

CITY OF CERES
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES

November 4, 2013

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: Chapman, Del Nero, Kachel, Molina, Smith

ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Director of Community Development Tom Westbrook,
Deputy City Manager/City Engineer Toby Wells, City
Attorney Mike Lyions, Associate Planner James Michaels,
Secretary/Deputy City Clerk Ann Montgomery

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairperson Del Nero.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. It was moved by Commissioner Molina; seconded by Commissioner Smith, to approve the minutes from the October 7, 2013 meeting; Carried 5/0
2. It was moved by Commissioner Smith; seconded by Commissioner Chapman, to approve the minutes from the October 21, 2013 meeting; Carried 5/0.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION:

None

CITIZEN COMMUNICATIONS:

None

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA AS POSTED (OR AMENDED) AND
CERTIFICATION OF POSTING:**

It was moved by Commissioner Chapman; seconded by Commissioner Kachel, to approve the agenda as posted; Carried 5/0.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

None

PUBLIC HEARING(S):

3. Variance (VAR 13-08); Proposal to consider a Variance to allow two wall signs to exceed the maximum allowable square footage requirement for a “DD’s Discounts” store at 1640 E. Hatch Road; United Sign Systems, applicant.

Associate Planner James Michaels presented the staff report.

Chairperson Del Nero clarified with Mr. Michaels about number 18, being directed to the east end of the building, and that they want to put in a sign that’s theoretically a third bigger. Mr. Michaels concurred, stating that there’s a 91 square foot differential with the proposed sign in front.

The Public Hearing was opened at 6:11 p.m.

- Jeff Sealy, Regional Vice-President of Real Estate with Ross Stores

Mr. Sealy stated that they’re very much looking forward to bringing dd’s Discounts to Ceres. We think it’s going to be a great store. One of the challenges they are facing is that dd’s is a relatively new concept for Ross. Some people don’t know what dd’s Discounts is, and that is why they’re asking for the department addition of “LADIES-KIDS-MEN-SHOES-HOME” to the bottom of the sign.

Discussion ensued regarding the verbiage and sizing of the signage.

Commissioner Smith referred to the staff report, explaining to Mr. Sealy that the Planning Commission is limited to making this kind of a variance, based on the muni-code guidelines. The muni-code requires that four findings are made. Of the four findings that are required, staff was only able to make two of them. She asked Mr. Sealy if he had a response to the two that were not, that would assist the Commission in making a finding different than staff. Mr. Sealy did not. Commissioner Smith inquired if he had spoken to any of the neighbors in the shopping center or on Hatch Road, regarding his proposal to have a sign larger than the signs that they’ve been allowed to have. Mr. Sealy had not.

The Public Hearing was closed at 6:24 p.m.

Commissioner Chapman thanked NetCo., Ross and dd’s Discounts for coming to Ceres. It’ll be a great store for that location in Ceres. He stated that he hasn’t heard enough evidence to support the variance request, so will have to deny.

Commissioners Kachel, Smith and Molina agreed with Commissioner Chapman. They think this store will be a great addition to Ceres. There's a market for a department type store in Ceres, especially on Hatch Road; however, there is not sufficient evidence to support this variance request.

It was moved by Commissioner Chapman; seconded by Commissioner Kachel, to deny Variance 13-08, by approving PC Resolution 13-13; Carried 5/0.

NEW BUSINESS

None

PUBLIC MEETING(S):

None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None

MATTERS INITIATED BY PLANNING COMMISSION AND STAFF

None

REPORTS:

Commission:

Commissioner Smith pointed out, at the last meeting, there was a question asked about the electricity portion of the CDRAB budget. It was stated in the minutes from the October 21st meeting, that Mr. Briggs reported that electricity costs were \$3,000 per quarter or \$12,000 per year, and the largest line item. She has a copy of the budget for the current fiscal year, which indicates the budgeted amount for electricity and gas is \$5,830. She knows that Mr. Briggs was asked to follow-up on some items, and that is one of them. She also requested at the next meeting on November 18th, a report from Mr. Briggs on the follow up items from the October 21st meeting, along with a status update, and information on the Contract Services, which is the largest item in the budget. She would like information about each of the contracts, such as when was the last time they were renewed, if there is an RFP process that accompanies it, and other pertinent details. She would also like a follow up on the other items, such as the request that a meeting take place with the Chamber and Mr. Briggs to begin some brainstorming about some partnerships.

Mr. Wells added that the Contract Services consists primarily of landscape maintenance. He also reported that the average monthly electricity bill has been \$350-\$400 per month. Last year's actual costs were about \$4,500.

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Commissioner Smith remarked that the other thing that they asked about regarding the electricity, was the origin of the charge being placed in the CDRAB budget. Mr. Wells explained that BID was founded on those two items; street lighting and landscaping.

Staff

Mr. Westbrook:

- Ceres Chamber of Commerce is having a Coffee-Hour on November 15th at the Howard Training Center at 7:00 a.m. He will send out an e-mail when he receives confirmation of that event.
- December 12th, the Chamber will be having their Annual Service Mixer.
- He attended a Chamber Board retreat last weekend and they discussed what they plan to do moving forward. There was very lively discussion and it was well attended by Chamber members.


Mr. Wells:

- PG&E update on Whitmore Avenue - They have finished the pipeline work; 10.2 miles of 12 inch pipe is in the ground and completed. The next step now is to hydro-test. Once that is completed, they will be doing the last paving and clean-up. Hopefully, with weather conditions; we need 50 degrees and rising in order to pave, they should be done and out of here by the end of the month.

ADJOURNMENT:

The Commission adjourned at 6:34 p.m. to the next regularly scheduled meeting of Monday, November 18, 2013.

APPROVED:



Gary Del Nero, Chairperson

ATTEST:



Tom Westbrook, Secretary