PLANNING COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES

DATE: **AUGUST 19, 2014** **CALLED TO ORDER: 6:00 P.M.**

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

1. CALL TO ORDER:

PRESENT: Chairman John Gifford, Vice Chairman Greg Vasquez, and Commissioners Rick Crimeni and Vince Overmyer

ABSENT: Commissioner Michael Perciful

Invocation and Flag Salute: Commissioner Rick Crimeni

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A. Minutes of the Planning Commission meeting of August 5, 2014

It was **MOVED** by Commissioner Rick Crimeni and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Vince Overmyer to **APPROVE** the Minutes of the Planning Commission meeting of August 5, 2014.

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

AYES: Chairman John Gifford, Vice Chair Greg Vasquez, Commissioners Rick Crimeni and Vince Overmyer
NOES: None
ABSENT: Commissioner Michael Perciful

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Chairman Gifford opened the Public Comment period and Ms. Judith McPherson (no address given) expressed her concerns regarding the language of "Appeal of CUP Minor Modification for Shooters," as listed on page 3, Agenda Item 9, on tonight's agenda. She expressed the opinion that there were at least five new conditions that have been inserted within the Conditions of Approval and CUP Amendment 14-001 that were not existing when the original CUP was approved. She requested that the term "minor" be removed from further descriptions.

She further expressed the desire that the City endeavor to require the same new conditions that she discovered on CUP items to be heard tonight and in the future.

PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

4. TENTATIVE PARCEL MAP NO. 36566 (MAP 13-001) (Verizon California) - A request for Planning Commission review and approval of the subdivision of 2.44 gross acres into two (2) parcels in the Downtown (D-1) Zone, located at 120 & 150 S. Juanita Street, with consideration of an Environmental Exemption pursuant to CEQA Guideline Section 15315.

PROJECT APPLICANT INFORMATION:

Applicant:	Verizon California, Inc.
Planner:	Soledad Carrisoza - Planning Technician
Authorized Agent:	Stephen Slater - Blu Croix, Ltd.
Project Location:	120 & 150 S. Juanita Street
Lot Area:	2.44 Acres
APN:	443-284-026

(Staff Presentation by Planner Emery Papp.)

Chairman Gifford asked how one defines a "minor change" in a parcel map.

Planner Papp said it is just subdivision of property. In addition, he further clarified that Parcel No. 2 is going to be subdivided and sold, but staff does not know what kind of sale may take place.

Vice Chair Vasquez asked if there was something unusual in cutting a small property like this in half. Planner Papp replied that it happens routinely. In this case, the site was developed as two separate buildings. Verizon no longer has the need for the large size building because they have fewer employees based there. They are content with a smaller building. He does not expect there will be any kind of retail at the larger building because of the parking situation, although if higher intensity utilizers of the space needed further parking, that could be accommodated within 300 feet of the site.

Chairman Gifford opened the public hearing and invited the applicant's representative to the lectern.

Stephen Slater (3961 Blackbird Way, Calabasas), Verizon's representative, stated he had enjoyed working with the staff. He represented that the smaller building is a switching arm. The larger building never had any switch equipment in it and was administrative in nature. Those uses have been consolidated, as many companies have done. The larger building was in escrow with someone who was going to use it for office space, but the escrow fell out about five months ago, and it is on the market now.

No other individuals indicating a desire to speak, Chairman Gifford closed the public hearing and stated he felt this is a very marketable building. He asked the age of the building.

CDD Elliano said she thought it was built in the '80s, after which Chairman Gifford entertained a motion.

It was **MOVED** by Commissioner Vince Overmyer and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Rick Crimeni to **ADOPT** Planning Commission Resolution Bill No.14-021 **APPROVING** Tentative Parcel Map No. 36566, subject to the findings and Conditions of Approval.

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

AYES: Chairman John Gifford, Vice Chairman Greg Vasquez, Commissioner Rick Crimeni and Vince Overmyer
NOES: None
ABSENT: Commissioner Michael Perciful

WORK STUDY REPORTS

5. WORK STUDY CONCERNING STORAGE CONTAINERS IN COMMERCIAL ZONES:

(PowerPoint presentation by Planner Emery Papp.)

CDD Elliano gave background on this issue, explaining that often these containers are used in commercial areas for such things as construction or remodeling of spaces, seasonal needs, such as in the back of Walmart or Target during the Christmas season. They were for limited time duration and the users would generally adhere to those time frames.

Then it began to be used as a convenience in such places as motels to store extra chairs, beds, furnishings, and placed in areas that were not screened. Often this occurred because they did not want to incur the cost of storage space.

The most recent issue was with the CrossFit Gym, whose owner placed the container in the parking lot area in the back of the building and wanted it to be permanent. It was therefore a code enforcement action and resulted in a code case. The business owner went before the City Council, who has asked us to look into the issue of storage containers.

So some of the questions before the commission are: do we want to treat the use of storage containers in industrial zones different than commercial zones? Do we want to continue what we have done by practice, allowing limited use during construction or seasonal periods? Do we want to allow it if it's screened from view?

The primary objection appears to be aesthetics and encroachment into parking areas and drive aisles. She stated she had met with the business owner and told him that right now, his storage container is not allowed, but she would take it forward as an issue to Planning Commission and see if there is any interest in having this accommodation or continue to enforce the existing requirements.

Vice Chair Vasquez asked if there are conditions applied to temporary permits.

Planner Papp explained that there are, but they are very general. The use is allowable for 90 days, as long as it is not put in parking areas, and it must be removed within 90 days. They have to meet the requirements for setbacks also.

Chairman Gifford inquired if they asked permit applicants what they plan to put in the containers; and how are these handled in other cities?

Planner Papp responded that they are asked what they are planning to put in them, but what staff is told does not mean that is what is going to go in them; therefore, staff wanted to get some direction from the Commission first before evaluating what other cities are doing.

CDD Elliano added that most of the cities she is aware of prohibit them other than for temporary construction-related purposes. The purpose of bringing it to the Commission is to see if they wanted to entertain having these containers in the commercial zones, and if so, under what circumstances, or should the current codes that have gone beyond their initial purpose just be better enforced.

Commissioner Crimeni asked if the industrial zones can have the containers also.

CDD Elliano stated that even in the industrial zones, it is limited to 90 days. However, it has not been enforced well because the vast majority of the photos we have are in the industrial zones. If these codes need to be rolled back, there will be a lot of pushback from industrial businesses. If the wish of the Commission is to let these go beyond 90 days, there should be some criteria for when it is utilized in the industrial areas.

Vice Chair Vasquez stated he thought they served their purpose in the commercial zones because they are temporary. However, they do contribute to visual blight in the city.

Commissioner Crimeni felt it was appropriate to allow containers during holiday times.

Chairman Gifford said he did not have a problem with the construction use of containers. He felt the regulations that control them need to be greatly improved and be specific. He felt that some specific guidelines need to be enforced. Guidelines that include; knowing what the containers hold, possibly posting a placard on the container telling the fire department what is being stored inside, adhering to a specific timeline unless they want long-term, in which case they need to meet the same requirements as if they were building a structure. He felt that staff's recommendation No. 3 (preparing regulations to address storage containers in the code) is the best model to follow.

Commissioner Overmyer wished Hemet were in a position as a city to not have these at all. However, the city is in a transitional time. He would look at this with some leniency so it would not force some small businesses to leave. But safety issues are also important.

Chairman Gifford expressed his agreement with Commissioner Overmyer. He felt that the containers need to be out of sight or screened in some way. They need to be temporary, unless there is an overriding need, which is a determination that the Planning Department can make.

Commissioner Crimeni wondered if these containers can be rented or are they available for purchase.

Planner Papp said both are available. They can be rented for from $300 to $500 a month or purchased for $1,000 to $2,000.

There were other possibilities mentioned in the continued discussion, such as screening, painting the containers if permanent, placement out of public view, no containers in residential zones, the effect on commerce.

In conclusion, Chairman Gifford summed up the need to beef up the ordinances, check with surrounding cities, ask more questions on the temporary use permit.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

6. CITY ATTORNEY REPORTS: (Nothing to report)

7. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR REPORTS:

A. Report on actions from the August 12, 2014 City Council Meeting.

CDD Elliano reported that during the August 12th meeting of the City Council, a Capital Improvement Program for the city was adopted, having major infrastructure and projects anticipated for the current fiscal year and beyond that, to the next five years. The city engineer was tasked with that effort, with all departments contributing in what those projects might be. It had a $50,000 threshold, with different funding sources, including grants.

Other issues mentioned were the update on Project HOPE, given by Chief of Police Dave Brown, with details, including decrease in prostitution, ROCS Task Force help with transients in public parks, and longer term solutions in terms of social implications of transient populations; a City Council approval of an update to the hiring bonus for lateral police transfers; and a discussion about a CHP contract.

B. Proposed cancellation of September 2, 2014 Planning Commission Meeting.

This was cancelled because of the Labor Day weekend and because applicants were not ready to bring their issues on the September 2.

C. Update on Rental Registration Program

Staff has launched the multi-family registration program. They finished the inventory and broke the project into two phases: Multi-family (three units and above), and

individual single-family or duplex. The information packet was sent to 346 different owners that represent 5180 units. The information is also on the city's Web site. The information includes a brochure that talks about what the city is looking for when staff does inspections: Exterior and interior maintenance.

Included in the information is a two-page letter that's basically an overview of what the problem is, why it's being done, what its purpose is, and what the city is hoping to accomplish in some of the main components.

There is also a property owner acknowledgement form, which is a series of things that they are asked to initial, indicating understanding of the various components. Next is the blue application, which is a standard registration and inspection form with a fee schedule calculation on the back and a separate application for the Landlord in Good Standing Program. CDD Elliano continued to explain the process and answered questions from the Commissioners.

She explained the other component of the program is the crime-free housing, which is funded through CDBG. A retired police sergeant is conducting the classes. People are submitting forms and signing up for the crime-free classes, recognizing that this information is important for maintaining the value and integrity of their properties. Chairman Gifford also commented that many of the problems evolve from having absentee landlords who do not take care of their properties. This is a way to organize and get those landlords to either maintain or improve their properties or the city will take action.

D. Citywide Update regarding Application and User Fees

CDD Elliano noted that the city has not updated its application fees, building permits, planning fees, library fees for several years, since 2005. Therefore, the finance department and city manager are going through an exhaustive cost recovery study. It will be presented to City Council in September. Prior to that, there will be outreach with the Building Association and other development professionals, to let them know what the fees are and gather comments from them.

8. PLANNING COMMISSIONER REPORTS:

A. Chairman Gifford (Nothing to report)
B. Vice Chair Vasquez (Nothing to report)
C. Commissioner Perciful (Absent)
D. Commissioner Overmyer (Nothing to report)
E. Commissioner Crimeni (Nothing to report)

9. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

A. Master Tentative Tract Map/Conveyance Map for Tres Cerritos East
B. Appeal of CUP Minor Modification for Shooters
C. Site Development Review for Copenhagen Apartments
D. Work Study for Sun Edison Solar Facility

CDD Elliano mentioned also an appeal from the owner of the 76 Station to the City Council the second meeting of September. Chairman Gifford asked for an update on the temporary sign ordinance and a review of CUPs issued.

10. ADJOURNMENT

It was unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 7:11 p.m. to the regular meeting of the City of Hemet Planning Commission scheduled for **September 16, 2014 at 6:00 p.m.** to be held at the City of Hemet Council Chambers located at 450 E. Latham Avenue, Hemet, CA 92543.

John Gifford, Chairman
Hemet Planning Commission

ATTEST:

Melissa Couden

Melissa Couden, Records Secretary
Hemet Planning Commission