

**TWENTYNINE PALMS PLANNING COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER, 6136 ADOBE ROAD
TWENTYNINE PALMS, CALIFORNIA
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2009
4:00 P.M. (Please Note Earlier Time)**

MINUTES

- 1.0 CALL TO ORDER-** Chair Caplinger called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE- Chair Caplinger led the Pledge of Allegiance.
ROLL CALL- The following Commissioners were present: Alderson, Easter, Mintz, Rinkes and Caplinger.
- 2.0 SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS** – Chair Caplinger announced this meeting will be televised on Cable TV Channel 10 Monday, December 21, 2009 at 6:30 p.m. and Friday, December 25, 2009 at 6:30 p.m.
- 3.0 MINUTES** - None
- 4.0 CONSENT CALENDAR** - None
- 5.0 ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT CALENDAR FOR DISCUSSION OR SEPARATE ACTION** - None
- 6.0 PUBLIC COMMENTS**– None
- 7.0 PUBLIC HEARINGS**
- 7.1 08-72 (Conditional Use Permit for Hampton Inn & Suites Hotel)** K-Partners Hospitality Group, L.P. proposes a Conditional Use Permit to construct a 56,001 square foot, three (3)-story, 87-suite hotel on 3.4 acres. The project includes 103 parking spaces, a swimming pool, a conference room and an exercise room. The project is located on the north side of Twentynine Palms Highway (State Highway 62), roughly 345 feet east of the centerline of Encelia Avenue, including all of Assessor Parcel Number (APN) 0615-222-29 and the eastern portion of APN 0615-222-35 within the City of Twentynine Palms.

RECOMMENDATION

Conduct the Public Hearing, consider public comment and adopt Planning Commission Resolution 09-25 adopting the Mitigated Negative Declaration/Mitigation Monitoring Program and approving the Conditional Use Permit subject to the attached Conditions of Approval.

Community Development Director LaClaire (Director LaClaire) presented a staff report to the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Mintz requested clarification on the hotel's driveway and wanted to know if Fairfield Inn and Hampton Inn would be sharing the same driveway and if the owner, who owns both hotels, sells the business will the hotels still share that exit and how that will be designated for future sell of the hotels.

Director LaClaire responded that an agreement had to be recorded in the title of the property giving the access easement.

Commissioner Rinkes asked if the retention basin has been approved for the Fairfield Inn.

Director LaClaire responded a drainage swell area of the Marriott would flow through the same basin as the Fairfield Hotel.

Commissioner Easter said he would like to prevent any traffic and pedestrian problems and that he did not feel comfortable approving the project due to safety issues with the Highway. He asked if a right turn only sign, to stop people from making a left turn at the intersection, could be installed. He said the problem should be prevented if it was known that a problem was going to be created.

City Engineer Pedersen said he required a study from the applicant to address this issue and the applicant hired an Engineer to determine if there was a need to put a crosswalk in at this location and a crosswalk was not recommended for the area. He said it was not safe to put a crosswalk at the intersection.

Commissioner Rinkes asked where the current fire hydrants were for the hotel.

Director LaClaire said it is a requirement by state law and fire codes that would need to be met by the applicant. He said the hydrant would have to be within 300 feet of the building as written in the fire code.

Vice Chair Alderson asked for clarification regarding the flammable vegetation.

Director LaClaire said there is no native vegetation within thirty feet of the structure, so it does not apply to the applicant.

Chair Caplinger opened the Public Hearing.

Mark Crisci, representing the applicant, said there was a retention basin on the adjoining Donaldson property. He asked for removal of Condition P33 because they would use satellite for their television services. He said on Condition P37, regarding the Morongo Basin Transit Authority (MBTA), he had spoken with the MBTA and they have very few patrons and employees that use the bus stop but they would be open to making a contribution to the MBTA for a bus stop, but all the work on the location and the approvals would be up to MBTA. He said on P39 the Hilton mandated what can be on the property as far as allowing art work to be displayed in the lobby; but he would push them as much as he could to see what they would allow. He said if there is an opportunity to put some local art in the lobby he liked the idea.

Paul Smith, Twentynine Palms, spoke in opposition of the item. He said the owner refused to join the Inn Keepers Association which spends money promoting the City.

Actash Bacta, Twentynine Palms, Co-owner of the Country Inn, expressed his concerns about how the drainage was going to work in the future. He said he was also concerned about the traffic issue on Encelia Avenue.

Mark Crisci, responded that the Military base is expanding over the next three to five years which will create more of a lodging demand in the area due to this expansion which the Hotel could meet by the time the project is opened in mid to late 2011.

Bill Warner, Nolte Associates, spoke to the Planning Commission regarding the requirements for the drainage. He said they chose to keep the drainage close to the natural drainage course as possible.

Commissioner Easter asked if the City was close to the threshold of needing to put a light signal in.

City Engineer Pedersen responded no, that the City was not close to putting in a light signal. He said one of the warrants is you have to have 140 cars per hour per 8 hours entering the intersection from the minor streets.

Director LaClaire asked the applicant for clarification for colors on the display. He said they would be the colors shown on the lower portion of the display and not the colors shown on the picture.

Mr. Crisci responded that was correct. For the remainder of the display that needed to be in the hotel lobby he did not

Chair Caplinger closed the Public Hearing.

Commissioner Easter said he had concern the retention basin was owned by the Donaldson Family Trust. He said, however, his main concern was the safety at the intersection and there was a problem there before either of the hotels was built. He said he was concerned someone was going to make a left hand turn onto Encelia and there was going to be a head on collision.

Commissioner Rinkes asked if something could be built in to check the flow of traffic and if in case the numbers start to go up that something could be done as soon as possible to address this new volume of traffic.

Commissioner Mintz said although he liked the promotion of Art in Public Places he did not feel Condition P39 would be required because he did not think the owners of the hotel should have to designate their hotel space for local artwork if they did not want to.

Chair Caplinger said he felt it would be disastrous to put a crosswalk at the Highway 62 and Encelia Avenue location. He said he did not like seeing another hotel go in that was not a full service hotel (referring to retail and restaurant services on site with the hotel).

Vice Chair Alderson said to put a bus stop in would not help the customers or employees.

ACTION: On a motion made by Commissioner Rinkes, seconded by Commissioner Mintz and carried with a 4-1 roll call vote (Easter no) the Planning Commission adopted Planning Commission Resolution 09-25 adopting the Mitigated Negative Declaration/Mitigation Monitoring Program and approving the Conditional Use Permit subject to the attached Conditions of Approval as modified including deletion of Condition P-33 and to include the revised language removing the word "shall" and replacing it with the word "will".

8.0 REPORTS, REQUESTS AND COMMUNICATIONS - None

9.0 FUTURE AGENDA ITEM- None

10.0 COMMISSION COMMENTS/STAFF- None

11.0 STUDY SESSION – None

12.0 ADJOURNMENT- Chair Caplinger adjourned the meeting at 5:28 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jacqueline M. Palmer, Deputy City Clerk