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PLANNING  **COMMISSION**

MEETING MINUTES

DATE: March 15, 2011 **CALLED TO ORDER:** 6:00 P.M.

MEETING LOCATION: City Council Chambers
450 East Latham Avenue
Hemet, CA 92543

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Roll Call: Chairman John Gifford, Vice Chair Sharon Deuber, and Commissioners David Rogers and Chauncey Thompson.

Invocation and Flag Salute: Commissioner John Gifford

2. INTRODUCTION OF NEW COMMISSIONER VINCE OVERMYER – *Community Development Director Elliano*

CDD Elliano introduced former Planning Commission Chairman Larry Smith, who introduced Vince Overmyer, thanking him for his willingness to serve and noting that Mr. Overmyer would be a proper fit for the continuing work of the Commission.

3. OATH OF OFFICE FOR COMMISSIONER VINCE OVERMYER

The oath of office was administered by Erin Murray, Minutes Secretary.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A. Minutes of the Planning Commission Meeting of February 1, 2011

It was **MOVED** by Commissioner Rogers and **SECONDED** by Vice Chair Deuber to **APPROVE** the minutes as presented.

1 The **MOTION** was carried by the following vote:

2
3 **AYES:** Chairman Gifford, Vice Chair Deuber, and Commissioner Rogers and
4 Thompson
5 **NOES:** None
6 **ABSTAIN:** Commissioner Overmyer
7 **ABSENT:** None
8
9

10 **5. PUBLIC COMMENTS:** (None)
11
12

13 **WORK STUDY ITEMS**

14
15
16 **6. PRESENTATION OF PUBLIC ART AT FLORIDA PROMENADE CENTER -**
17 *Power Point presentation by City Planner Ron Running*
18

19 Planner Running gave a brief history of the plan for public art to improve the aesthetics
20 of the downtown scenic highway setback that extends along Sanderson, Florida and
21 Warren Avenues within the city. The subject artwork is located at the Florida
22 Promenade Center in front of the Winco building.
23

24 The artwork is a bronze, life-sized installation portraying a multigenerational theme
25 with a grandfather figure with a granddaughter on his shoulder, pointing at the first star
26 of the evening.
27

28 Planner Running is recommending a plaque to be developed that explains the process,
29 how the statue got named and who was responsible for installing the \$35,000 artwork.
30

31 Chairman Gifford applauded the efforts of the Planning Commission, staff, the arts
32 community and the developer for enthusiastically embracing the concept.
33
34

35 **7. STATUS REPORT REGARDING PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE ZONING**
36 **REGULATIONS AND DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR DOWNTOWN** - *Power Point*
37 *presentation by City Planner Ron Running*
38
39

40 Planner Running presented a Power Point overview of the history of the downtown
41 zoning and overlay ordinance, and the proposed amendments, including: the change
42 of HUB of the Valley designation to Downtown Overlay Zone; elimination of the
43 downtown collaborative provision; revision of the coverage standards for the D1 zone;
44 elimination of Area 2; and, modification of the northern boundary of the downtown area
45 to be coterminus with Devonshire Avenue.
46

47 Also, the sign code for the downtown area is proposed for amendment; and all new
48 buildings in the downtown area will be reviewed by the Planning Commission and City
49 Council. New major facade improvements will be reviewed by the Planning
50 Commission only, while new minor facade improvements (25 percent of building) will
be reviewed at the staff level.

1 Area 1 will be truncated, while Area 2 will be eliminated, and a new article has been
2 added concerning downtown signs, and scaling them to pedestrian orientation and
3 usage. The proposal also allows for sidewalk A-frame signs, mandating ADA
4 compliance and avoidance of public rights-of-way. Kiosks may also be allowed rather
5 than many A-frame signs.
6

7 Examples of complementary architecture were presented, including canopies and
8 awnings, landscape planters, zero front setback areas with adequate sidewalk area,
9 building articulation, and the use of a variety of materials, with a consistent streetscape
10 including street trees and coordinated furniture (trash cans, streetlights, banners, etc.)
11 throughout the district. New development opportunities would include increased
12 sidewalk areas, the creation of patios for outside dining, and parkways along the curb
13 that provide for pedestrian safety.
14

15 Gateways would be established that could consist either of arches, towers or plazas to
16 make entrance to the downtown more inviting, and enforce the unique characteristics
17 of the area. There would be guidelines for parking lots, and mixed-use design
18 guidelines, as well as noise buffering, safety, and entrance guidelines for the
19 designated downtown area.
20

21 Future considerations include a specific plan for the downtown area that would create a
22 block-by-block vision of the future; reestablishment of a facade improvement program;
23 development of a program of maintenance and improvement for the public parking
24 areas; and development of a way-finding program and gateway improvement plan
25

26 Staff is proposing community outreach notification to all downtown property owners
27 regarding the public hearing process in a couple of months, as a first phase of the
28 ordinance amendments.
29

30 Commissioner Rogers asked if the changes would apply to only new development, or
31 to all buildings that fall under the overlay district.
32

33 Planner Running said it would apply to everyone. He added that there would hopefully
34 be incentive programs available, but that the City was not in a position to mandate
35 improvements for anything other than new construction.
36

37 Commissioner Deuber indicated that the murals added a nice touch, but suggested
38 maintaining of the centennial heritage within them. She also questioned the time frame
39 for the Metrolink station, and inquired as to whether that architecture might relate to the
40 downtown area, or be completely different.
41

42 Planner Running responded that, with the rise of gas prices, etc., it might come in 10 or
43 15 years. He noted that the original depot was built on a curve and could not be
44 utilized, so it would have to be located further to the north, along State Street.
45

46 CDD Elliano added that the proposed location for the depot was on the north State
47 Street section, outside of the historic core, and that more modern architecture and uses
48 in and around the transit station were anticipated.
49
50

1 Commissioner Deuber asked about the City's goal for a specific plan for the area, to
2 which Planner Running responded that it would be time consuming and costly. He
3 indicated that the City was hoping for grant assistance in the preparation of the plan.
4

5 CDD Elliano explained that, initially, staff was fixing inconsistencies and preparing the
6 framework for the upcoming project at Carmalita and Florida Avenues, but since there
7 was no available funding to do the extent of planning that they would like to do, they
8 were proceeding with the first phase or first steps of the project – for instance, the
9 City's future vision for a consistent downtown look – and would add to it as funds
10 became secured.
11

12 CDD Elliano answered Chairman Gifford's question regarding timing for the proposed
13 ordinance changes by stating that the drafts should be coming to the Planning
14 Commission for review next month.
15

16 Chairman Gifford wanted to know if any marketing plans were in place.
17

18 Planner Running suggested that it would need to be a collaborative effort between the
19 City and the tenants of the downtown area. He noted that some of the new downtown
20 tenants appeared to have energy and excitement, and were hopefully planning to do
21 consolidated advertising and special events.
22

23 CDD Elliano felt the City could coordinate with the Economic Development Agency,
24 and the Inland Empire Economic Partnership. With a new building being developed,
25 the City may be able to assist in getting the best tenants in there, as opposed to just
26 filling the space with more of the same.
27

28 Chairman Gifford asked if there were redevelopment funds or grants to help make the
29 plan happen, or if the City could couch the plan in terms such as "redevelopment" or
30 "historic," because it's something the City should not let slip by.
31

32 Planner Running indicated that state grants were available, such as Proposition 84
33 grants of up to \$1 million for planning studies, which they were hoping to have time to
34 apply for. He explained that the grant was designated for economically disadvantaged
35 communities, and that Hemet would fit into that category.
36

37 Chairman Gifford felt the million dollar grant was worth spending staff time on if there
38 was a chance of getting it. He also suggested the following: development of a
39 schedule for the various phases of the project; coming up with a strategy for marketing
40 to retailers and others; and supplying details about grant funding and time
41 requirements for applications.
42

43 Commissioner Rogers suggested a milestone chart, while Commissioner Deuber
44 suggested the Diamond symbol for the valley, recommending the use of gem stone
45 zones, such as Emerald, Ruby, Sapphire, for various areas of Hemet.
46

47 Commissioner Thompson asked what would happen if one property owner failed to
48 perform the necessary upgrades.
49

50 Planner Running responded that a combination of increased property value, incentives,
and the fact that the area was a redevelopment zone, which gives the City power,

1 could prevail. Also, some cities form a Business Improvement District, in which taxes
2 are imposed to maintain parking lots, etc.

3
4 CDD Elliano noted that it would have to be a combination of both private and public
5 effort to be successful.

6
7 Chairman Gifford opened the meeting to public comments.

8
9 City Councilman Larry Smith, who represents the city as a member of the Riverside
10 County Transportation Commission, felt that unless Hemet changed its cul-de-sac
11 mentality, the downtown effort would not thrive. He indicated that the County was
12 planning an expansion of Highway 91, which breaks ground early next year, and that is
13 the current priority. However, the Perris Valley Metrolink line, which extends the
14 existing line from Perris to Riverside, is high on the priority list, as is the Mid-County
15 Parkway and realignment of Highway 79. He recommended that the Commissioners
16 join the City Council in April for a presentation by Cathy Bechtel, the project manager
17 for transportation projects, who will be giving an update on timelines and priorities. He
18 also suggested that the Redlands and Temecula Historic Downtowns be visited so that
19 the Commission could get some idea of successful projects.

20
21
22 **8. REPORT ON 2010 CENSUS AND DEMOGRAPHICS FOR HEMET - Community**
23 *Development Director Elliano*

24
25 CDD Elliano reported that between 2000 and 2010, the city of Hemet added almost
26 20,000 people, a 33.7 percent increase. Riverside County had a 41.7 increase in
27 population, and overall, the state of California grew by 10 percent.

28
29 Housing units increased in Hemet by 20 percent, or 6,000 units. Riverside County's
30 increase was 36.9 percent, and the state of California increased by 12 percent.

31
32 The allocations of race as a percentage of population haven't changed dramatically.
33 Caucasian is still the majority, but there has been a decrease in that population, with
34 an uptick in others, most particularly Hispanic. Riverside County has a higher Hispanic
35 population, but not a huge swing from 2000.

36
37 From SCAG statistics, the median age in Hemet is 40, one of the highest median age
38 cities in the county, the average being 32. The average household size is 2.4, with the
39 county at 3.1. This difference is attributed to Hemet's senior population and mobile
40 home units. Home ownership rate is 64.3 percent, which is healthy, but below the
41 county average. Median household income for Hemet is \$35,000 plus. Riverside
42 County is \$58,000. Temecula is at \$84,000. However, even though Hemet is lower in
43 statistical analysis, undoubtedly because of retirement incomes, when you look at
44 average salaries for those working, it's not substantially less than in Riverside County.

45
46 The median home sales price for Hemet is \$120,000, compared with Riverside County
47 at \$189,000.

48
49 Commissioner Overmyer commented that when he was in high school, the average
50 age in Hemet was 73.

1 CDD Elliano distributed a handout that went into further demographic detail, giving
2 comparisons between Southwest and Eastern Riverside County. She pointed out
3 various statistics, such as: property tax revenues decreasing, but sales tax increasing;
4 median home sales prices at a 2002 level; population growth in 2015 proposed to be in
5 the 35-54 age category; new housing market beginning to make a recovery; in 2009,
6 over 2,500 foreclosed homes in Hemet, and 760 in the last six months.
7

8 Commissioner Thompson indicated there may be one more big wave of foreclosures
9 as ARMs become due with higher percentage rates.
10

11 Commission Deuber noted that this leveling off period has taken at least nine years,
12 when before it's been four to five years, followed by an upswing. She felt this was
13 repetitive of the '70s and that there was no end in sight yet. However, Hemet benefits
14 because of its senior population, and more fiscally conservative demographics.
15

16 Commissioner Overmyer called the situation somewhat of a new paradigm because
17 builders are in the business of building, so as the property values or land values
18 become feasible, the City will see new development that will be cheaper than some of
19 the foreclosed properties, but will not be damaged, and therefore will be attractive.
20

21 Commissioner Deuber felt that as Orange and San Diego Counties come back, that if
22 our median price remains at \$120,000, the City would see some of the younger
23 families coming this way.
24

25 CDD Elliano closed her presentation with jobs by sector, showing health and education
26 to comprise 39 percent of the total jobs within the city, while retail jobs were at 7.2
27 percent, leisure hospitality at 9.1 percent, and professional management at 7.3
28 percent.
29
30

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

9. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR REPORTS:

A. Report on City Council Actions from 2/8, 2/22, and 3/8 meetings.

37
38 CDD Elliano advised the Commission that while the February 8th meeting of the City
39 Council had no planning-related issues, it was a joint meeting between Hemet and
40 San Jacinto City Councils, and a historic first, with the cities jointly wanting to do what
41 was best for the Valley.
42

43 CDD Elliano noted that the February 22nd City Council meeting had included public
44 hearings relative to both the shopping cart retrieval ordinance and the medical
45 marijuana dispensary ordinance, which were adopted and will be effective in 30 days.
46 Also at that meeting, it was reported that, because of the Neighborhood Stabilization
47 Program grants, Hemet, with its construction partners, has been able to restore,
48 rehabilitate and resell 32 units. In addition, the city purchased almost all distressed
49 fourplex units on Mobley Lane and is still working on them, either rehabilitating them as
50 a new project, or scrapping them and starting over with a new concept. The city is
submitting an application for a third round of NSP, which is another \$1.3 million, and

1 the consultants feel, given the city's track record, that the city is in a very good position
2 to receive it.

3
4 Also at the February 22nd meeting, the city agreed to contract with the YMCA to run a
5 number of programs for youth, seniors, and others at the Simpson Center at gradually
6 increasing cost savings to the city.

7
8 At the March 8th City Council meeting, a work study session was held pertaining to the
9 mid-year budget review, which was not the best news. The next fiscal year will see a
10 deficit of about \$4.8 million, largely because of State of California costs to replenish
11 PERS funds, liability funds, workers' compensation insurance, and because of internal
12 structural changes in allocating costs.

13
14 Also on March 8th agenda was the Community Development Block Grant allocations,
15 and the city received funding for two code enforcement officers, so the general fund will
16 not have to provide those resources.

17
18 **B. General Plan Work Study planned for March 22, 2011 City Council Meeting.**

19
20 CDD Elliano announced that at the March 22nd City Council meeting there would be a
21 General Plan work study session, with the exact time to be announced. The City's
22 technical consultants will be reporting on the conclusions and findings of two of the big
23 technical studies that tested the land plan, traffic and fiscal studies. The timing for the
24 completion of the General Plan and Environmental Impact Report will also be
25 presented.

26
27 **C. Temporary Signs and Banners**

28
29 CDD Elliano explained the situation with the Hemet Municipal Code as it related to
30 temporary signs and banners, and their being permitted for 30 days and then down for
31 14 days. She noted that this could continue almost indefinitely and makes code
32 enforcement almost impossible. Therefore, staff would like to see that issue put on the
33 study list, if the Commission feels this is an issue that is worthy of considering changes
34 to the ordinance.

35
36 Commissioner Rogers indicated that he would like to drive around and get some
37 perspective on the issue, and Commissioner Thompson thought that coming up with a
38 work study would be a good idea, especially within the downtown overlay zone.

39
40 Vice Chair Deuber stated that first the city should establish an identity, or a vision of
41 what we want to look like and communicate as a city. She also stressed the centennial
42 heritage.

43
44 Chairman Gifford said he felt there was direction to come back with a work study.

45
46
47
48 **10. CITY ATTORNEY REPORTS: (None)**

1 **11. PLANNING COMMISSIONER REPORTS:**
2

- 3 A. Chairman Gifford (None)
4 B. Vice Chair Deuber welcomed Commissioner Overmyer.
5 C. Commissioner Overmyer (None)
6 D. Commissioner Rogers welcomed Commissioner Overmyer and requested an
7 update on Hemet ROCS on a future agenda
8 E. Commissioner Thompson welcomed Commissioner Overmyer
9

10
11 **12. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:**
12

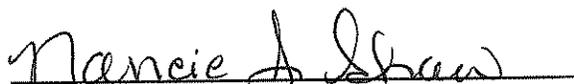
- 13 A. CEQA Overview and CEQA Guidelines Update by City Attorney Tom Jex
14 B. Tres Cerritos Specific Plan Amendment is coming up for consideration in April.
15 C. Conditional Use Permits for Churches, Skate Park, Cell Tower, Billiard Hall &
16 restaurant and downtown building applications
17

18
19 **13. ADJOURNMENT:** It was unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 p.m.
20 to the regular meeting of the City of Hemet Planning Commission scheduled for
21 April 5, 2011 at 6:00 p.m. to be held at the City of Hemet Council Chambers
22 located at 450 E. Latham Avenue, Hemet, CA 92543.
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28 John Gifford, Chairman
29 Hemet Planning Commission
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33
34 ATTEST:

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37
38 Nancie Shaw, Records Secretary
39 Hemet Planning Commission
40