MINUTES
OF A REGULAR MEETING
OF THE
PITTSBURG PLANNING COMMISSION

June 24, 2008

A regular meeting of the Pittsburg Planning Commission was called to order by Vice Chair Garcia at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, June 24, 2008, in the Council Chamber, City Hall, 65 Civic Avenue, Pittsburg, California.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Commissioners Harris, Ramirez, Wegerbauer, Vice Chair Garcia

Excused: Commissioners Diokno, Kelley, Chairperson Ohlson

Absent: None

Staff: City Manager/Planning Director Marc Grisham, Senior Planner Dana Hoggatt, Assistant Planner Leigha Schmidt, Senior Civil Engineer Alfredo Hurtado, and Administrative Assistant to Director Kathy Comtois.

POSTING OF AGENDA:

The agenda was posted at City Hall on Thursday, June 19, 2008.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Commissioner Ramirez led the Pledge of Allegiance.

DELETIONS/WITHDRAWALS/CONTINUANCES:

There were no deletions, withdrawals or continuances.

COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE:

There were no comments from the audience.
PRESENTATIONS:

There were no presentations.

CONSENT:

Item 1: Minutes of Meeting, June 10, 2008

MOTION:

Motion by Commissioner Harris to adopt the Consent Calendar, as shown. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Wegerbauer and carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Harris, Wegerbauer, Garcia
Noes: None
Abstain: Commissioner Ramirez
Absent: Commissioners Diokno, Kelley, Ohlson

PUBLIC HEARING:

Item 2: RES SUCCESS. AP-08-528 (UP, DR).

An application by Ian Bremner requesting: 1) approval of a use permit to allow a day care establishment for up to 60 developmentally disabled adults; and 2) design review approval of a commercial rehabilitation for an existing 7,045 square foot building and parking lot at 2980 Railroad Avenue in the CC (Community Commercial) District. APNs 087-061-040 and 087-061-042.

Assistant Planner Leigha Schmidt presented the staff report dated June 24, 2008. She reported that after the preparation of the staff report, the applicant had contacted staff and expressed the desire to re-stucco the entire building; retain the T-111 siding existing on the north and south elevations and to paint them to match the color proposed on the remainder of the building; construct wood railings and a wood fence rather than continue the masonry perimeter wall; and consider alternative materials for the solid walls and roof of the trash enclosure. Staff suggested that, with the changes, the Planning Commission could still make the findings to approve the design review aspect of the application.

Ms. Schmidt recommended that the Planning Commission adopt Resolution No. 9760, approving AP-08-528 (UP, DR), subject to conditions and including the project modifications as described by staff.

Commissioner Harris understood that the existing two-story building would not have an elevator. He questioned whether or not the occupants of the first floor would be able to access the second floor.
Ms. Schmidt explained that the use would be split between the first and second stories. Those with severe disabilities would be served on the first floor and those with milder disabilities would be served on the second floor. She acknowledged that there would be no elevator. Those with severe disabilities would only be on the ground floor and would not access the second floor. Both floor plans for the first and second floor would be mirror images of one another and would have Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) bathrooms. There would also be designated kitchen and lunch areas on both floors. In this instance, an elevator was not required for the building.

PUBLIC HEARING OPENED

PROPOSENENT:

IAN BREMNER, 706 Main Street, Suite B, Martinez, stated that he currently operated three locations: two facilities located in the city of Martinez and one in the city of Pleasant Hill. The program in Pleasant Hill served mild to moderately disabled persons who attended Diablo Valley College (DVC). The intent was to recreate what had already been accomplished in that facility in Pittsburg given that many of those attending the programs lived in East County.

In response to the Vice Chair, Mr. Bremner advised that he had read and was in agreement with the conditions of approval as recommended and as modified by staff.

Commissioner Wegerbauer understood that Mobility Plus was the transit service that would provide transit to the site. She questioned whether or not the buses would park at the subject facility. She also questioned whether or not the subject facility was similar to a facility located in the city of Lafayette.

Mr. Bremner commented that Mobility Plus would be picking clients up at their homes to bring them to the programs, Monday through Friday, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Mobility Plus would drop clients off at approximately 9:30 a.m. The vehicles would be brought back to the yard and would return to the facility between 3:00 and 3:30 p.m. to pick up the clients and bring them to their homes.

Mr. Bremner noted that his facility started in the city of Lafayette in 1994. The proposed program would be similar to the Lafayette program. When asked, he clarified that there would be one staff person for every three clients in the program. Clients would use the bus, walk in the immediate area and patronize local businesses.

In response to Commissioner Ramirez, Mr. Bremner reiterated that those with the most severe disabilities would be bused by Mobility Plus to the site and then brought home. Those who were mildly disabled would be taught to use public transportation over time so as to increase their independence.
REGINA RICARD, an employee of RES Success, explained that she managed the Martinez facility located at 801 Ferry Street in Martinez. She highly recommended the program, noting that the applicant had been in the business for over 13 years and had operated a great agency which had been supported by case managers in the County. The applicant also managed two residential programs.

Ms. Ricard looked forward to being the Site Director for the program in Pittsburg. She emphasized that the clients would be consistently monitored with a 3:1 ratio of staff to client. She added that some of the clients of the Pleasant Hill facility who attended DVC had started at the lower functioning facility. Once they had been trained by staff, they were self sufficient enough to graduate to the residential Pleasant Hill facility. The same outcome was anticipated at the Pittsburg facility.

OPPONENTS:  None

Commissioner Ramirez stated that he had met with the Mayor from the city of Martinez who had high praise for the programs. In reviewing the plans, he supported the approval of the use permit and the design review based on the applicant’s time, work and expense in upgrading the building to benefit the clients and the City. The applicant had also agreed to all of the conditions of approval. Additionally the program had a good history of changing the lives of its clients and community. He commented that as his brother’s legal guardian, he had experience with such facilities as well as the program with which his brother was involved, which was full of activities, was well-organized and his brother had enjoyed over the years.

PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED

MOTION:  AP-08-528 (UP, DR)

Motion by Commissioner Ramirez to adopt Resolution No. 9760, approving AP-08-528 (UP, DR), a use permit to establish an adult daycare and design review approval of architectural plans for the rehabilitation of an existing commercial structure at 2980 Railroad Avenue for “RES Success, AP-08-528 (UP, DR),” with the conditions as shown and with modifications as described by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Wegerbauer and carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Harris, Ramirez, Wegerbauer, Garcia
Noes: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Commissioners Diokno, Kelley, Ohlson
COMMISSION CONSIDERATIONS:

Item 3: Railroad Avenue Corridor Monument Sign. AP-08-534 (SE).

An application by Kerry Lyman representing the Redevelopment Agency of the City of Pittsburg requesting a sign exception to construct a 24 square foot, 12-foot tall, free-standing, light emitting diode (LED) monument sign, with exceptions for sign location, height and type. The sign would be used to advertise community events and news and would be located on a vacant lot near the northeastern corner of the Railroad Avenue and California Avenue intersection in the M (Mixed Use) District. APN 086-221-002.

Assistant Planner Leigha Schmidt presented the staff report dated June 24, 2008. She recommended that the Planning Commission adopt Resolution No. 9761, approving AP-08-543 (SE), as conditioned.

Commissioner Wegerbauer questioned how the sign would be maintained in the event graffiti were to be applied to the LED portion of the sign.

Ms. Schmidt suggested that the sign could be painted again although the LED portion of the sign had been proposed at a height that staff believed would make it difficult for someone to reach.

City Manager/Planning Director Marc Grisham commented that there had been no graffiti on the LED sign or along the wall at Highlands Ranch. That park had been respected and it was hoped the proposed sign to be used for promotion of community events would also be graffiti free.

Commissioner Wegerbauer asked whether or not the sign could be modified to read City of Pittsburg.

PROPOSER: City of Pittsburg Redevelopment Agency

KERRY LYMAN, representing the Redevelopment Agency, commented that copy reading City of Pittsburg could be added although it would delay the installation of the sign and would add to its cost. He suggested that copy reading City of Pittsburg could be added to the text on the LED. He noted that the sign would be easily programmable.

Commissioner Wegerbauer recommended that once funds were available it would be nice to add the name of the City or copy reading Welcome to Pittsburg to the sign.

Commissioner Harris recommended a crown on the top of the sign. He found the sign to be simple and unappealing.

Mr. Lyman acknowledged that the design of the sign had changed over time, and while the current design was simple and could be modified, it would add to the cost.
Mr. Grisham recommended that the sign be installed now. It could be modified with a crown at a later date as part of a two-phase process.

Commissioner Harris agreed that the sign could be installed now, and at a later date, if the City had the funds, the sign could be modified to add copy reading City of Pittsburg.

OPPONENTS: None

MOTION: AP-08-534 (SE)

Motion by Commissioner Wegerbauer to adopt Resolution No. 9761, approving AP-08-534 (SE) for a freestanding sign and sign exceptions for location, height and type for “Railroad Avenue Corridor Monument Sign, AP-08-534 (SE),” as conditioned. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Harris and carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Harris, Ramirez, Wegerbauer, Garcia
Noes: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Commissioners Diokno, Kelley, Ohlson

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR REPORTS:

The Planning Commission acknowledged receipt of the following:

Notice of Intent to Exercise Delegated Design Review Authority:
La Aurora Market Storefront Remodel. AP-08-538 (AD).
USA Gas Station E.V.R. Equipment Installation. AP-08-539 (AD).
Golden Star Market Storefront Remodel. AP-08-540 (AD).

Mr. Grisham reported that the time extension for the Mehran Restaurant to complete the remaining conditions of approval had expired on June 23. He understood that staff had inspected the site this date, and if the work had not been completed, a letter would immediately be sent to the applicant.

Ms. Schmidt reported that the work had been substantially completed. The block wall had been installed, although she had found that six blocks were missing along the very top of one portion. The air filter was on top of the building and had been hooked up, although electrical work remained to be done. She noted that an electrician had been present to do that work at the time she had inspected the site. She had asked the applicant to contact the Building Department to verify the operation of the air filter.

Mr. Grisham reiterated that a letter would be sent to the applicant if the work had not been determined to be complete.
PETE CARPINO, El Camino Drive, Pittsburg, reported that the applicant appeared to have someone working on the hood this date, although he was uncertain that the work had been completed.

Commissioner Wegerbauer referenced the USA Gas Station E.V.R. equipment installation and questioned whether or not the location of the equipment would be safe, to which Senior Planner Dana Hoggatt explained that the cashier’s building had a landscaped area behind it where the E.V.R. equipment would be installed. It would not be installed on the Railroad Avenue frontage.

**PLANNING DIRECTOR/STAFF COMMUNICATIONS:**

There were no Planning Director/Staff Communications.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

There were no Committee Reports.

**PLANNING COMMISSIONERS’ COMMENTS:**

Vice Chair Garcia reported that Tim Galli with the Pittsburg Unified School District (PUSD), who was handling the construction of the new high school, advised that he would be happy to make a presentation to the Planning Commission if a formal written request was made. He added that he would like to see the traffic circulation and suggested it would be good for the Planning Commission to see the architecture.

Mr. Grisham advised that the Assistant to the Planning Director would prepare a letter to be sent to the PUSD to request a future presentation.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:39 p.m. to a Regular Meeting scheduled for July 8, 2008, in the City Council Chamber at 65 Civic Avenue, Pittsburg, CA.

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MARC S. GRISHAM, Secretary
Pittsburg Planning Commission

Planning Commission Minutes
June 24, 2008