



UPTOWN PLANNERS

Uptown Community Planning Group

September 4, 2018

APPROVED MINUTES

Call to order by Leo Wilson at 6:07

In attendance: William Smith, Jr., Jennifer Pesqueira, Bill Ellig, Tim Gahagan, Mat Wahlstrom, Michael Brennan, Leo Wilson, Stuart McGraw, Tom Mullaney, Bob Daniel, Roy Dahl, Dennis Seisun, Kyle Schertzing

Absent: Jay Newington, Amie Hayes, Soheil Nakhshab, Ken Tablang

I. Board Meeting: Parliamentary Items/Reports:

Introductions

Adoption of Agenda and Rules of Order: Motion by Wahlstrom, seconded by Ellig, to place the two letters of support from agenda Item VII: Request for Letter of Support for JDRF One Walk, and Request for Letter of Support for the San Diego AIDS Walk & Run, on the Consent Agenda. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote. Motion by Dahl, seconded by Wahlstrom; to approve the Consent Agenda; approved by unanimous voice vote.

Approval of Minutes: Motion by Wahlstrom, seconded by Daniel, to approve the August 6, 2018 minutes. Motion approved by a vote of 10-0-4, with non-voting Chair Wilson, Tablang, Brennan and Mullaney abstaining.

Treasurer's Report: Account balance remains unchanged at \$150.65.

Chair/CPC Report: The Maple Canyon Restoration project item has been continued to a future meeting by city staff. The CPC had a special meeting at which new City of San Diego Planning Director Mike Hanson made a presentation, and answered questions. Chair Wilson reported it was a very productive meeting.

II. Public Communication:

Ben Nichols, Director of the Hillcrest BID, spoke regarding the proposed Normal Street Linear Park. Nichols spoke in support of establishing a committee to coordinate the park's potential development.

Chris Cole, the Uptown Planners representative on the Airport Noise Advisory Committee (ANACC) reported that the comment period for the Airport Terminal One improvements had been extended.

Leo Wilson, as a Bankers Hill resident, reported that there had been an increase in crime in Bankers Hill and Balboa Park. A prowler had been reported in the community, and there were crystal meth narcotics sales happening on the West Mesa of Balboa Park. Bob Daniel, a Mission Hills/Western Slope resident, stated there had been a similar crime increase in Missions Hills, and major increase in the local homeless population.

III. Representatives of Elected Officials:

Zack Bunshaft, representing Congressman Susan Davis reported on her activities, including work done regarding budget and other issues.

Brian Elliott, representing City Councilmember Chris Ward, reported that additional police resources had been assigned to Balboa Park, including day time police officers. The City was also attempting to increase services to the homeless and mentally ill. The city has very few facilities to place homeless residents.

1. **REQUEST FOR LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR STYROFOAM/SINGLE USE PLASTIC BAN– Action Item** --Brian Elliott, representing Councilmember Chris Ward, will provide an update on the proposal to ban the sale and distribution of polystyrene foam (Styrofoam) products, and place restrictions on single use plastics in the City of San Diego. The proposal was approved by a 3-2 vote of the San Diego City Council Rules Committee in July 2018, and will be voted on by the full City Council later in 2018.

Brian Elliott explained the purpose of the proposed ordinance, and the issues that it sought to address. He distributed a fact sheet regarding the proposed ordinance, which he indicated it would go before the full City Council in October 2018.

Public comment: Sharon Gehl had reservations about the banning Styrofoam, but not on banning straws. Styrofoam could be recycled, so there was not a reason to ban it. Melissa from University Heights asked several questions about the reason for the ban.

Board Comments: Pesqueira, a restaurant owner, spoke against the proposed ordinance, stating it would impose a financial hardship on small businesses; she indicated there was not a paper alternative that was acceptable, as paper leaked. Daniel also indicated he had reservations about the proposal.

Seisun and Gahagan indicated they were undecided and needed more information.

Wahlstrom was supportive of the ban, but questioned if review of the ordinance was within the purview of a community planning group. Dahl was also supported, and felt the issue was appropriate for a recommendation by Uptown Planners as it dealt with landfill/land use issues.

Schertzing, Chair Wilson, Brennan, Mullaney, Ellig and McGraw were generally supportive. Chair Wilson, Mullaney and Ellig expressed a concern over the impact on small businesses, which Pesqueira had raised, and supported a small business exemption. Smith expressed reservations about the ordinance and particularly the potential penalties it could impose on use of the products it banned.

As the board had unanswered questions, particularly relating to the impacts to small businesses, it continued the item until the October meeting. Elliot indicated he would bring additional information to the meeting to respond to the board's questions.

A Motion was made by Schertzing, second by Wahlstrom; to continue the item to the October 2, 2018 meeting. Motion passed by a 13-0-1 vote, with non-voting chair Wilson abstaining.

- IV. Consent Agenda:** Motion to approve the consent agenda made by Wahlstrom, seconded by Daniel, and approved by a vote of 11-0-1, with non-voting chair abstaining. The item was heard at the end of the meeting, as the DMV item was time certain. The following two special event agenda items were approved on consent:

REQUEST FOR LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR JDRF ONE WALK– Action Item -- Bankers Hill/Park West – The JDRF One Walk is scheduled for Saturday, November 10, 2018, in Balboa Park and along Sixth Avenue. There are over 200 JDRF walks held throughout the country that have over 900,000 participants. Last year, the San Diego Chapter raised over \$645,000 for type 1 diabetes research through One Walk. The route will begin in Balboa Park, go north along Balboa Drive to Upas Street, then south along Sixth Avenue to Laurel Street, and back into Balboa Park to the starting site/festival location. A second walk will travel along the Bridle nature trail in Balboa Park, and then return to the starting site/festival location.

REQUEST FOR LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR THE SAN DIEGO AIDS WALK & RUN – Action Item -Hillcrest/ Bankers Hill/Park West -- The 30th Annual AIDS Walk & Run will be held in Hillcrest on Saturday, September 29, 2018, from 6:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon; the route of the walk & run includes Normal Street, University Avenue, Park Boulevard, El Prado in Balboa Park, Sixth Avenue, back to start location on University Avenue.

V. Action Items: Planning –

- 1. DMV NORMAL STREET FIELD OFFICE REPLACEMENT: CEQA DRAFT MITIGATED DECLARATION (“MND”) – Action Item -- Potential CEQA Comments – Hillcrest –** Written public comments for the MND for the DMV project are due by September 7, 2018. The project consists of the demolition of the existing, 14,319 sq. ft. partial two-story DMV field office, and construction of a new field office on the same site. The new field office will be a maximum of 18,540sq. ft., within a single-story building that is approximately 35-feet in height. The west-facing façade of the building will include an attached carport canopy extending the building over drive test and vehicle verification lanes. The new field office would accommodate the existing staff of 45, and the approximately 931 customers who visit the office each day. The parking lot layout and configuration would provide approximately 141 parking spaces, including five ADA spaces. There would be a seven-foot high ornamental wrought-iron fence, with a pointed finish and motorized cantilevered rolling gates at site driveways along Normal Street and Cleveland Avenue. Pedestrian gates will be provided on Normal Street and Cleveland Street. The project will be LEED-ND silver certified, and aim for having zero net energy consumption.

Gil Topete, Deputy Director of Legislative Affairs for the California DMW, made the presentation. He provided a background regarding the DMV’s attempt to build a mixed use project on the site. In 2012, an attempt to attract a private developer for the site failed. Topete then described the project that was currently proposed, including the proposed fence, shared parking agreement, and new facility that would be built. The state is prepared to continue existing agreements after the new facility is built.

Assembly member Todd Gloria who was present also spoke. Gloria indicated he did not think the current project was a good fit for the Normal Street location, and would not provide a benefit to the community. He encouraged the DMV to be respectful of public input regarding the project. Gloria hoped the new facility will be built to the maximum extent possible to benefit the public and accommodate existing community uses. He encouraged public comment and indicated he was eager to hear it.

Public Comment

Randy Stobalen, representing the University Christian Church at 3900 Cleveland Street expressed concern over potential loss of parking for the church and local community.

Ben Nichols stated the project looked suburban, and did not fit into the context of the neighborhood; he was also concerned the proposed fence would adversely impact the Hillcrest Farmers Market. Mary Alsup, who resides near the project site, objected to the outside public address system, which disturbs the neighborhood.

Patrick Santana suggested reconsideration of the mixed use project. He also questioned the fence, and though the site needed more shade. Mia from Hillcrest objected to the fence, which was not welcoming, and stated that there needed to be shared parking. Roy McMakin suggested the parking be placed underground. Ian Epley suggested that the building go on top of the parking lot, as had been done in Mission Hills. Sharon Gehl emphasized the importance of DMV projects design being cohesive with the proposed Normal Street Linear Park. Mike Singleton did not like single use design and fence, and though the project could be more than was proposed. Melissa from University Heights was concerned on traffic impacts.

Board Comments:

McGraw supporting placing a parking under the structure. Smith suggested a land swap for property in Mission Valley or another community, which would allow for housing on the Normal Street site. Ellig objected to the PA system, and believed the project should be better integrated with the proposed Normal Street Linear Park. Tablang supported a mixed use project, with an underground parking structure.

Mullaney objected to the project being walled off by the fence, and believed the project should be integrated with the Normal Street Linear Park. Brennan disliked the suburban style design, and though it needed to be integrated into the future Normal Street Neighborhood Park. Wilson also spoke against the suburban style of development, and supported underground parking. Schertzing thought the project was out of context with the local community, and should not be walled off from the community. Dahl stated the site was in an area planned for dense development and walkability, and supported underground parking. Wahlstrom pointed out the original legislation encouraged mixed use, and the proposed project failed to conform to it.

Gahagan suggested the DMV take the comments made at the meeting and turn them into design solutions, particularly the issues regarding the fence and shared use agreement. Seisun mentioned there could be other needs that require the perimeter fence, and other ways should be found to notify people outside other than the PA system. Daniel pointed out the project was not the highest and best use of the land, and that the project needed a more creative design; he also had a problem with the fence and reduction in parking. Pesqueira suggested the DMV needed to go back to the drawing board.

Board Motions:

Since there was diversity of comment; Chair Wilson suggested the each board member may want to submit individual comments for the draft CEQA document. The board after discussing the matter, voted to approve three motions.

(Gahagan exits the meeting)

First Motion: Uptown Planners disagrees with the agency's statement in the draft mitigated declaration that the project as defined responds to the State's commitment to compact, infill development. Motion by Smith, seconded by Dahl; the motion passed by a 12-0-1 vote, non-voting chair abstaining.

(Seisun exits meeting)

Second Motion: Uptown Planners disagrees with the statement in the draft mitigated negative declaration that the project does not divide the neighborhood. The perimeter fence would divide the neighborhood and should be eliminated. Motion by Mullaney, seconded by Dahl; the motion passed by a 11-0-1 vote, non-voting chair abstaining.

Third Motion: Uptown Planners supports the original intent of California Senate Bill 754, Kehoe (Version: 94 – Chaptered Oct. 14, 2007) that a mixed-use project be built at this site, that includes community agreements for shared use and parking. Motion by Wahlstrom, seconded by Daniel, the motion passed by 10-1-1 with Mullaney voting against, and non-voting chair abstaining.

VI. Action Items: Projects:

None

VII. Letters of Support:

Moved to the Consent Agenda

Adjournment: by voice vote 8:43

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Brennan, Secretary
(Finalized by Leo Wilson)