A regular meeting of the Pittsburg Planning Commission was called to order by Chairperson Mark Leonard at 7:00 P.M. on Tuesday, August 26, 2003, in the City Council Chambers of City Hall at 65 Civic Avenue, Pittsburg, CA.

**ROLL CALL:**

Present: Commissioners Dolojan, Garcia, Kelley, Ramirez, Tumbaga, Chairperson Leonard

Absent: Commissioner Harris

Staff: Planning Manager Melissa Ayres; Assistant Planner Ken Strelo; Planning Technician Christopher Barton; and Civil Engineer II Alfredo Hurtado.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

Commissioner Tumbaga 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. Planning Commission Meeting Minutes of August 12, 2003
Motion by Commissioner Garcia to approve the consent calendar, as shown. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ramirez and carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Dolojan, Garcia, Kelley, Ramirez, Tumbaga

Noes: None

Abstain: Chairperson Leonard

Absent: Commissioner Harris

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

**Item 1: G.B. Max Second Hand Sales. AP-03-31 (UP).**

This is a public hearing on an application by Patasay Safi of GB Max requesting a use permit to establish a second hand sales business at 3827 Railroad Avenue, CC (Community Commercial) District; APN 088-072-063.

Planning Technician Christopher Barton presented the staff report.

The business would be located in the Railroad Square Shopping Center, which included the former Style Bridal shop where tenant improvements were being made for a video store to occupy a portion of the building. The other half of that tenant space would remain vacant. The Shilo Missionary Baptist Church was also located in the center and Bruno’s barbershop and the Taj Mahal Superstore were located to the north. The GB Max business would be located on the far northern end of the shopping center.

Mr. Barton advised that the business would be open seven days a week, 10:00 A.M. to 7:00 P.M. A condition had been recommended that no merchandise shall be stored outside of the business and that the business shall be operated in an orderly fashion. He also reported that a wall sign had already been installed and the applicant was currently obtaining building and planning approvals for that sign.

Mr. Barton recommended that the Planning Commission adopt Resolution No. 9445, approving AP-03-31, with the conditions as shown.

PUBLIC HEARING OPENED

PROPRIETORS:

IDA BRAHIMI was present to represent the applicant. She had nothing further to add to the staff report. In response to the Chair, Ms. Brahimi acknowledged that she had read and was in agreement with the staff recommended conditions of approval.

OPPONENTS: None
PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED

MOTION: UP-03-31

Motion by Commissioner Garcia to adopt Resolution No. 9445, approving AP-03-31, a use permit to allow second hand sales located at 3827 Railroad Avenue for “GB Max Second hand Sales,” with the conditions as shown. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ramirez and carried by the following vote:

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

Item 2: Bancroft Gardens Subdivision. Subdivision 8657 and AP-03-41 (VA, DR).

This is a public hearing on an application by Sal Evola of Discovery Builders requesting approval of a tentative map to subdivide one parcel into 22 single-family residential lots, a variance to allow a reduction in minimum lot width/street line for one lot (Lot 13), and design review approval of the proposed home designs. The project is located on an undeveloped 4.07-acre site south of State Route 4 and north of West Leland Road at the western terminal of Wedgewood Drive. The site is zoned RS (Single-Family Residential) District; APN 095-150-030.

Assistant Planner Ken Strelo presented the staff report.

Mr. Strelo recommended that the Planning Commission approve the Bancroft Gardens Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation and Monitoring Plan, adopt Resolution No. 9446 approving Subdivision 8657, AP-03-41 (VA), and adopt Resolution No. 9447 approving AP-03-41 (DR), subject to the conditions as shown.

PUBLIC HEARING OPENED

PROPOSENENTS:

SAL EVOLA, Discovery Builders, 4061 Port Chicago Highway, Suite H, Concord, acknowledged that the project had initially been presented to the Commission during a study session in January 2003, at which time a rezoning for a 26-lot subdivision had been requested.

During the study session, Mr. Evola explained that the Commission had not unanimously supported the project. As a result, the number of lots had been reduced from 26 to 22 and the proposal complied with the existing zoning, with the exception of one variance request. That variance request was for Lot 13, which had been supported by staff.
Mr. Evola stated that due to the shape of the lot, the fact that it was surrounded by a PG&E easement on one side at 100 feet in width, and an East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) easement on the other side that was also 100 feet wide, the project was unique.

Mr. Evola added that a Caltrans easement had been identified on the property when the project had first been presented to the Commission, although once the correct topographical map had been placed on the site it had come to light that there was a 50-foot gap between the location of the homes and the location of the freeway. He stated that gap, which the Commission had not been aware at that time, would provide an additional buffer for the site.

Mr. Evola explained that they had been working with PG&E for approximately a year to either purchase a portion of the right-of-way required for the project roadway or to purchase the entire easement. He acknowledged that the project was conditioned to provide that access to the site.

JOHN SCHEMERHORN, 4061 Port Chicago Highway, Suite H, Concord, reiterated that the architecture would consist of three separate plans, a single story plan, and two, two story elevations with three car garages.

There would be six colors spread throughout the entire subdivision. The homes would utilize tile roofs, stucco and wood siding representative of the parts of the neighborhood one had to drive through to reach the project site.

In response to Commissioner Dolojan, Mr. Schemerhorn clarified that post tension slabs would be used in the expansive soil where the property was located, with 10 to 12 inch thick post tension slabs that had cables through them so that the homes would float on top of the soil rather than drilling down through the soil. Mitigation measures had required the use of either a post tension, thickened or matte surface slab.

Mr. Evola added that he had recently met with two of the nearby homeowners, one of whom was present in the audience. He clarified that concerns with access to the existing bicycle pathway had been raised and that issue would depend on what PG&E allowed the developer to do with the property. Because of the plan and the way the sewer line easement was situated, the only place to add a connection to the existing bicycle trail would be to install that trail alongside the PG&E easement, off of Bancroft Court, to then tie into the existing route.

INTERESTED SPEAKERS:

BRUCE OHLSON, Pittsburg, commented that when the project had initially been presented to the Commission he had requested bicycle access from the west end to the Delta DeAnza Regional trail operated by the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) but on
the PG&E right-of-way. He urged the Commission to direct the applicant to construct an access to the trail from Wedgewood Drive with the location to be determined by the applicant’s and the City’s engineers. He advised that the bicycle community would like the access to be located on the very west end of the cul-de-sac, but would accept wherever the applicant could fit that access in.

JOHN SEBAUGH, 853 Wedgewood Drive, Pittsburg, acknowledged that the concern with the bike trail was an issue. He noted that commuters used the property to continue on to the trail. He pointed out that there was no access to the trail unless one were to travel back to Wedgewood Drive, on to Ackerman, and then back on Ackerman a quarter of a mile against the direction of commuting traffic to the Pittsburg/Bay Point BART Station.

Mr. Sebaugh also expressed concern with the lack of water pressure in his neighborhood, particularly during the summer months. He explained that he had raised the same concerns when the project had initially been presented to the Commission.

While City representatives had visited his property to measure the water pressure, Mr. Sebaugh remained concerned with impacts to the water pressure for not only his home but also his neighbors as a result of the construction of homes at the end of the street. He was not opposed to the development in that it would offer some advantages, although he reiterated his concerns with the water pressure and with access to the trail.

Mr. Sebaugh had additional concerns with the fact that the street was a straight street that would be extended a couple of hundred yards. Since the neighborhood had experienced problems with speeding traffic, he requested the consideration of speed control devices in the neighborhood, such as a speed bump at the bridge location or signage-identifying Children at Play.

Mr. Sebaugh otherwise acknowledged that he had met with the developer who had been willing to consider the neighbors’ concerns.

Commissioner Garcia reported that he had met with Mr. Sebaugh after the project had initially been presented to the Commission earlier in the year. He recognized the concerns with the speed of traffic on that street and he agreed with the request for the placement of Children at Play signs in the neighborhood. As to a speed bump, he inquired where that would best be located.

Mr. Sebaugh suggested that speed bumps be placed at the entrance and that some sort of speed control device should also be placed between Carpetta Circle and Bancroft Court.

Commissioner Garcia suggested a placement farther up the street at the intersection. He recommended that staff evaluate the speeding problem and consider the placement of a speed bump in the neighborhood. He added that staff should work with the developer on that issue.

Mr. Strelo inquired whether or not the Commission would like that concern evaluated by the
City’s Staff Traffic Committee, which handled such requests. He clarified that there was a protocol that the Traffic Engineering Division followed for such requests, with a survey to be sent to the affected homeowners to ensure that the request was supported by the neighborhood and that everyone on the street would benefit. As to the recommendation for speed bumps, he understood that they were not typically supported since the Fire Department opposed their use, and for other reasons which the Traffic Committee could clarify.

Mr. Strelo expressed the willingness to forward the concerns and recommendations to the Staff Traffic Committee for review.

Commissioner Garcia suggested that staff work with the property owner to keep him apprised of when the concerns would be raised with the Traffic Committee. He stressed that the Children at Play signs should be installed with the commencement of the project. In response to Commissioner Ramirez, Civil Engineer II Alfredo Hurtado explained that the City was aware of the water pressure concerns in the neighborhood.

Mr. Hurtado stated that the project would be conditioned to require that the developer’s engineer provide adequate calculations of the water pressure to show how more pressure could be added to the system. The City also had a Water Master Plan, which the developer must follow to ensure water pressure in the area. In addition, the Contra Costa Consolidated Fire Protection District (CCCFPD) would ensure that appropriate water pressure was provided since it would need adequate pressure for its fire hydrants. Without adequate water pressure, the developer would be unable to develop the property. Mr. Hurtado also clarified that the water sampling stations did not provide information on water pressure. Water samples only were provided by those stations.

Commissioner Dolojan noted that speed bumps had been installed along Ventura Drive with no problems. He questioned why the same could not be done in the subject neighborhood. He supported the installation of speed bumps, as requested.

Commissioner Tumbaga commented that in the past the Commission had discussed the concerns of the bicycle community with some standard language that could be applied to applications. She inquired of the status of those conversations.

Planning Manager Ayres acknowledged there had been some conversations about that issue during the study session on the item. Staff had spoken with, and had encouraged, the developer to find a way to connect the project to the bicycle trail. She noted that the developer had lost four lots in order to bring the project to the 6,000 square foot standard and was not eager to lose another lot to create direct trail access from the project. Ms. Ayres explained that the developer had expressed a willingness to work with PG&E to create a connection from the PG&E easement to the trail and had shown a commitment to create that connection, if possible. She commented that the issue had also been reviewed during the environmental review of the project. It had been determined that there was an
existing access point to the trail within a reasonable distance. As a result, that issue had not been identified as a significant impact in the environmental review of the project.

Commissioner Tumbaga inquired about possibility to condition project to require connection through PG&E easement.

Ms. Ayres advised that it would be difficult to condition the project for off-site improvements. Under the subdivision rules, the City could not force the developer to provide off-site improvements unless the City provided the developer with the right-of-way to achieve that goal. Ms. Ayres expressed concern with setting the City up in a condemnation action against another public agency. To the extent that the developer would work cooperatively to reach that goal, she stated that staff would continue to encourage the developer to provide the trail in the PG&E easement.

She also clarified, when asked, that residents had claimed at the last meeting to cross the project site to get to the trail, but that it had been used illegally through trespassing on private property.

OPPONENTS: None

PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED

Commissioner Ramirez stated that although he had not been present when the project had initially been presented to the Commission, he had been concerned with the initial number of homes that had been proposed. He was pleased to see that the number of homes had been reduced from 26 to 22 lots. He supported the project.

MOTION: Subdivision 8657/AP-03-41 (VA)

Motion by Commissioner Ramirez to adopt Resolution No. 9446, approving Subdivision 8657, AP-03-41 (VA), a Vesting Tentative Map for a 22-lot residential subdivision and a Variance to reduce the minimum lot width of Lot 13 to 48 feet for the Bancroft Gardens Residential Subdivision, with the conditions as shown. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Garcia and carried by the following vote:

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

MOTION: AP-03-41 (DR)

Motion by Commissioner Ramirez to adopt Resolution No. 9447, approving AP-03-41 (DR), Design Review approval of home designs for Bancroft Gardens Residential Subdivision located at the western terminus of Wedgewood Drive, with the conditions as
shown. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Garcia and carried by the following vote:

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

Commissioner Tumbaga stepped down from the dais as a result of a potential conflict of interest with Agenda Item No. 3.

COMMISSION CONSIDERATION:

**Item 3: American Auto Body Freestanding Sign. AP-03-45 (DR).**

This is a request by Tom Ksenzulak of American Auto Body for design review approval of architectural plans to construct a 40 square foot, seven foot two inch high freestanding sign at the northeast corner of Markstein Drive and North Park Boulevard for “American Auto Body” located at 3001 North Park Boulevard. The site is zoned IP (Industrial Park) District; APN 088-151-012.

Assistant Planner Ken Strelo presented the staff report. Mr. Strelo recommended that the Planning Commission adopt Resolution No. 9448 approving AP-03-45 (DR), with the conditions as shown.

**PROPONEENT:**

A representative for Barber Sign Company, 600 Pennsylvania Street, Vallejo, expressed his appreciation to staff for their assistance in working on the application.

**MOTION: AP-03-45**

Motion by Commissioner Garcia to adopt Resolution No. 9448, approving AP-03-45 (DR), Design Review approval of architectural plans to construct a 40 square foot, seven foot two inch high freestanding sign at American Auto Body located at 3001 North Park Boulevard, with the conditions as shown. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ramirez and carried by the following vote:

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

Commissioner Tumbaga returned to the dais at this time.
Item 4: Application of General Plan Hillside Policies.

Clarification of the application of General Plan Hillside Policies.

Ms. Ayres reported that on June 23, 2003 a joint workshop had been held between the City Council and the Planning Commission where numerous planning related items had been discussed including the application of hillside standards in new developments in the southern hills. A General Plan Land Use Policy stated the need to ensure that all General Plan policies apply to hillside land irrespective of zoning.

Ms. Ayres advised that staff had approached the Council and Commission with three specific questions related to how hillsides were defined, and what criteria should be used to qualify a hillside development. Or, as another option, whether or not staff should apply those policies only to land designated hillside low density or for all hillside land. In addition, a question related to the application of the hillside street standards.

After much discussion, the Council had deferred the matter to August and had requested that staff return to the Council with a definition of hillside and with some background on how hillsides had been defined in the past.

Ms. Ayres reported that staff had returned to the Council on August 4, 2003, and had recommended that the Council adopt a policy that General Plan hillside policies apply to all lands in the southern foothills above the 500 foot contour, as identified in General Plan Figure 4.1.

The Council had decided that before it made a decision there should be a recommendation from the Planning Commission. As such, it had deferred the item and had directed staff to solicit further comments from the Commission on the general application of hillside standards.

Ms. Ayres referred to the materials included in the staff report, including background information on how hillsides had been defined in the 1988 General Plan and the Hillside Development District, and the Subdivision Ordinance. Four options had also been identified for how the Commission could consider the item before making recommendation to the City Council.

Ms. Ayres recommended that the Planning Commission identify its preference that the General Plan Hillside Policies in Chapter 4, Urban Design Element of the General Plan be applied (only) to all lands in the southern foothills above the 500-foot contour elevation, irrespective of General Plan or zoning designation.

Commissioner Garcia questioned how the policies had been applied in the past since the City had built Oak Hills Units 1 through 6 and the Monterra and San Marcos developments, some of which were beyond the 500 contour elevation. He questioned what criteria had been used for those developments.
Ms. Ayres noted that the 2001 General Plan had not been in place when the projects had been adopted.

Commissioner Garcia noted that the developments were compliant with the 1988 General Plan. He questioned whether or not the Hillside Ordinance had been used at that time for the projects referenced. He noted that each project had turned out well and each had been reviewed on its own merits.

Commissioner Garcia questioned why the Commission needed to make any recommendation to the Council. He suggested that every project should be evaluated to determine if the hillside policies should be applicable to it at the time it was presented to the Commission on a case-by-case basis.

In response to Commissioner Tumbaga, Ms. Ayres clarified that any project currently in process would not be affected by the proposed action before the Commission. She clarified, as an example, that it would not affect grading in the San Marco development, which had an approved Development Agreement from 1993.

Commissioner Tumbaga saw no problem with Option 4, as recommended by staff, which she could support. She recognized that previously approved projects would not be affected and that the option would only have an affect on future developments in the community. She agreed that clarification of where the hillside policies applied was important.

Commissioner Garcia inquired what affect the policy would have on the ridgelines in the 900 foot range in that sometime in the future if the Bailey Estates project were developed and there was a need to connect Bailey Road to San Marco Boulevard, the policy might restrict development on the ridgelines. Commissioner Garcia pointed out that no developer would be willing to build the road if the road could not be financed by the development of homes. He emphasized that all the City had left to build was the hillsides.

In response to a question from Mr. Dolojan, Ms. Ayres clarified that the basis of the 500-foot contour was from sea level and datum contours on the geographical map. That line had been chosen by staff because it had already been mapped in the General Plan and since every engineer drew a map with contours on it, where it would be easy for the public and the Commission and staff to identify that contour.

Commissioner Kelley advised that she could support Option 4, as recommended by staff. She recognized that it would not apply to those developments previously approved.

Chairperson Leonard spoke to the number of meetings conducted during the review of the General Plan with the primary discussions on the hillsides. He expressed concern with any grading limitations on road construction in the hillsides. He referenced the efforts to connect the center of the City with its western borders and suggested that there was a long way to go before such a connecting roadway was realized.
Chairperson Leonard suggested that whether the hillside policies were applicable to a particular project site should be determined when plans were submitted and then be applied only if they resulted in a better project; he said the City should continue its efforts to tie the center of the City with its western boundaries. He did not want to see limits that could create obstacles to allowing that connection to occur.

Commissioner Dolojan suggested that the staff recommended Option 4 would be fair.

Commissioner Tumbaga sought the development of some criteria. She was disappointed by the fact that the rules kept changing and she emphasized the need to have a starting point and to have everyone apprised of clear policies. If there was to be any deviation, changes or modifications, she suggested that the project could trigger that process. She pointed out that the reasons the policies were in place was that the City desired to protect its hillsides and the views of those hillsides. Without setting some trigger mechanism that would require the review of projects in the context of those policies, she said it made no sense to have those policies.

Commissioner Tumbaga recalled that when the policies were discussed that there had been conversations of development occurring on the backsides of the hills that was not as visually impactful as development on the front sides of the hillsides, which were clearly visible. She suggested that Option 4 would be a good thing.

Chairperson Leonard stated that he would have to review the information further before he could make a recommendation.

MOTION:

Motion by Commissioner Tumbaga to make a recommendation to the City Council to support Option 4: Apply policies only to land above the 500-foot contour elevation as delineated on General Plan Figure 4-1 (View Shed Analysis), and that the option be adopted as a guideline for hillsides. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kelley and FAILED to carry by the following vote:

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

Given the split vote, Commissioner Garcia recommended that the item be held over to allow more information on the policies to be provided. He suggested that the potential impacts of the options being considered by the Commission were not clear.

Commissioner Tumbaga disagreed in that the policies were clearly contained in the General Plan. All Commissioners were present during the General Plan discussions, with
the exception of Commissioners Dolojan and Ramirez.

Commissioner Dolojan suggested that the item be continued to allow Commissioner Harris to be present to break the tie vote.

Chairperson Leonard requested a topographical map and an overlay of the future projection of San Marco Boulevard in terms of where it would lie and in what elevation. While he recognized the desire to hide any development along the hillsides, he reiterated that 900 feet was not that high.

Ms. Ayres summarized the discussion that Commissioners Dolojan, Tumbaga and Kelley were supportive of Option 4, while Commissioner Garcia and Chairperson Leonard were desirous of reviewing projects on a case-by-case basis and applying the hillside policies, as appropriate.

Commissioner Ramirez clarified that he was in agreement with Commissioner Garcia and the Chair. He suggested that projects be reviewed on an individual basis. He added that he did not have sufficient information at this time to make any another decision.

Ms. Ayres expressed the willingness to provide new copies of the current General Plan and/or applicable policies to the Commission for review.

It was the consensus of the Commission to continue the discussion of the item to the regular meeting of the Planning Commission scheduled for September 16, 2003, with staff to provide additional information, as discussed.

**Item 5: Delegation of Design Review Authority.**

Consideration of a proposal to delegate design review authority of certain types of projects to the City Planner/Zoning Administrator.

Ms. Ayres reported that during the July 8, 2003 Planning Commission meeting, the Chair had recommended that the Commission delegate certain projects to staff, such as projects relating to signs and antennas. Projects that could be handled by staff without compromising the public process were presented. A list of nine projects had been identified in the staff report, which projects could be delegated to staff under the provisions of the Municipal Code to allow the delegation of a City Planner to exercise discretion in connection with specific land use matters provided the Commission was notified of the intent to exercise that authority.

A draft resolution was presented for Commission consideration. If adopted, it would delegate projects to staff related to freestanding signs, wireless communication antennas monopoles, minor storefront remodels including building colors, awnings, window changes, parking lots, landscaping, small additions to existing buildings less than 2,500 square feet.
when designed to complement the existing architecture of the existing building, changes in building colors, new model homes, approved subdivisions and ancillary structures, including mechanical equipment associated with legal uses in the industrial districts.

Under the new process, staff would notify the Commission as it had done and as identified on the last page of the staff report, which included a Notice of Intent to Exercise Design Review Authority pursuant to Planning Commission Resolution No. 9444, if approved. That project involved an expansion for Nation’s Hamburgers, as reflected in the notice.

Ms. Ayres commented that the new process could save applicants three to four weeks of processing time and improve customer service. If the Commission or the public was concerned with the process, a member of the public or a Commissioner could request that an item be brought to the Commission for a final decision. Otherwise the decision would be made at the staff level and the Commission would be provided with a copy of the resolution of approval after the fact with any associated conditions.

Commissioner Garcia recommended that when the Zoning Administrator made a decision on an application that the applicant be notified of the appeal process of any such decision directly to the Planning Commission.

Ms. Ayres explained that if an agreement could not be reached with an applicant, the project would automatically be presented to the Commission for review, which would prevent an appeal process.

Commissioner Dolojan questioned what would occur if a Commissioner disagreed that a particular project should be approved at staff level. He also inquired if the resolution were approved, whether or not the process would be used forever with no changes.

Ms. Ayres reiterated that she would notify the Commission in advance of any item staff intended to approve under the new policy with a Notice of Intent as previously described. Any Commissioner could then request that an application be brought to the Commission. Additionally, if the resolution was adopted and if the Commission so wished, the resolution could be modified to change the list of delegated project types in the future through the adoption of a new resolution by a majority vote of the Planning Commission.

Speaking to the project type that staff had recommended be considered for delegation, specifically parking lots, and landscaping, Chairperson Leonard suggested that the term “existing” be added to those items. Chairperson Leonard supported the resolution, as amended, which he suggested was a move in the right direction.

MOTION:

Motion by Commissioner Kelley to adopt Resolution No. 9444, delegating design review authority of certain types of projects to the Zoning Administrator, with amendments as suggested by Commissioner Leonard. The motion was seconded by Commissioner
Ramirez and carried by the following vote:

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

STAFF COMMUNICATIONS:

Ms. Ayres reported back to the Commission on inquires from the previous meeting.

In response to a staff update related to the condition of the landscaping and parking lot associated with a Chinese restaurant on Railroad Avenue, Commissioner Garcia suggested that staff review conditions applicable to the adjacent day care school behind the restaurant and Southern Auto Parts businesses which might also apply to the parking lot and landscaping in question.

On another item, Ms. Ayres reported that a letter had been sent from staff to Frances Greene requesting her attendance at a meeting in September to advise of the status of her project.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

There were no Committee Reports.

COMMENTS FROM COMMISSIONERS:

Commissioner Tumbaga reported that she had attended the recent joint Planning Commission/Council Workshop with Commissioners Garcia and Kelley when the Council had discussed various ways of structuring City commissions/committees.

Commissioner Garcia commented on the numerous options the Council had discussed to restructure the City’s commissions/committees.

In response, Chairperson Leonard said he understood that a Historical Resources Commission (HRC) was needed in order to continue the City’s historical designations in the downtown.

Having served on the HRC years ago, Commissioner Garcia clarified the function of that committee to review any exterior changes to buildings in the downtown to ensure that any modifications or changes were appropriate. If that Commission were disbanded, he suggested that those projects would be evaluated by the Planning Commission.

COMMENTS FROM COMMISSIONERS:
Commissioner Tumbaga invited everyone to attend the Friday Film Nights in Heritage Plaza starting at 8:30 P.M. The event had proven successful and would run through October, weather permitting.

Commissioner Garcia acknowledged the closure of the Pep Boys business but explained that the landscaping for that property was not being maintained. He requested that the property owners be contacted.

Commissioner Garcia added that the Habitat for Humanity home facing Harbor Street adjacent to the church no longer had the landscaping that had initially been installed. The property was now full of weeds. He suggested that the organization would not want to see its homes in such a condition, and he requested that Habitat for Humanity be contacted to abate the situation.

Chairperson Leonard understood that the property owner had sold the property in question, although it was his understanding that could not be done pursuant to Habitat for Humanity regulations.

Commissioner Garcia advised that he would not be present for the meeting of September 30 and would not be present to comment on the DEIR for Bailey Estates. Commissioner Garcia questioned whether or not the City was prepared to furnish water to the project site, Commissioner Garcia also questioned whether or not Bailey Road would be widened to four lanes. He did not want to see the City have to pay for the additional lanes at a later date.

Ms. Ayes explained that four lanes were not required by the City’s General Plan. She also clarified that the roadway was not considered a route of regional significance north of Leland Road in either the City of Pittsburg or the City of Concord’s General Plan.

Commissioner Garcia recommended that issue be reviewed further.

Chairperson Leonard expressed the willingness to raise any comments from Commissioner Garcia during the meeting of September 30 since Commissioner Garcia had reported that he would not be present at that meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:48 P.M. to a regular meeting of the Planning Commission on September 16, 2003 at 7:00 P.M. in the City Council Chambers at 65 Civic Avenue, Pittsburg, CA.