to Mr. Navarro, Bill Shipsey noted that the City of Santa Maria does not have a specific zoning for affordable housing.

In response to Mr. Navarro, Bill Shipsey again explained the process to arrive at the numbers in Table D, and Commissioner Lopez translated that into Spanish.

After more discussion concerning affordable housing, and Table D, Bill Shipsey commented that staff would contact Mr. Navarro to discuss his issues independent of a public hearing.

With no further comments, Chair Waterfield closed the hearing and called for a motion. Commissioner Moats made a motion to recommend that City Council receive the 2006 General Plan Annual Report and direct the City Clerk to file said report with the Office of Planning and Research, the Department of Housing and Community Development, and the Santa Barbara County Grand Jury. Commissioner Lopez seconded it, and it passed, 4-1-0 (Andrade opposed).

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**ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:53 p.m. to a Study Session on May 24, 2007 at 10:00 a.m. in the Community Development Department conference room, 110 S. Pine Street, Santa Maria.

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Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Peggy Woods  
PEGGY WOODS, ASSISTANT SECRETARY  
CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

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