A regular meeting of the Pittsburg Planning Commission was called to order by Vice Chairperson George Harris at 7:30 P.M. on Tuesday, February 25, 2003, in the City Council Chambers of City Hall at 65 Civic Avenue, Pittsburg, CA.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Commissioners Dolojan, Garcia, Ramirez, Tumbaga, Vice Chairperson Harris

Absent: Commissioner Kelley, Chairperson Leonard

Staff: Director of Planning and Building Randy Jerome; Planning Manager Melissa Ayres; Associate Planner Ken Strelo; Associate Planner Noel Ibalio; and City Engineer II Alfredo Hurtado.

POSTING OF AGENDA:

Vice Chairperson Harris reported that the agenda had been posted at City Hall on Friday, February 21, 2003.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Vice Chairperson Harris 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:

A. Minutes - January 28, 2003

Motion by Commissioner Garcia to adopt the Consent Calendar consisting of the minutes of the January 28, 2003 meeting, as submitted. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ramirez and carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Dolojan, Garcia, Ramirez, Tumbaga, Harris
Noes: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Commissioner Kelley, Chairperson Leonard

Commissioner Tumbaga stepped down from the dais due to a possible conflict of interest with Item No. 1.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

Item 1: American Auto Body Relocation. UP-02-34 and DR-02-47.

Public hearing on an application by Tom Ksenzulak requesting Planning Commission approval to operate an auto body repair shop and design review approval of architectural and site development plans to construct a 20,400 square foot building on a vacant 2.9-acre lot located on the east side of Markstein Drive, between California Avenue and North Park Boulevard, IP (Industrial Park) District; APN 088-151-012.

Associate Planner Ken Strelo presented the staff report. The application involved the relocation of an existing business currently located on Bliss Avenue. Mr. Strelo explained that the northern portion of the site would be a gravel lot that would be used to store vehicles before they were repaired and that the lot would be surrounded by a ten-foot high decorative stucco wall, which would extend from one side of the building around the entire lot to the opposite corner of the building. A decorative wrought iron sliding gate would be installed between the building and the wall with employee parking and auto storage behind the wall and customer parking in front.

Mr. Strelo presented a color rendering of the proposed building to the Commission for review. He noted that a colored copy of the color palette had also been presented to the Commission. He clarified that Color A would not be as yellow as shown on commissioner's copies and would appear more like a creamy light brown color as shown on the original palette.

Mr. Strelo noted that staff was requesting the applicant install sidewalks along both street frontages and to make changes to the northwest corner of the screen wall to increase driver visibility as traffic traveled down Markstein Drive. Staff was also requesting changes to the north entry drive to accommodate the turning radius of tow trucks entering the site.
While a freestanding sign had been identified on the site plans, Mr. Strelo explained that the Commission would not be acting on any freestanding signage at this time because no specific sign plans had been submitted. Any future freestanding sign plans would be returned to the Planning Commission for design review approval.

Mr. Strelo explained that the site was located in an area designated Regional Commercial in the General Plan. It had been determined that the use was a regional use and would attract customers from throughout the City and adjacent cities, would complement the future Auto Mall, and was permitted under the current zoning district with a use permit.

Mr. Strelo recommended that the Planning Commission adopt Resolution No. 9413 approving UP-02-34 and Resolution No. 9414 approving DR-02-47, with the conditions as shown.

PUBLIC HEARING OPENED

PROPOSENENT:

TOM KSENZULAK, 105 Bliss Avenue, Pittsburg, acknowledged, when asked, that he had read and was in agreement with the staff recommended conditions of approval. He expressed his hope to be able to break ground in April.

Commissioner Ramirez was glad to see that the business would remain in town. He congratulated the applicant on the project.

Commissioner Dolojan inquired of the process for the repair of vehicles in terms of how long the vehicles would be stored on-site.

Mr. Ksenzulak explained that when a vehicle came to the site for repair, the damage would be immediately assessed. If repairable, the vehicle would go through the repair process within a couple of days. If the vehicle was not repairable it would leave the site within five to seven days. Vehicles would be stored behind the ten-foot high wall and would not be visible to the public.

OPPONENTS: None

PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED

MOTION: UP-02-34

Motion by Commissioner Ramirez to adopt Resolution No. 9413, approving UP-02-34, a Use Permit to allow an Auto Body Repair business located on the east side of Markstein Drive between North Park Boulevard and California Avenue for American Auto Body
Relocation, with the conditions as shown. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dolojan and carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Dolojan, Garcia, Ramirez, Harris
Noes: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Commissioner Kelley, Commissioner Tumbaga, Chairperson Leonard

MOTION: DR-02-47

Motion by Commissioner Ramirez to adopt Resolution No. 9414, approving DR-02-47, Design Review approval of architectural and site development plans to construct a 22,400 square foot Auto Body Repair business located on the east side of Markstein Drive and North Park Boulevard and California Avenue for American Auto Body Relocation, with the conditions as shown.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dolojan and carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Dolojan, Garcia, Ramirez, Harris
Noes: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Commissioner Kelley, Commissioner Tumbaga, Chairperson Leonard

Commissioner Tumbaga returned to the dais at this time.

Item 2: Housing Relocation - 39 Locust Drive. AP-03-04 (UP, DR & Moving of Structures Permit)

Public hearing on an application by Mark Taylor requesting a Use Permit, a Moving of Structures Permit and design review approval involving the relocation of an existing house from 2091 Railroad Avenue to 39 Locust Drive, RS (Single Family Residential District); APN 086-122-014.

Associate Planner Noel Ibalio presented the staff report. Mr. Ibalio noted the new site was vacant and approximately 4,700 square feet in size. The surrounding properties in the area were around 4,500 square feet in size. There were no City records to indicate that the site had ever been developed and it had always been vacant with mature trees and with overgrown wild landscaping. There was an existing shed in the back of the vacant property.

Mr. Ibalio suggested that the finding could be made to approve the use permit, in that the use would be consistent with the surrounding residences and it would not impact the surrounding properties as regards to noise, solar impacts or traffic. It would also be consistent with the goals and policies of the General Plan and the Zoning Ordinance.
Speaking to the design review application, Mr. Ibalio advised that the applicant had proposed to maintain the architectural integrity of the home. Improvements to the home would be cosmetic in nature and would consist of a new foundation, front steps, driveway, roof, garage door, new front door, and the replacement of all windows.

Mr. Ibalio advised that the Commission could approve the design review application based on the findings that the development was compatible in scale, bulk and overall vernacular of the neighborhood and the home was architecturally compatible with the characteristics of the neighborhood in terms of roof pitch, location of front doors and basic window treatments.

Mr. Ibalio noted that the application also involved a moving structure permit that was required for the relocation of the home and which could include conditions as required. He recommended that the Planning Commission adopt Resolution No. 9415 approving a Use Permit, Design Review Approval and a Moving of Structure Permit for AP-03-04, with the conditions as shown.

Mr. Ibalio acknowledged that the applicant was not present in the audience and appeared to be absent from the hearing.

Commissioner Garcia commented that since the applicant was not present and since the Commission’s policy was to continue an application in the absence of an applicant, he recommended that the public hearing be opened to allow public testimony and that the hearing then be closed with the application continued to the next meeting.

PUBLIC HEARING OPENED

JAMES GERMANY, 78 Locust Drive, Pittsburg, stated that since the applicant was not present he would reserve his comments until such time as the applicant was present.

RAYMOND INIGUEZ, 98 Locust Drive, Pittsburg, also recognized that the applicant was not present. He requested that the Commission defer any decision pending the presence of the applicant to address the application. He disagreed with the staff assessment of the condition of the property; he found it to be clean of debris. In addition, he suggested that the vacant lot was not as large as described by staff in that it was quite small.

Mr. Iniguez also expressed concern with drainage in the area and explained that there was only a 3 1/2 inch pipe that covered Park and Central Avenues. When it rained, he stated that the runoff went under the neighboring homes. Although the City had been contacted, he had been told that there was nothing that could be done. He expressed concern that with another home, more water would run into the street possibly impacting the neighboring properties. He requested that the lot dimensions be clarified given his concern that the lot might not be large enough to accommodate a new home.
Vice Chairperson Harris commented that the vacant lot would probably have to be graded prior to the relocation of the home to ensure it met the City’s requirements. If a drainage pipe was necessary to address drainage, it was likely the City would see that such requirements were met. In addition, if the home met the City’s setback requirements it could be permitted on the property.

Commissioner Garcia recommended that Planning staff meet with the residents in the lobby to clarify the staff recommendation and to respond to questions from the residents.

MOTION:

Motion by Commissioner Dolojan to continue AP-03-04 (UP, DR and Moving of Structures Permit) to relocate an existing home from 2091 Railroad Avenue to 39 Locust Drive, to the meeting scheduled for March 11, 2003. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tumbaga and carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Dolojan, Garcia, Ramirez, Tumbaga, Harris
Noes: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Commissioner Kelley, Chairperson Leonard

COMMISSION CONSIDERATIONS:

There were no Commission considerations.

STAFF COMMUNICATIONS:

Planning Manager Melissa Ayres advised that the Commission's Conflict of Interest forms were required to be turned into the City Clerk by March 14.

Ms. Ayres also advised that after the recent Joint City Council/Planning Commission Workshop held on February 18, the Mayor had directed that another workshop be scheduled within the next thirty days, specifically to address the Pittsburg/Bay Point BART Specific Plan, which would also be noticed to the public. However, due to the unavailability of all Councilmembers and the Council Chambers within the next thirty days, it was likely that a joint workshop could not be scheduled until April 28. Commissioners would be apprised of an appropriate meeting date.

In response to the Vice Chair, Ms. Ayres clarified that the Mayor had recommended two separate workshops, one focusing primarily on the BART Specific Plan and the other to address general planning issues where staff needed guidance and direct input, which would be solicited from everyone including the public. It was likely that a Position Paper would be prepared for the City Council and the Planning Commission to identify the pros and cons of all issues.
COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Commissioner Garcia reported that the TRANSPLAN Committee at its last meeting had received an update on the State Route 4 expansion between Railroad Avenue and Loveridge Road; it was reported that the Harbor Street Overpass should be completed in late May and open in June, and that the Railroad Avenue project would probably not be started until November since all of the funding was not in place.

Commissioner Garcia stated it was hoped that by July the funding would be in place to allow the project to be put out to bid. In addition, reports on the widening of State Route 4 from Loveridge to Somersville Roads was a year behind since work on the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) had not yet started as a result of federal uncertainty as to how to handle the EIR.

Vice Chairperson Harris reported that during the latest Traffic and Circulation Advisory Committee (TCAC) he had a confrontation with the City’s Traffic Engineer during which time he (Vice Chairperson Harris) had resigned from the TCAC. He recommended that the Commission’s Alternate attend the meetings in his place.

Ms. Ayres stated that Doris Kelley was the Alternate to the TCAC. She expressed the willingness to contact Commissioner Kelley to determine whether or not she would be willing to take Commissioner Harris’ place on the committee until a permanent representative was appointed by the Chair.

Vice Chairperson Harris explained that the reason he had been so disturbed at the last TCAC meeting related to the area of Harbor Street and California Avenue where it was difficult for traffic to make a right or left turn. Normally when the traffic signal was operational there was a four way stop, although due to the work on the Harbor Street Overpass, there was only one stop sign which was for Harbor Street to enter onto California Avenue. When traffic traveled from the Old Pittsburg/Antioch Highway, it backed up during the commute hours. In addition, traffic coming off of the freeway further congested the area while the traffic on Railroad Avenue also backed up.

Vice Chairperson Harris related a recent incident where he had been on that same route and had tried to get through that intersection, although a vehicle traveling at a high rate of speed had forced him to pull over to avoid an accident, which had resulted in his vehicle hitting a temporary concrete barrier with some damage. As a result, he had recommended that a temporary three-way stop sign be considered for that intersection. During the TCAC meeting, the Traffic Engineer had not supported the recommendation citing Caltrans guidelines.

Vice Chairperson Harris emphasized that as a result of his frustration with the process, he had resigned from the TCAC. He also commented that staff had reported to the TCAC that
at the end of February a four-way traffic signal would be installed in the area, although it did not appear as if any work had commenced.

Commissioner Tumbaga expressed the willingness to serve as the Alternate to the TCAC, if needed.

**COMMENTS FROM COMMISSIONERS:**

Commissioner Ramirez advised that resident Pete Carpino had requested that he inquire of the status of a request to invite the representatives from Fort Knox Storage to appear before the Planning Commission to address concerns related to that project.

Ms. Ayres reported that she had pulled the project file, which was on the list of things for staff to do.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:08 P.M. to a regular meeting of the Planning Commission on March 11, 2003 at 7:30 P.M. in the City Council Chambers at 65 Civic Avenue, Pittsburg, CA.

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MELISSA AYRES, Secretary
Pittsburg Planning Commission