

CITY OF CERES  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
MINUTES

April 20, 2015

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

**ROLL CALL:**

**PRESENT:** Commissioners Condit, Del Nero, Kachel, Molina,  
Chairperson Smith

**ABSENT:** None

**ALSO PRESENT:** Director of Community Development Tom Westbrook,  
Director of Engineering Services/City Engineer Daryl  
Jordan, City Attorney Nubia Goldstein, Redevelopment and  
Economic Development Manager Steve Hallam, Associate  
Planner James Michaels, Acting City Clerk Ann  
Montgomery

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairperson Smith.

**OATH OF OFFICE:**

The Oath of Office for the new Planning Commissioner Couper Condit was administered by Acting City Clerk, Ann Montgomery.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

None

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION:**

None

**CITIZEN COMMUNICATIONS:**

Renee Ledbetter, Ceres Chamber of Commerce Board President

Mrs. Ledbetter announced several upcoming events:

- Ceres Street Faire is coming up the first weekend in May.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Whiskey & Cigar event with barbeque dinner at Whitmore Mansion. This is another Chamber fundraiser for community projects.

- May 28<sup>th</sup> – The 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Agribusiness luncheon. Tickets are available through the Chamber Office and the Chamber website.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> EPIC luncheon – Wednesday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the Community Center. We are partnering with the School District to talk about work force issues and economic development issues as they pertain to the Ag industry. She extended an invitation to all the Commissioners, noting this is free of charge.

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

ACTION: It was moved by Commissioner Molina; seconded by Commissioner Kachel to approve the agenda as posted (or amended) and certification of posting. Motion passed by the following vote:

AYES: Commissioners Condit, Del Nero, Kachel, Molina, Chairperson Smith  
NOES: None  
ABSENT: None

**CONSENT CALENDAR:**

None

**PUBLIC HEARING:**

1. Conditional Use Permit (CUP) 15:01; Proposal for a Conditional Use Permit to allow for a 65-foot tall wireless cell tower with equipment shelter and generator at 2907 Nicholas Way. Verizon Wireless, applicant.

Associate Planner, James Michaels presented the staff report, noting staff recommends denial of the proposal.

Brief Commission discussion ensued.

**The public hearing was opened at 6:15 p.m.**

- Mark Lobaugh, EPIC Wireless Consulting, Site Acquisition Consultant for Verizon Wireless

Mr. Lobaugh explained he began his search back in March when he contacted staff about the site. He chose this area because it is zoned “Industrial” and noted that cell towers are an allowed use there. He also stated that he attempted to contact the property owner several times regarding the need to lease additional ground space, with no response for several months. He further explained his proposal and stated that he vehemently disagrees with staff’s recommendation for denial. He noted that co-locating on this tower will not work as the tower has already been co-located on, the centerline will be too low and it won’t function.

Commission discussion ensued.

- Randy Moring, 2304 Quilling Court, Modesto, CA

Mr. Moring stated that he is here representing himself in regards to the proposal for the cell tower being located in proximity of a buildable lot he purchased 7 years ago. He has concerns about the proposal, because aesthetically he thinks the tower would be an eye sore to the subdivision behind it.

**The public hearing was closed at 6:28 p.m.**

Lengthy Commission discussion ensued.

**The public hearing was re-opened at 6:38 p.m.**

Commissioners had further questions for the applicant, which included verification that every cell tower is required to have FAA approval.

Chairperson Smith clarified with the applicant that when he originally contacted the owner of the existing tower, that they did not respond, and his original intention was to co-locate. Mr. Lobaugh noted the intention was to at least open the dialogue. He sent out many letters and finally received a response from one gentleman. Chairperson Smith confirmed with Mr. Lobaugh that he ultimately discovered that co-locating on the existing tower was not going to work, due to its insufficient size and not being able to accommodate the equipment.

- Renee Ledbetter, 2217 Don Pedro, Ceres, CA

Mrs. Ledbetter asked Mr. Lobaugh if there are other locations throughout the Ceres area on this side of town that could potentially work for this.

Mr. Lobaugh responded that he hadn't expanded his search outside that industrial park; he hasn't even looked.

Ms. Ledbetter asked staff; other than industrial sites and Costa Park, what are the parameters of placing them.

Mr. Westbrook clarified that it's industrial areas or the facilities where we've had the light standards.

**The public hearing was closed at 6:54 p.m.**

Brief Commission discussion ensued.

**ACTION:** It was moved by Commissioner Kachel; seconded by Commissioner Molina to revise PC Resolution 15-12 and continue this item to the next meeting. Motion failed by the following vote:

**AYES:** Commissioners Kachel, Molina  
**NOES:** Commissioners Condit, Del Nero, Chairperson Smith  
**ABSENT:** None

**ACTION:** It was moved by Commissioner Del Nero; seconded by Commissioner Condit to adopt PC Resolution 15-12. Motion passed by the following vote:

**AYES:** Commissioners Condit, Del Nero, Chairperson Smith  
**NOES:** Commissioners Kachel, Molina  
**ABSENT:** None

2. Site Plan Approval (SPA) 15:05; Proposal for a Site Plan Approval entitlement to provide upgrades for American Disability Act (ADA) and Restroom facilities at Whitmore Park and Smyrna Park.

Associate Planner, James Michaels provided the staff report.

Brief Commission discussion ensued.

**The public hearing was opened at 7:02 p.m.**

**There being no public comments, the public hearing was closed at 7:02 p.m.**

**ACTION:** It was moved by Commissioner Molina; seconded by Commissioner Kachel to adopt PC Resolution 15-10 and PC Resolution 15-11. Motion passed by the following vote:

**AYES:** Commissioners Condit, Del Nero, Kachel, Molina, Chairperson Smith  
**NOES:** None  
**ABSENT:** None

**NEW BUSINESS:**

None

**ADJOURNED AS THE PLANNING COMMISSION TO THE CERES  
DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION AREA BOARD**

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:** 7:04 p.m.

**ROLL CALL:**

**PRESENT:** Commissioners Condit, Del Nero, Kachel, Molina

**ABSENT:** Chairperson Smith

**ALSO PRESENT:** Director of Community Development Tom Westbrook, Director of Engineering Services/City Engineer Daryl Jordan, City Attorney Nubia Goldstein, Redevelopment and Economic Development Manager Steve Hallam, Associate Planner James Michaels, Acting City Clerk Ann Montgomery

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION**

None

**NEW BUSINESS**

3. Downtown Façade Improvement Program – Proposed Parameters

Redevelopment and Economic Development Manager, Steve Hallam presented the staff report.

Brief discussion ensued.

**The public hearing was opened at 7:40 p.m.**

- Suzanne Jamison, business owner of Suszanne’s Ceramics

Mrs. Jamison noted that as part of the CDRA, we pay each month to be allowed to be a storefront owner. She inquired if all the new businesses are required to pay.

Chairperson Smith clarified that they are required to pay, as CDRA is an assessment district. Any business owner within the assessment district jurisdiction is assessed a tax.

Mr. Westbrook further explained that those fees are paid quarterly with the business license fees, with the exception of churches, as they are non-profit.

Mrs. Jamison asked why there are so many churches in the CDRA area.

Mr. Westbrook explained that many of the churches existed prior to the adoption of the Downtown Specific Plan. However, in the Downtown Specific Plan, churches aren’t permitted, so once they vacate the premise, they will be backfilled by a professional office or other commercial business.

Mrs. Jamison inquired if there will be an increase in the CDRAB fees that they are paying right now.

Mr. Westbrook responded that there will not and explained that the funding source for this program is not tied to the revenues from the CDRAB funds. There is no proposed increase in the assessment. If there was ever was a proposed increase, it would have to go back to the property owners and that's not being considered at this time.

- Loren Jamison – Suzanne's spouse

Mr. Jamison presented a question regarding the front of the buildings. Some of them have tile, which will have to come down in order to meet the specifications of the rest of the block. What happens if there is dry rot or termites found, as it could involve a lot of extra expense?

Mr. Westbrook remarked that if dry rot or termites exist, it will most likely be the property owner who would provide the money to correct that. Ultimately it would be a good thing if that was found.

- Renee Ledbetter, Ceres Chamber of Commerce Board President

Mrs. Ledbetter informed Mr. Hallam what an outstanding job he has done, and she's very excited that we're moving forward with this program.

**The public hearing was closed at 7:50 p.m.**

Brief discussion ensued. Commissioners appreciate Mr. Hallam's wonderful work; they are very pleased with the report and program.

**ACTION:** It was moved by Commissioner Del Nero; seconded by Commissioner Kachel to approve the Downtown Façade Improvement Program and forward to City Council. Motion passed by the following vote:

**AYES:** Commissioners Condit, Del Nero, Kachel, Molina, Chairperson Smith  
**NOES:** None  
**ABSENT:** None

**RECONVENED AS THE PLANNING COMMISSION** at 7:54 p.m.

**PUBLIC MEETING(S):**

None

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

None

**MATTERS INITIATED BY PLANNING COMMISSION AND STAFF**

None

**REPORTS:**

- Commissioner Gary Del Nero welcomed Couper Condit to the Planning Commission.
- Chairperson Laurie Smith congratulated and welcomed Couper Condit to the Planning Commission, noting he did a great job this evening.
- Director of Community Development, Tom Westbrook:
  - Welcomed Couper Condit to the Planning Commission.
  - Wednesday, April 23<sup>rd</sup> at 6:00 p.m., there will be a Parks Master Plan Update Meeting in the Community Center.
  - Ceres Street Faire is coming up on May 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>. The Chamber is in need of volunteers for their booths.
  - EPIC luncheon on April 22<sup>nd</sup>; please let him or the Chamber know right away if you're interested in attending.
- Director of Engineering Services, City Engineer Daryl Jordan explained the reason the restrooms that were mentioned earlier are so expensive is that we're needing to build them to a penitentiary grade level, so they'll last for the public.
- Redevelopment and Economic Development Manager, Steve Hallam explained the first fabric banner for the billboard sign along the freeway went up this week, promoting the Concerts in the Park and Certified Farmers Market. The banners cost about \$800 and there is a \$400 fee to install them. We will be using CDRAB funds to fund the design work of the next banners, which will be promoting signature events.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

The Commission adjourned at 8:00 p.m. to the next regularly scheduled meeting of Monday, May 4, 2015.

APPROVED:

  
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Laurie Smith, Chairperson

ATTEST:

  
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Tom Westbrook, Secretary