

CITY OF CERES  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
MINUTES

May 4, 2015

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

**ROLL CALL:**

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

**ABSENT:** Commissioner Kachel

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

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairperson Smith.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

None

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION:**

Commissioner Smith noted for the record that her nephew is an employee of the applicant for Agenda Item 1. She has discussed this with the City Attorney and there is no conflict.

**CITIZEN COMMUNICATIONS:**

None

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

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

**AYES:** Commissioners Condit, Del Nero, Molina, Chairperson Smith

**NOES:** None

**ABSENT:** Commissioner Kachel

CONSENT CALENDAR:

None

**PUBLIC HEARING:**

1. 15-03 VTSM; Proposal for a Vesting Tentative Subdivision Map to subdivide 8.26 acres into 38 single-family lots at 1200 & 1206 Hackett Road. GDR Engineering, Inc., applicant.

Associate Planner, James Michaels presented the staff report.

Mr. Michaels noted there are two changes to the Conditions of Approval – PC Resolution 15-14 of VTSM 15-03 (Cambridge Estates – Phase II) on page 13; sections B-3 and B-4. He read the two revisions into the record:

- B-3: “The Vesting Tentative Subdivision Map shall create 38 residential lots on 8.26 +/- acres. Prior to constructing any homes for the 38 lots, the applicant must receive approval of a Planned Community Development Plan (PCDP) entitlement from the City Planning Commission for the home designs and their placement on the lots.”
- B-4: “Before any construction of the single-family homes takes place, the developer shall install a 7-foot tall chain link fence with slats for those ranchette properties along Morgan Road that have livestock to protect the grandfathered uses from the proposed single-family homes. If the grandfathered uses (agricultural or livestock) do not exist, this condition is null and void and the traditional 6-foot tall solid wood fence would be placed.”

Brief Commission discussion ensued.

**The public hearing was opened at 6:12 p.m.**

- Max Garcia, GDR Engineering, Inc., 3525 Mitchell Road, Ceres, CA

Mr. Garcia stated that he is representing the owner, Surgit Singh and his son, Vic Singh. Mr. Garcia also noted that Josh Jantz, the Project Manager from GDR is also in attendance this evening.

Mr. Garcia provided a brief history, noting that there have been several extensions over the years, through the Governor and the City. The map was approved, but no one has moved forward with it yet. He remarked that they’re back to get the map approved, noting that they’re not trying to save the two older homes on Hackett. They’ve met with staff, discussed the changes on the Conditions of Approval that were read tonight, and they’re in agreement with them. They’ll bring back the plan that shows the homes in the future.

- Commissioner Condit asked Mr. Garcia what his timeline is to start building.

Mr. Garcia responded that will depend on the economy, getting financing in place. They will be coming back with the development plan before we start building. No matter how fast everything works out, they're looking at, at least a year before we start building.

- Diego Fernandez, 1183 Alondra Drive, Ceres, CA

Mr. Fernandez expressed concerns of his family and some of his neighbors:

- Proposed opening of the roadway on Alondra Drive, and having that cross-traffic coming in. Currently it's like a big cul-de-sac, and it's fairly safe for his and the neighbors' children. He would like to have the road remain closed and not open it up to that cross-traffic.
- To note for future planning; when he and his family first moved there, they weren't aware that taxes hadn't been paid with the builder. When people tried to sell their properties, they were informed that there were taxes due and then they received letters saying the properties were going to be seized by the state. The issue was eventually resolved when the property owner returned from Europe and paid the taxes.
- Housing – He and his neighbors were wondering about the area across from the Dollar Tree; there are lots that are ready to be built, but there's no housing yet. Their question is, here there's a proposal for additional housing and we haven't finished housing in other spots of our town in that same neighborhood.

Chairperson Smith remarked that she's going to ask staff to respond to some of his questions, but explained that the Planning Commission doesn't have jurisdiction over property taxes, and she certainly empathizes with him. With regard to development of property, properties are owned by different people, and the order in which they are developed is purely dependent upon the property owner's financing, and other things that Mr. Garcia described. The Planning Commission doesn't have jurisdiction over how or when property that's fully entitled is developed.

Chairperson Smith asked staff to address the concern about the opening and closing of the street; to discuss the problems with not having access to those houses that will be built on those lots.

Mr. Westbrook explained that when the subdivision was originally approved, there was one way in and out from Hackett Road; Esteban Drive. The reason that there's a median in between was that there was no outlet to another subdivision. The Fire Department needed that access in case there was an accident right in that location; they could get around to the other side. The reason the subdivision looks like this is because there's a City Standard that says you can't have a cul-de-sac more than 500 feet in length. This far exceeds 500 feet in length if it was by itself and the road was blocked. But if the road goes through, it's not more than 500 feet in length and there's continuous access around. This is just reverting back to what the original subdivision was. Streets that are intended

to be dead-end streets forever, they look like the cul-de-sacs here. The streets on the north end of the project and the south end of the project were always intended to connect when the future property to the east developed.

Mr. Fernandez expressed his concerns about the additional traffic and with not having another access out to Hackett Road, and asked that be taken into consideration. He suggested that the Planning Commission drive through that neighborhood and see what he's talking about. He thanked the Commission for their time.

- Duane Thompson, 1197 Alondra Drive, Ceres, CA

Mr. Thompson remarked that he doesn't see the excitement with the project as the developer and Commissioner Molina do. He checked Zillow this morning and there are 154 houses for sale in Ceres. He's not sure why we need 38 more houses in Ceres. He is about to have two new neighbors, with the way this is laid out. When he purchased his property, it was not indicated to him that the plan was made for the road to ever go through. It is not set in stone so it does not have to go through.

Mr. Thompson noted if the street is opened up, his and his neighbors' lifestyles will change. The area where he lives has had one entry way for 13 years and he doesn't think that only one entry way for that other subdivision will be a problem. Mr. Thompson also mentioned the added traffic. It's a safety hazard with children crossing the road right there as a lot of cars are going in and out. He has contacted the Police Department several times about the safety hazard there, and feels that leaving that road cut off is not going to be a problem.

Mr. Thompson also voiced his concern about water. The City needs to cut back water usage; not sure how we can do that with adding 38 more homes.

Mr. Thompson remarked that the few of them that are going to be affected by this, are just voicing their opinions tonight because really he doesn't feel that their opinions carry a lot of weight. They can't compete with the almighty dollar. The City stands to gain a great deal, a lot of money with this project. This will affect, change their livelihood.

- Mr. Rivera, 1196 Alondra Drive, Ceres, CA

Mr. Rivera stated the reason he chose that location was the safety of roadway with the entrance being one way in and one way out, noting he has two kids and two dogs. With adding more homes and cars, there will be an increase in traffic. He doesn't let his daughter walk to or from school because he's deathly afraid of her getting hit by a car, especially with the additional quantity of cars. He too, would like to keep that street closed and add another entrance.

- Ray Smith, 3537 Morgan Road, Ceres, CA

Mr. Smith remarked that he lives in a ranchette, east of the property and has been following this since the Brown Annexation many years ago. He thinks all of the residents on that street would love to move out to the country, but it's not feasible.

Mr. Smith asked if this follows the Brown Annexation; the Master Plan as far as the notification to future property owners about neighboring ranchettes, irrigation, fencing and future building and planning.

Mr. Westbrook explained that the original purchaser will have the disclosure statement as part of their purchase agreement.

**The public hearing was closed at 6:42 p.m.**

Lengthy Commission discussion ensued.

**ACTION:** It was moved by Commissioner Molina; seconded by Commissioner Del Nero to adopt PC Resolutions 15-13 and 15-14. Motion passed by the following vote:

**AYES:** Commissioners Del Nero, Molina, Chairperson Smith  
**NOES:** Commissioner Condit  
**ABSENT:** Commissioner Kachel

**NEW BUSINESS:**

2. Requesting the Planning Commission to forward recommendation to City Council for authorization to submit the Draft 2014-2023 Housing Element to the State Housing and Community Development (HCD) Department for the mandated 60-day review period, and to release the Draft 2014-2023 Housing Element for public review. The 60-day HCD Review Period is required in accordance with Section 65585(b) of the State Government Code.

Mark Niskanen, J.B. Anderson Land Use Planning provided a brief presentation on the Housing Element.

Brief Commission discussion ensued.

**ACTION:** It was moved by Commissioner Molina; seconded by Commissioner Del Nero to forward a recommendation to City Council for authorization to submit the Draft 2014-2023 Housing Element to the State Housing and Community Development (HCD) Department for the mandated 60-day review period, and to release the Draft 2014-2023 Housing Element for public review. Motion passed by the following vote:

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AYES: Commissioners Del Nero, Molina, Chairperson Smith<sup>2</sup>  
NOES: Commissioner Condit  
ABSENT: Commissioner Kachel

**PUBLIC MEETING(S):**

None

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

None

**MATTERS INITIATED BY PLANNING COMMISSION AND STAFF**

None

**REPORTS:**

Director of Community Development, Tom Westbrook announced:

- Ceres Street Faire last weekend was'a success.
- Chamber of Commerce is having a Whiskey & Cigar event this Saturday. Tickets are available on line.
- Concerts in the Park series will be starting June 2<sup>nd</sup> at 6:30 p.m. in Whitmore Park.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

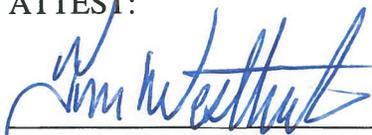
The Commission adjourned at 7:18 p.m. to the next regularly scheduled meeting of Monday, May 18, 2015.

APPROVED:



Laurie Smith, Chairperson

ATTEST:



Tom Westbrook, Secretary