

**CITY OF CERES
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES**

July 18, 2016

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairperson Smith.

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: Commissioners: Condit, Del Nero, Molina (arrived at 6:03pm), Smith, Chairperson Kachel

ABSENT: None

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

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION:

None

CITIZEN COMMUNICATIONS:

- Leonard Shepherd – 2841 Fowler Road, Space 71, Ceres, CA

Mr. Shepherd remarked that he and his wife became citizens of the City of Ceres on June 26, 1993. At the time, they thought what a great little community; it's nice, small, old-fashioned, and people knew other people. A few years later he realized there were people in the City of Ceres, not including him, that envied neighboring cities because they were bigger and they had more. When people were wanting to grow Ceres beyond the capacity of their Police and Fire, in his opinion, at a rapid rate, he spoke at a City Council meeting, and asked for a moratorium on expanding homes in Ceres and to concentrate on expanding business in Ceres. He further noted that Super WalMart is a great idea, but more houses in Ceres are not, because right now we can't handle the population that we have in Ceres, with our Fire and Police, our water and sewer. However, the City is doing a good job trying to provide the things the citizens need. He asked that the Commission think about that nice little town that he came to in 1993.

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CONSENT CALENDAR:

1. Clerk's Report of Posting. The Agenda for the regular meeting of the Planning Commission of July 18, 2016 was posted on July 14, 2016.

ACTION: It was moved by Commissioner Smith; seconded by Commissioner Del Nero to approve Item 1 on Consent Calendar. Motion passed by the following vote:

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

2. Approval of Minutes
 - a. June 6, 2016 (all present)
 - b. June 20, 2016 (Smith absent)

ACTION: It was moved by Commissioner Molina; seconded by Commissioner Condit to approve Item 2.a. on the Consent Calendar. Motion passed by the following vote:

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

ACTION: It was moved by Commissioner Molina; seconded by Commissioner Condit to approve Item 2.b. on the Consent Calendar. Motion passed by the following vote:

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

CONSIDERATION OF ITEMS REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT CALENDAR

None

PUBLIC HEARING:

3. Specific Plan Site Plan (SPSP) 16-09. Proposal to remodel the exterior elevations of an existing Burger King restaurant at 2732 Mitchell Road; Amir Sahebalzamani, applicant.

Associate Planner, James Michaels presented the staff report.

The public hearing was opened at 6:13 P.M.

- Scott Gibson, Architect – 2540 Zanella Way, Chico, CA

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Mr. Gibson stated that he is happy to be before the Commission this evening, noting that this will be a great improvement to the building, and a great brand image enhancement. He added that we expect an increase in sales, as we further our commitment to the community with this project. He is here to answer any questions the Commission may have.

The public hearing was closed at 6:14 P.M.

ACTION: It was moved by Commissioner Condit; seconded by Commissioner Smith to adopt PC Resolution 16-16. Motion passed by the following vote:

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

4. 16-06 GPA/16-07 RZ/16-08 PCDP; Proposal involving the construction of a 20-unit multi-family residential project and an amendment to both the existing General Plan and Zoning designations of three properties located 2800-2808 Blaker Road; Darrell Ledbetter, applicant.

Associate Planner, James Michaels presented the staff report.

Commission Questions:

- Chairperson Kachel asked about the parking requirement; to maintain the parking within the facility.

Mr. Michaels explained that sometimes people use their garages for storage of items other than their vehicles, causing difficulty with parking.

The public hearing was opened at 6:24 P.M.

- Josh Jantz, GDR Engineering 3525 Mitchell Road, Ceres, CA

Mr. Jantz stated he is representing the applicant, Daryl Ledbetter. He thanked City Staff for their assistance with putting this project together that we have before the Commission tonight. Mr. Jantz provided additional information on the actual units, explaining that this project was based on an existing project, Oakwood Villas that Mr. Ledbetter did on Central Avenue. He added that he and Mr. Ledbetter are both here this evening and are available to answer any questions that the Commission may have.

- Leonard Shepherd, 2841 Fowler Road, Space 71, Ceres, CA

Mr. Shepherd inquired where the second emergency vehicle access is located.

Mr. Michaels indicated on the diagram, that it's located on the south end of the property, noting that access is only available to emergency service vehicles, as it's fenced with a gate.

- Andrea, Ceres, CA

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Andrea stated that she has lived in the Oakwood Villas for the past six years and has been a Ceres resident for seven. She has found Oakwood Villas to be a safe environment for her and her three daughters, with the one way in and one way out design. It's a great opportunity for families; the units are comfortable, compared to an apartment. She hopes that the Commission will vote for this.

The public hearing was closed at 6:30 P.M.

Commissioner Molina inquired about the water issue; is there enough to accommodate this new project.

Mr. Westbrook explained that there is water for this project. When you compare a multi-family project of this type to traditional single-family homes, this will use far less water. This was vetted through the Public Works Department and there were no issues raised regarding the water.

ACTION: It was moved by Commissioner Smith; seconded by Commissioner Molina to adopt PC Resolution 16-18. Motion passed by the following vote:

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

ACTION: It was moved by Commissioner Smith; seconded by Commissioner Molina to adopt PC Resolution 16-17. Motion passed by the following vote:

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

ACTION: It was moved by Commissioner Smith; seconded by Commissioner Molina to adopt PC Resolution 16-19. Motion passed by the following vote:

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

ACTION: It was moved by Commissioner Smith; seconded by Commissioner Molina to adopt PC Resolution 16-20. Motion passed by the following vote:

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

NEW BUSINESS:

None

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

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: 6:33 P.M.

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: Board Members Condit, Del Nero, Molina, Smith,
Board Chair Kachel

ABSENT: None

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

CONFLICT OF INTEREST:

None

NEW BUSINESS

5. Ceres Downtown Revitalization Area Board (CDRAB) FY 2015-16 Quarterly Report –
4th Quarter.

Redevelopment and Economic Development Manager Steve Hallam presented the 4th
Quarter Report.

Board Questions and Discussion:

Board Member Condit inquired about the property management of two parcels located at
3004 and 3012 5th Street; what are their current uses.

Mr. Hallam explained that the property located at 3004 5th Street is currently vacant; it's
leased to a private individual. The lot immediately south, located at 3012 5th Street has
a single family residence on it, and it's also leased to a private individual who subleases
that residence to a tenant. Both of those properties, while they're currently vacant and
have a residential use, they are zoned for commercial uses in the Downtown Specific
Plan. We are marketing those together, acknowledging that the zoning allows
commercial uses there.

Board Member Condit asked about the Downtown Façade Improvement Program; if he
had any suggestions why businesses haven't really shown any interest.

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Mr. Hallam explained he's not sure he can accurately assess why there's been so little response. One of the challenges, anytime we use public government funds, on a private construction project, that construction project is required to be bid out to a contractor that pays prevailing wage rates to its laborers. That has a chilling effect, particular to a lot of property owners that may be looking at small projects, because it may cost 30-75% more than it might otherwise cost if they were to use a non-union or non-prevailing wage laborers. There is nothing we can do about that; that is a state law that we are bound on.

Mr. Hallam reported that we've gotten very good support from the Ceres Courier at getting the word out. We've done two different mailings to property and business owners, and he thinks that it is not the right time, quite yet. He's hoping that things turn around this year. If we have one or two persons or buildings do that, take advantage of the grant assistance, he thinks it's going to grow.

Board Member Condit asked about Item #4, Capital Improvements; the Design Concept Plans were prepared and sent out to Downtown Business and Property Owners. He asked if that was all the contact that was made and were there any responses.

Mr. Hallam reported that no formal written responses have been received. He fielded some phone inquiries and visited three downtown businesses personally; the larger ones, more significant players, who are the major payers of our assessment. He did this to follow-up with them one afternoon, asking them if they received the mailer and did they have any questions.

Board Member Condit asked if the responses were positive or negative.

Mr. Hallam replied that the responses he has been hearing have been positive. People are always a little apprehensive about another public project. Remember it's been just about 20 years ago that we undertook one phase of some improvements downtown. Now we're looking at the next phase, but these are really implementing that longer term vision that was spelled out in the 2011 Specific Plan for Downtown.

Board Chair Kachel opened the meeting for public questions or comments.

- Shane Parson, Downtown business owner

Mr. Parson inquired on the design, if it is a matching fund or a grant.

Mr. Hallam explained that the Phase 1, Design Assistance Matching Grant of \$1,500 requires an equal match of \$1,500 by the property owner. We already have three architectural firms on board committed to prepare the renderings on the first level design concept plans for that \$3,000 fee. Then the ultimate, Phase 2, the actual physical improvements; the \$10,000 match from the City is also up to a \$10,000 match by a private property owner.

Board Member Condit also inquired, if a business owner just wants to do Part 1, they can just do Part 1 and then do Part 2 by themselves.

Mr. Hallam responded that is correct. He further explained, it's interesting because with

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Phase 1 design assistance's professional services, we aren't obligated by the prevailing wage concept. But, we thought we'd streamline the process and get the preview set by retaining qualifications from eligible firms, selecting firms and then establishing a list, so we have the architectural firms on board, ready to go, as soon as somebody applied for design assistance.

- William Bilson, property owner at 2908 and 2904 4th Street, Ceres, CA

Mr. Bilson expressed his concern with the amount of space that has been taken up with parking with this concept. The last time we had a roundabout made on that corner, it took out two of the parking spaces in front of his building. The roundabout was built so large that a truck is unable to go around the roundabout. And twice his building has been damaged by trucks running into it. He contacted the City Engineers the first time, about three years ago, and was told that something would be done; that it was definitely too large. This last Christmas the whole side of the overhang was taken out to the tune of \$1,700. Still nothing has been done about this roundabout. His concern, although he is much in favor of the downtown redevelopment, he would like to be assured that he's not going to lose any more parking, and that the project will be done in such a manner that we don't have this problem with trucks running into our businesses.

Board Member Condit asked Mr. Bilson if he was ever asked about the concept plan for the Downtown Revitalization Capital Improvement Plan we're going to be voting on.

Mr. Bilson replied that he did receive a brochure. It looks very nice; it's kind of "grandioso." He's concerned about the amount of trees that are being put in, pointing out the four palm trees on each side of his building that are shown in the plan. He feels that should be studied a bit more and suggested a smaller tree be put in or brush or shrub that isn't as obtrusive.

Board Member Condit clarified with Mr. Bilson that he was not involved in the process of drafting those plans. Your input was not heard before the plans were presented.

Mr. Bilson confirmed that he has never been contacted by anyone, other than having the brochure arrive; but he is in favor of the downtown improvements. And the parking lot that you gentlemen talked about is not 2904 4th street; the vacant lot is next door to his property, which is 2904 and 2908. They will need to fix that address.

- Mrs. England, Business owner at 2546 4th Street, Ceres, CA

Mrs. England stated that she has been a business owner at that location since 2003. She asked where the business owners on that portion of 4th Street fall into the Downtown Improvement; wondering if they are going to be included in that.

Board Member Smith remarked that we will be getting to that, and suggested to the Board Chair that we return to the order of the agenda, finish the administrative items and then get to the presentation on the 4th Street Streetscape Improvement Design Concept Plan, that everyone is interested in.

- Betty Bilson, property owner at 2908 and 2904 4th Street, Ceres, CA

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Mrs. Bilson remarked that her husband was told at one point, the ADA requirement parking would not be required for the Downtown Ceres on 4th Street; inquired if this is true.

Board Chair Kachel responded that we will get an answer for them.

ACTION: It was moved by Commissioner Smith; seconded by Commissioner Del Nero to accept the Ceres Downtown Revitalization Area Board (CDRAB) FY 2015-16 Quarterly Report – 4th Quarter. Motion passed by the following vote:

AYES: Board Members Condit, Del Nero, Molina, Smith, Board Chair Kachel
NOES: None
ABSENT: None

6. Background and Status of Levy Assessed to Applicable Businesses in the Ceres Downtown Revitalization Area.

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

7. Boundary and Assessment Status Applicable to Businesses in the Ceres Downtown Revitalization Area.

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

Board Questions and Discussion:

Board Member Condit asked if the boundaries of the area can be increased, noting that Mr. Hallam had said, with a clear benefit, they can. He stated that he thinks they've given a clear benefit to any business in the downtown area that's not in the district to join, with the Façade Improvement Program. That's a clear benefit to any business in the downtown area.

Board Member Smith suggested that we bring this back for discussion at a time when we don't have so many items on the agenda. She also thanked Mr. Hallam for reminding us what City Attorney Lyons told us several years ago. She pointed out that one of the things that's important about this benefit district is the age under which it was created. The State law that allowed its creation is quite old and doesn't necessarily provide the benefits that some of the newer benefit districts, like the Community Benefit District, and she thinks there are several others that aren't limited by type of business within the boundaries, don't exclude non-profits, don't exclude banks, don't exclude insurance companies, and have the same requirement with regard to the manner in which the funds can be spent, but are broader in their allowing for the assessment of payment. She thinks that we should explore that and that would give us an opportunity then to talk about exploring the boundaries, to include businesses that can certainly benefit both from the district and benefit the district itself. She believes it requires additional discussion, and she doesn't think we're ready to do that. She would also like

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to ask the City Attorney to tell us what other types of districts there are. She knows that one district doesn't preclude another district from existing. You see how many areas of discussion can take place. She thinks it's a bigger discussion than what we're prepared for. She appreciates Mr. Hallam bringing back the report; it gives the Board time to study it, and maybe have a little bit of research done, and bring it back when we don't have such a comprehensive discussion on the Downtown Master Plan.

Mr. Hallam reported that we modified our CDRA budget to be our "bare bones" budget, to match what we thought would be revenue. We used to budget \$1,000 for some general consultant support. That isn't in the budget this year. It's good for the Board to review this report and wrestle over concepts and different options. He thinks getting back an infrastructure improvement district or something like that is probably not a big task. Any commitment of staff time or attorney legal time to look at something, he'd probably suggest the mechanics may be to have, if the Board wishes to head down this road, would be a recommendation to Council, to allocate some funding to study that for us. And that would give the Council an opportunity early on to bless or weigh in on, if they want to go down this road.

Board Member Smith commented that she appreciates that; but before we go to Council, she would prefer to have some background information so we can make some suggestions and at least provide information, that there's something to consider. In addition to that, there's a healthy reserve that can be used for any consulting services that may be required to explore the mechanics of any future benefit district.

- Mrs. Bilson

Mrs. Bilson inquired about the picture showing a bike lane, wondering if that is an area that would be designated just for bicyclists, because the street has parking on both sides of the street and two-way traffic, does not have room for just a bicycle lane.

Board Member Smith explained that we just finished with Agenda Item 7 and Mr. Jordan will be giving his presentation shortly, where this will be addressed.

Board Member Smith would like to take some action to accept the report and recommend that it come back to the Board at a future date to discuss options and ask the City Attorney to explore other benefit districts that may be applicable to the downtown.

Board Member Condit asked if we might get a time limit on that.

Board Member Smith suggested 90 days. She doesn't see this as something happening within the next year. She sees it as something we discuss over the next year, and probably be prepared to do at the beginning of the following year, in preparation for FY 17/18 budget.

City Attorney, Nubia Goldstein recommended that any study or additional research that's presented to the Board at a later date is coordinated with the City Manager and City Staff first, but we can discuss bringing that on at a later date, not to exceed 4 to 5 months.

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Board Member Smith stated that's acceptable.

ACTION: It was moved by Board Member Smith; seconded by Board Member Condit to recommend that any study or additional research that's presented to the Board at a later date is coordinated with the City Manager and City Staff first, with the ability to discuss bringing that on at a later date, not to exceed 4 to 5 months. Motion passed by the following vote:

AYES: Board Members Condit, Del Nero, Molina, Smith, Board Chair Kachel

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

8. 4th Street Streetscape Improvement Design Concept Plan Presentation.

Director of Engineering Services/City Engineer Daryl Jordan presented the 4th Street Streetscape Design Concept Plan.

Board Questions and Discussion:

Board Member Condit asked Mr. Jordan how much we paid O'Dell Engineering for this plan.

Mr. Jordan responded that this plan is in process; this is not the final plan. He believes the contract is approximately \$40,000 for their services.

City Manager, Toby Wells thanked the Board for hearing this item and appreciates the audience in attendance this evening. For him, downtowns are something that are very special; something he's focused a lot of his career on. He has done two downtowns so far. The City of Turlock was his first infrastructure project back in 1998. He's very proud of how that project has turned out. He was also the Project Manager for the City of Livermore's downtown. And now Ceres; this is one where he has the same level of enthusiasm about. It's something that's very exciting with the opportunity we have here. He wanted to stress a few things. One, this is a concept. This is the first initial concept; this isn't a final design. This is the putting something on paper to get input. Mr. Bilson indicated some challenges around his corner. Staff is very well aware of those. We need the survey; we need the data, to be able to see exactly where those parking spots will fit or won't fit, so we can make those detailed changes. The other piece that's really critical, with the two experiences that he's had with downtowns; it's absolutely critical to make sure that we have input and buy-in all the way through the process. But, you have to have something first; and really this is that first step. Our plan would be, once we have this, is get feedback, we get more information on our design with the survey and real hard information. Then we would sit down with the businesses, which will help us make some critical decisions. One of those is how you build it. There are a couple of different options:

- 1) One, he'll call the nuclear option; which is you shut the street down on both ends, "Blow and Go;" tear up the street as fast as you can and rebuild as fast as you can. That has the maximum impact on the businesses.

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- 2) Then there's the middle option; where you kind of minimize what's closed at one time and what's being under construction. You try to balance that.
- 3) The longer option; where you're really minimizing the areas that are impacted, and you're stretching out the construction time-frame.

Those are the decisions that we want the businesses to help us make because they're the ones impacted. From his experiences, it all depends on the types of business, the time of year; all those things come into play. It's absolutely critical that we have that input from those businesses. This is the first step, and there'll be plenty of outreach to the businesses, to make sure we do that.

Again, the concept here is creating a very unique and special environment that's different. He's done this in other places, but something that's Ceres unique; that's what we're trying to do here. The palm trees are kind of a unique feature and you're trying to give it an aesthetic that's different than any other downtown in this area, so it's got something of an appeal. Plus, with our freeway visibility, you're able to see those palm trees from a long ways away; giving us that something that's visible coming either direction from highway 99, to be able to say, there's something different here, along this stretch. And, as Mr. Jordan mentioned, one of the key features, is the sidewalks being clear of trees, so it's got the full ten foot of pedestrian walkway. The other aspect is moving those trees in the parking area, creates what we used in Livermore, as "flexible space." So, that if a restaurant came in for example, it would have the ability to utilize that space, give up a couple parking spots, and be able to put seating in that space. It's something that really adds a tremendous flexibility to your downtown, to be able to allow a business to expand into a space that's public right-of-way, that's able to expand their business and create that outdoor dining that they probably wouldn't otherwise be able to do. Those types of features are something we're very excited about and looking forward to any input the Commission as well as the residents and business owners have for us.

Board Chair Kachel asked for the benefit of the audience, if either Mr. Wells or Mr. Jordan would give an overview of the process; the time, the steps, so everyone knows what they could expect. There are specific questions and we're not quite at that point.

Mr. Wells explained that the idea is that we are hoping to finish the design in this calendar year. So around January, be done with the design process; have the project out to bid, and the goal would be to have construction start the day after the Street Faire. So, we would have construction starting in summer; May 8th, go through summer, depending on the length of construction with what construction method is chosen; hope to have the project wrapped up by end of calendar year 2017. With the maintenance period in there, it would be fully the City for maintenance or CDRAB for that matter, by the fiscal year 18/19, so July of 2018.

Board Chair Kachel asked what is the next thing a business or property owner might expect to hear from the City and when.

Mr. Wells responded, tentatively it will be in September; we expect to have about a 50% design from O'Dell Engineering. We would be able to have some information and real details to be able to sit down with a specific business like Mr. Bilson's, for example, and say this is what it would like in front of your business and have some good information to

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be able to show them, i.e. here's where the parking spaces would be, here's where your façade would be; here's how it would work. So we'd be able to get to that level of detail with each property owner and then collectively have those businesses weigh in. This makes sense for how you might build this thing. We get that input around September and then we'd be able to move to that next phase of the design.

Mr. Wells continued with, the one other question on the bike path, it's shown on the picture, as bike path, really bike friendly, and that symbol is basically showing that the bikes are actually sharing the road with the cars. The idea is trying to make it more bicycle and pedestrian friendly. There would not be a separate bike lane; it is just sharing the roadway with the bicycles. You'll see a very similar symbol and you'll see that a lot, especially in the beach communities where they've really made a focus on bicycles; narrower lanes, and that's really what this effort does too; narrower lanes and you're slowing the traffic down so that bikes and cars get along a little easier because you have a much slower traffic speed.

Board Chair Kachel remarked that he's excited and was not aware of Mr. Wells' background in either of those towns. Having been to both of them; he went to Livermore last December and was amazed how active the downtown was on a Friday night. Things were lit up and there were people on the sidewalks. It was wonderfully exciting down there. He was really almost shocked with how nice it was. Congratulations to them and to Mr. Wells for his part in that. We all know how Turlock's is like, and it's exciting to think we could have something like that. Mr. Wells should be proud.

Mr. Wells stated the key here; this is the public's investment in the infrastructure. For it to be successful, what Turlock has seen; is that it's taken nearly 20 years, is it's been the private investment. This really is setting the stage, for the private investment because we are limited, as you heard Mr. Hallam say, about our participating on private property. This is where we're setting the stage, so that the private business owners can invest in their property. And when that happens, that's when you really see the "win-win."

Board Member Smith commented that Mrs. England had a question that perhaps Mr. Wells may be able to respond to. Her question was; this project is from North to El Camino; are there plans for 4th Street from North to Whitmore.

Mr. Wells responded, not at this time.

Board Member Smith remarked, it would seem a natural extension.

Mr. Wells responded that it is a natural extension that requires funding that we don't have currently. He further explained that the Downtown Specific Plan identified about \$20 million in infrastructure costs at full build out. This project is estimated somewhere in the \$2-2.5 million range. And the Bond Proceeds that we have from the Redevelopment Agency is in that neighborhood. We have \$1.5 million that's dedicated to this project, plus we have a little bit of funds that are dedicated to another project that we should be able to move over depending on where our final numbers come in. To extend any further than that, we don't have the funding at the current time. It is part of the Downtown Specific Plan to extend those improvements all the way to Whitmore.

Board Chair Kachel opened the meeting for public questions or comments.

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- Leonard Shepherd – 2841 Fowler Road, Space 71

Mr. Shepherd informed City Manager Wells and Board Chair Kachel that he doesn't like Livermore. He has tried to drive down through First Street and stated that it's a "Boondoggle." Everything has a little boutique here and a little boutique there and a little latte sipping place there. That's not Ceres. Please don't try to make it that way in Ceres. He reminded the Board that this is an agricultural town. This is a town where working people don't go sit around at night sipping lattes. They go home, they go to bed because they're tired, because they're workers. He remarked that if this happens, he'll have to find a place that's simple, that's small and isn't trying to be envious of their big neighbors. He just doesn't understand the businesses in downtown Ceres right now don't have enough parking, and then you want to take some of it away by putting in palm trees. He asked if anyone has thought if the citizens of Ceres might not want a street downtown lined with palm trees. He remarked he knows Toby is a good guy and he likes him, but suggested that we think about the citizens that live here now. The downtown can use a whole lot of dressing up; he doesn't disagree. He asked if anyone has ever driven down highway 99, north or south. He doesn't care where you go past Ceres, you don't see anything. A palm tree isn't going to get his attention. We need Ceres downtown history. He asked what's going to happen to the Police Station; the one right across the street; Sole Savers. What's going to happen to it? We're going to tear it down. We're going to tear down the building where the TV shop is, the one that's got the beautiful mural on the side of it. Now, we're going to put in a little brick faced boutique. He stated that he's sorry, but he guesses he'll have to look for a town that believes in their history, a town that believes in the area they serve, because you aren't going to get that many almond farmers to come to downtown Ceres in the evening to sit; they're going to be at a restaurant where they can chat with their friends or they may be at a Lions Club or a Rotary Club. The people in the Bay area like that stuff. The folks he talks to around here are simple folks. They've got theaters to go to, but they don't. It's the city folks that live in the city. But we're supposed to be taking care of those people in our influence. There are a whole lot of almond farmers that don't care about latte, they don't care about a boutique, they don't care about whether you gussy up the downtown or not. And, what's going to happen to businesses like Ceres Drugs, Sole Savers? He used to use Suzanne's Ceramics as a business, but they're leaving downtown Ceres in December because the building that they're in; they can't get the owner to bring it up to code, electrically and so forth.

Board Chair Kachel asked if we could focus more on the plan.

Mr. Shepherd stated he is focusing on the plan; the plan is to ruin downtown Ceres, as far as he's concerned! He doesn't think that a little archway and all that stuff is going to bring anything to Ceres downtown at all.

- Lisa Mantarro-Moore – 3929 Helen Perry, Ceres, CA

Mrs. Mantarro-Moore stated that she is speaking this evening on behalf of the Ceres Street Faire, the Whitmore Mansion Foundation, and the simple folks that Mr. Shepherd referred to this evening. She remarked that she rarely takes an opportunity to get up on the microphone in this capacity, but she couldn't do anymore. She has the deepest respect for Mr. Shepherd, and his commitment to this town, but strongly disagrees with his concerns about the latte sippers and city folk. She doesn't have hay seed in her

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teeth, because she doesn't have cows at her house, so she doesn't think she needs to avoid her downtown because she's too tired to come out at night. She's at the Whitmore Mansion at a regular time in the evening with the rest of the committee and she would love more opportunities in her downtown to spend more time and money here and not have to go Mitchell Road or Hatch Road for latte. With all due respect, the opportunity to upgrade our downtown is what our community needs for many different reasons. It's also for pride of ownership and it's also honoring our history. Because if we honor our history, by not taking care of it, then we're really not honoring it. We really need to take our history one step forward, recognize this incredible town that we've all dedicated a good part of our life to. She appreciates the staff's time on this and is looking forward to the outcome of this, and the discussion on how we can have a viable downtown, whether there are palm trees involved or not, she's not particularly concerned about that. She just wants to be able to see people downtown and want to be here in Ceres, and this would be a reason do so. Thank you.

Board Member Condit asked Mrs. Mantarro-Moore if she was consulted on this, being the head of the Street Faire, head of the Whitmore Mansion Foundation; if she were sought out, asked for advice on this plan.

Mrs. Mantarro-Moore responded with respect to the Street Faire, she would say that's a compilation of several projects. She doesn't think that falls into those guidelines.

Board Member Condit clarified, with her history of downtown service, she has not been sought out for any input.

Mrs. Mantarro-Moore remarked she has not; not from City Staff.

- Shane Parson - Downtown Business Owner

Mr. Parson commended everyone and remarked that after consideration he'd like to put up his \$1,500 to match those funds because if you are going to put up money, than so is he. He might not use the services to reuse stuff, but he will put up his money up for that; at least give it a shot. As far as consulting, there was nothing to consult on until we have this presentation. So, we have this now, now we can talk about it. He thinks it's a wonderful thing. If he wants to have a steak, he has to go to Turlock or Modesto. He has an open building; he's actively looking for a steak house to come here. He'll give consideration for rent; he'll do whatever he can do to make this happen. He's working with an antique store to try to move them into another building he has. As far as the TV store, he has a standing offer for a cash purchase from him (Shane) to keep that building just the way it is. Across the street, another cash offer to buy that building because of the way it is. So, if you're asking about what's happening and you're asking about the Sole Savers, you better talk to Mr. DelHart, because you won't have to knock it down pretty soon, because of the building next door; it may fall down if they don't do something. He thinks this plan is a great thing. Maybe he doesn't want to sip lattes, but he can buy breakfast for what a latte costs. He still wouldn't mind going downtown and having a nice meal. He wants to commend everyone that's been involved with this.

- Sheila Brandt – Ceres Citizen

Mrs. Brandt remarked that she loves the idea. She doesn't see why we cannot

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incorporate history, as well as moving forward into the future. She doesn't think we're going to go in and just wipe out the whole downtown area and start anew. She's sure we're going to look at the history; there are certain buildings that we'll keep. She does a lot of shopping downtown. She tries to do a lot of shopping in Ceres, but we're kind of limited. So, unless we start doing something downtown to bring businesses in and to bring people in the surrounding areas in, there's no way we're going to build any kind of base for our City. She loves this plan; it looks great! She loves the fact of being able to go down 99 and people seeing and saying, "What's going on down there?" It looks like something is happening in Ceres. I need to pull off and go in that area and see what's going on. She thinks it's a great idea!

- Shane Parson – Downtown Business Owner

Mr. Parson added that it sure would be nice if it said "Main Street" instead of "Fourth Street" when coming off highway 99.

- Renee Ledbetter – Ceres Chamber of Commerce Board President

Mrs. Ledbetter thanked staff for all the work they've done. She wanted to back-step to the last item, since the Board approved the last motion, but it wasn't opened up for comments. She wanted to stress the importance of the Downtown Improvement District and how important those funds are, and how for many years, businesses have paid into it. Now is the time, she thinks we have the right players in place, it's taken a long time for us to get here. We have a great City Manager who has wonderful vision, who has proven himself in the past through other communities, to move us forward. We want to move forward. She knows that there are some individuals who don't want to move forward, and that's okay. People have their opinions and they're entitled to them. But we all have to live together, and we all have to work together. She thinks it's important that we stay open minded about this. She too, loves her latte. She would love to be able to sit outside and eat at a bistro or eat a downtown restaurant. When we talk about how we're going to fund Police and Fire, a lot of that can be funded through sales tax. What generates sales tax; people spending money; people spending money in our community. If people don't start getting that, we're going to continually have a budget that runs in a deficit, because people don't understand and they don't want to act on it. She gets furious when she hears City employees complain, "we want our raises," but the funds aren't there. She gets tired of hearing people complain, we have to go outside of Ceres to shop, and then when we try to bring a solution, people get upset because we're growing. Well, you've got to pick and choose; you've got to draw a line and say, here's what I believe in, but you know what, we can do it in a slow fashion; we've done it in a slow fashion. She has lived here almost thirty years and downtown hasn't changed in thirty years. But now it's time; it's our time; it's our time to grow as a community in a smart fashion. She thinks we have a smart City Manager, we have smart City Staff, we have a Council that wants to move forward, and she thinks all the players are here. This is the time. When you want to talk about the things that are going to generate more revenue, you need to think outside the box. When we're talking about generating construction plans for hotels, is that going to bring people here; yes. They're going to spend their money here. They're going to eat here. They're going to stay and pay a hotel tax, that's going to go back into the City to fund your Police and Fire. People need to start connecting the dots. We just have to continuously educate the citizens of our community, so that they understand. You can't have one without the other. You can't

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grow the community and have good Fire and Police protection without having the money to back it up. If people don't start understanding that, we're going to stand still for another 20 or 30 years. It frustrates her when she hears people complain one way or the other; they want it their way, but they want to see growth, and they need to really understand. She hopes she has made her point. She really wants to commend everyone for this. As far as using a consultant to get these renderings done, we needed a starting point. Most people are visual, and we can talk and talk and talk about building a downtown, but unless people see a starting point, a visualization; they're not going to get it. If City staff can't provide it, then it's okay that we used a consultant to do that. We need to just look at this and say, what can we become. If we want to move forward, if we want to pay for our services, we need to start thinking outside the box, and we need to start thinking as our community and spend our money here first. Shop Ceres first!

Board Member Condit asked Mrs. Ledbetter if she had been contacted by City Staff or O'Dell Engineering about this.

Mrs. Ledbetter responded that she was contacted by City Staff. The drawings were shared with her at the very beginning of the concept.

Board Member Smith asked City Manager Wells, clarifying that he had said earlier that O'Dell Engineering was working on the preliminary design plans, and would have those mid-way complete in September, and that City Staff would be bringing that back for a public meeting and there'll be input.

Mr. Wells replied that is correct.

Ms. Smith stated, they'll be looking at the design with some variables; this is what we have, we could have this, this or that. She inquired if there will be costs associated with those options.

Mr. Wells explained when we have 50% design, we'll be meeting with businesses that are most impacted; Mr. Bilson's store, for example. His corner, we'll want to make sure we get that right. The second piece, we're really looking for the input on the construction impact. The range of impact; that's really where that public meeting is; here's the options, here are the costs associated with it. You get some "buy-in" and that's what we found to be most successful, when those businesses buy into any of those options. This is what works best for us. Sometimes there's a little give and take there, but that's really where the key is, is looking for that. The plan is to do both; one-on-one with the businesses that will be most impacted, and then more of a collective meeting for all those folks along that stretch, so that they can get that "buy-in."

Ms. Smith asked if it will be limited to the businesses.

Mr. Wells responded no, it will be a public meeting.

Ms. Smith commented that even though Mrs. England's business is not in an area that's planned for this new design, she'll definitely be impacted. Because if we have more traffic at that end, there's the possibility that there'll be some traveling down to the other end. She'll also have an opportunity.

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Board Member Condit asked if this will be at the September meeting or will there be meetings leading up to that.

Mr. Wells replied at this point he doesn't know. We're still working on that schedule. Part of that depends on how far along in the process O'Dell gets; what kind of input we get this evening and afterwards. In the next week or two, that will drive that process of how quickly we can get that back in front of us.

Board Member Molina wanted to echo on the sentiment of what we're looking at. He congratulated Mr. Wells and the rest of staff who spent their time diligently and going back and forth, he assumes with the consultants, in putting this together. Someone said people are visual and need something to look at. He remembered a few years ago where we had a meeting something like this, where they gave us an idea of what it may look like. His question is, since we're consulting professionals with this specific issue, is there a cost or something where we have to consult every person who comes to the podium, and ask them for their input. He assumes there will be a public hearing where everyone will have a chance to give their thoughts.

City Manager Wells remarked that there is no requirement for a public hearing on any of this. A public hearing is not required for building a public project. Obviously, it's crazy to try to do a project of this nature without getting as much public input as you possibly can. This is a transparent process. This is us throwing this out there; it's open and he's sure that Mr. Benziger will do a very nice article about this coming up. The changes; again, we're not at a point right now where any changes would make any difference to the design. They're just doing the preliminary stuff; all the base work, all the surveying, that's what's being done right now. They're getting that stuff laid out. That is why we're at this point; we're looking for that public input. Then we'll start to formulate the true design. Again, this is concept. Where the trees are, the types of trees, all those things; that is still completely flexible. All those things aren't set in stone at this point. We're still 6-9 months away from having something really pretty well fixed we're we'll be ready for a contractor to actually bid on that project. We're not there yet.

Board Member Condit suggested to City Manager Wells that we all read Mr. Benziger's book, "Ceres," and look at what Ceres downtown used to be in the 1960's and 1950's, and maybe we bring a little bit of that back. We don't have to have high tech street lights; we like the old street lights maybe. Maybe we want to be a little vintage Ceres town. Mr. Shepherd talks about remembering our history; we should remember our history. We were the peach capital of the world at one time. We need to remember that. We need to remember who we are. We can't forget that. Let's show that off in our downtown somehow.

Board Member Smith remarked peaches and latte; they go together.

Board Member Molina stated that it sounds like we want some almond trees rather than palm trees.

Board Member Condit suggested we have a more agricultural friendly tree; something that shows off our history. Maybe trees similar to those that are in Whitmore Park; something along that nature. We need to show off our history. Our downtown is a staple of our community; it's the heart of our City. We need it to highlight our history. He

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will echo that we should have a meeting with O'Dell Engineering before September. We should invite Madam President Renee, Former Council Member Lisa Mantarro-Moore, all 44 of the Downtown Businesses and if you want to have a few of us CDRA Board Members there and a few Council Members.

City Manager Wells stated they're all invited. Every single one of them have been invited, and this is who showed up.

Board Member Condit suggested that we should have another meeting before the 50% is completed, to try to get some more ideas out there, instead of O'Dell doing it on their own.

City Manager Wells remarked that's what we're asking for; give us your ideas now.

Board Member Condit stated that he gave his ideas and he hopes they go through. Some cypress trees, some redwoods, maybe instead of palm trees.

City Manager Wells explained that these trees are being placed in a City street. So, putting a redwood in a City street isn't going to work. It's not an option.

Board Member Condit stated that he would like something a little more agricultural friendly, if we could do that.

City Manager Wells remarked that the tree selection in the parking areas has not been decided yet; there are some options there. There are a number of trees that would work in a street. And again, one of the unique features that we're proposing to include there, as Mr. Jordan indicated, is permeable pavement. That parking lot area would actually have the ability for water to percolate through the roadway rather than on top of the roadway into what's called a "silvacell", and that "silvacell" is what provides the water for that tree, in addition to irrigation. The trees that will thrive in that are rather limited. The idea of putting an almond tree there; that's not going to work. It does narrow that scope of what trees will work, based on the unique environment they're going to live in, as well as the constraints that we're in. There are several constraints there that limit your palate that you're choosing from.

Board Member Condit asked if we will have a couple of options provided to choose from.

City Manager Wells replied if that's what you'd like; we're looking for direction.

Board Chair Kachel noted that the Board's action tonight is to provide comments and direction prior to City Council review. We've certainly provided comments. He added that he's certainly not as eloquent as Mrs. Ledbetter, but she did a terrific job of summing up what we're going through right now. We have 15 people in the audience tonight, which maybe doesn't sound like a lot, but for those of us who are here all the time, that's a lot of people. He appreciates every one of them being here tonight and being concerned about this. Fifteen people here tonight for a two-hour Planning Commission meeting, who sat through a lot of dry stuff to get to this tonight, is a great sign. We have differences of opinion, but that's great too, because that generates interest. The Press is still here listening to us, and that's great too! Board Chair Kachel continued that he was never a big fan, but to quote Bob Dylan, "This is positively 4th

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Street,” that we’re talking about here. He thinks that’s a great thing for the City. We’re in the process of updating our General Plan, but this we’ve got before us right now. As Mrs. Ledbetter said, there’s a lot of good things coming together at the same time, kind of “a perfect storm.” Everything happening; we’ve got the people interested, we’ve got a plan coming together, we’ve got differences of opinion and he looks forward to the next couple, three months until we hear the next step in the process. Those of you that had interest expressed, you’ll be hearing more from us, and having your question(s) answered. We can move together and maybe by this time next year, we can be close to celebrating the completion of this vision that we’re all in a position to provide input. Don’t be afraid to contact the City. The City Planning Department is there to be talked to. That’s what Planners love, is for someone to come in and talk about plans. The Commission doesn’t get to do that very often and I know they like to hear from you.

Board Member Molina asked if this is the right time to echo Mr. Parson’s suggestion that we rename 4th Street to Main Street. He thinks it’s a good idea, since we’re giving it a whole new facelift and whatnot.

City Manager Wells explained that to change a street name, there is a process we have to go through. The idea actually came up at a General Plan Workshop for the first time. It’s resonating with several members of the community. The expectation would be at the end of the process would be an appropriate time. One, we have the audience with the businesses, because they’re the most impacted by that change. So we need to have that outreach as well, with asking them, whether they buy into that. The other little challenge is that 4th Street goes past Whitmore. There is a 4th Street that is north of Whitmore that has houses on it, so we have to address that little issue that changes 4th Street, north of Whitmore and its Main Street south of Whitmore. A couple little logistics to work out, but the expectation is that we would move that as a concept, through this plan development, and make those changes probably at the time we start construction, or soon thereafter.

Board Member Molina explained why he brings that up, is because when you go to Turlock, there’s University Way that goes all the way to the University, then it keeps going as Monte Vista on both ends, so he figured maybe there’s something we could do for this block.

City Manager Wells noted that what Turlock did there was they didn’t change the official name, but have a secondary name. Monte Vista is still Monte Vista, so it didn’t require any businesses or any property owners along Monte Vista Avenue to change their name. But, they added “University” as a marker because the University fronts on that street. They didn’t go through the channels to change the street; they did the simpler version that didn’t impact the residences and the businesses. We can go that process, but he thinks for “Main Street” you’ll want people to associate they’re on “Main Street.” If they want that association, then changing their stationery is a pretty minor thing. Again, outreach and talking to the businesses is critical.

Board Member Smith asked if there’s any action that needs to be taken on this item.

City Attorney Nubia Goldstein clarified, based on the City Manager’s representation, this is recommendations to the Council; no formal action is required.

RECONVENED AS THE PLANNING COMMISSION at 7:56 P.M.

PUBLIC MEETING(S):

None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None

MATTERS INITIATED BY PLANNING COMMISSION AND STAFF

None

REPORTS:

Director of Community Development, Tom Westbrook reported:

- Ross Dress For Less had their Ribbon Cutting ceremony on Saturday. As soon as they cut the ribbon, they invited everyone in to shop.
- Golden Valley Health Center is going to have their Ribbon Cutting ceremony on July 27th at 4:00 p.m. He will send the Planning Commission the invitation.

ADJOURNMENT:

The Commission adjourned at 7:57 p.m. to the next regularly scheduled meeting of Monday, August 15, 2016.

APPROVED:



Robert Kachel, Chairperson

ATTEST:



Tom Westbrook, Secretary