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*PLANNING*  *COMMISSION*

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**MEETING MINUTES**

**DATE:**           **OCTOBER 4, 2016**

**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 Michael Perciful,  
                                  Commissioner Vince Overmyer

**ABSENT:**            Commissioner Greg Vasquez

**Invocation and Flag Salute:** Vice Chair Michael Perciful

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**WORK STUDY ITEMS**

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- 2. WORK STUDY: DOWNTOWN HEMET SPECIFIC PLAN (SP NO. 16-001):**  
Presentation by city staff and consultant team on the public review draft of the Downtown Hemet Specific Plan for discussion by the Planning Commission, Downtown Advisory Committee (DAC) and members of the general public.

**PROJECT APPLICANT INFORMATION:**

**Applicant:**           City of Hemet  
**Location:**           360 acres in Downtown Hemet bounded by Gilbert Street on the west, Oakland Avenue on the north, Santa Fe Street on the east, and Acacia Avenue on the south.  
**Planner:**            Ron Running, Project Planner

Chairman Gifford welcomed the consultants, DAC members and members of the public to the work study and invited CDD Elliano to explain the process.

CDD Elliano announced that the public review draft of the Downtown Hemet Specific Plan has been published and is available on the City's Web site. It is being first introduced to the Planning Commission, the DAC and interested public today, with time for comments and questions. Later it will be brought before the Planning Commission again for a public hearing and then to the City Council. There is a CEQA document under preparation, and a mitigated negative declaration is anticipated soon.

1 Planner Ron Running announced that the traffic study is going to be the driver of the  
2 consultants' final analysis, which should be completed the first part of December.

3  
4 Jean Ward of the Arroyo Group, lead consultants for the plan, outlined how the  
5 document was organized, how it's adopted through the CEQA process, and what the  
6 stages of planning and study have been, starting from their initial contract in May of  
7 2015. She reviewed the contacts with stakeholders (City administrative review, City  
8 Council, Planning Commission, DAC, Community workshops and an on-line community  
9 survey). She then went through the document, outlining the contents of the various  
10 chapters.

11  
12 The document includes the following chapters with contents: Chapter 1, setting,  
13 context and boundaries, goals and policies; Chapter 2, downtown vision, including  
14 graphics; Chapter 3, regulations and zoning; Chapter 4, five mixed use and commercial  
15 zones in the downtown, including downtown village zone, office professional mixed use  
16 zones, transit oriented district or TOD zone, Hemet Stock Farm zone and downtown  
17 commercial zone. Also included are design guidelines; Chapter 5, residential zones;  
18 Chapter 6, development standards and design guidelines for multifamily and single  
19 family uses.

20  
21 Chairman Gifford asked how flexible the plan in terms of transit zones is if Hemet does  
22 not get any Metro Link facilities. And will high density housing still be needed in the  
23 district if there is no transit hub.

24  
25 Ms. Ward stated a certainty that there would be some kind of transit mobility hub. And  
26 one of the advantages of mixed use zoning is that it's flexible; if housing is not needed,  
27 it could revert to office or commercial. The difference between the Transit Oriented  
28 Development (TOD) zone and the Downtown Village Zone is the difference of one story  
29 in height.

30  
31 Vigen Davidian of the Iteris consulting firm who focuses on circulation and  
32 transportation, further explained that even if a rail system is not developed, it is fairly  
33 common in the region to have a transit development, with rapid transport buses.

34  
35 Chairman Gifford also had questions about the project approval process and how will  
36 this plan facilitate businesses and future economic development.

37  
38 Ms. Ward said the approval process would be more streamlined but there would still be  
39 CUPs, particularly in the downtown village zone, but the plan calls for fewer CUPs than  
40 the current D-1 and D-2 zoning has.

41  
42 Chairman Gifford expressed his recommendation that a specific plan overlay be  
43 devised with preexisting kinds of conditions that would make CUPs less likely to be  
44 required and businesses would not have to go through the expense of applying, so a  
45 modification of the CUP process.

46  
47 CDD Elliano explained that the process had already been somewhat modified to allow  
48 more approval at a staff level. Multifamily, in the TOD, is a CUP because they wanted  
49 to make sure there was adequate new job creation to accommodate and balance the  
50 housing and employment ratio.

1 Chairman Gifford also asked about live/work facilities and their appropriateness for  
2 Hemet.

3  
4 Ms. Ward responded that they differentiate between mixed use and live/work. She  
5 foresaw the mixed use as a very viable element in Hemet because it allowed for  
6 residential over retail or office. Live/work is a combined space with both uses in the  
7 same area. She felt it would be used less frequently but it is allowed.

8  
9 Stanley Hoffman, economic consultant, noted Murrieta and Corona, Dos Lagos, as  
10 successful live/work areas.

11  
12 Mr. Davidian commented on the transportation and circulation plan, which includes  
13 bikes, pedestrians, state highways, streets, medians and parking. He gave a number  
14 of examples of parkettes, bike networks, and hopes they can accommodate many of  
15 these elements along Florida Avenue. Traffic calming elements will also be  
16 implemented, which include closure of some medians, one-way streets, and a more  
17 organized way of dealing with the parking, such as implementing shared parking for  
18 mixed use facilities because of different time needs.

19  
20 Larry Morrison of the Arroyo Group focused on Chapter 7, streetscapes and open  
21 space, assuring a pleasant public experience while moving about the downtown area.  
22 This means better open spaces and improved linkages between them. The means of  
23 doing so are utilizing bulbouts, street trees, street furniture, improved crosswalks, and  
24 way finding signage and gateways. He showed graphics of some of the design work  
25 and street pallets, which include color, identification of street trees, shade, etc.

26  
27 There are also plans to update existing parks, adding such elements as amphitheaters,  
28 fountains, outdoor seating areas and Class 1 bikeways. Also included was a civic  
29 plaza, including the library, areas for dining, tree areas. The Ramona Loop would take  
30 advantage of the city's history with the Ramona Pageant. They are also suggesting  
31 pocket parks in the downtown area.

32  
33 Hemet's infrastructure is examined in the civil engineering component, and he reported  
34 that Hemet's systems are adequate. There will be an emphasis on groundwater  
35 recharge, retention basins, permeable surfaces for parking lots, and developing  
36 streetscapes for drainage.

37  
38 Chairman Gifford asked for more information regarding the Ramona Loop.

39  
40 Mr. Morrison stated this is going to be an overlay on the overall pedestrian grid, which  
41 will include a banner system and paving, but also definitive signage.

42  
43 Vice Chair Perciful wanted to make sure the trees planted for streetscapes and  
44 medians do not have invasive root systems so sidewalks and streets would not be  
45 destroyed.

46  
47 Mr. Morrison assured him that they were carefully reviewed by public works because it  
48 was one of their considerations.

1 Mr. Hoffman, the economic and demographic consultant, outlined his tasks as looking  
2 at the economic and demographic trends analysis of the land use changes being  
3 proposed and then developing implementation techniques.

4  
5 He looked at short term uses, like retail, restaurants and food services, with long term  
6 uses being medical offices and professional offices. Offices are particularly important  
7 because of the State Highway 79 corridor developing, bringing more economic  
8 development into the valley, with the need for personal services, hotels, gas stations,  
9 etc.

10  
11 He listed attractions locally that bring in tourists, such as the Ramona Pageant, the  
12 Diamond Valley Lake, traffic corridor to San Jacinto and over to the Coachella Valley.  
13 SCAG's projection for the valley is showing more than double growth from 2012 to  
14 2040. He also noted that employment in the downtown area is around 1700 presently,  
15 but with development of retail, residential and other uses, he projected a job increase  
16 of about 2500 jobs, bringing the total to about 4200.

17  
18 Housing in the area is now approximately 1100 to 1200 homes, with projections of  
19 about 610 more, growing the housing to about 1700.

20  
21 The commercial activity is the stronger point of growth. In their analysis, they came up  
22 with about 362,000 square feet of commercial and 265,000 square feet between  
23 medical and professional offices. The expansion of the civic center is estimated at  
24 52,000 square feet.

25  
26 The implementation section studies how these improvements can be paid for. He  
27 explained cap and trade, grant moneys, Riverside County Transportation Commission  
28 funds, TUMF fees, community development block grants, enhanced infrastructure  
29 financing districts, property taxes.

30  
31 There is also something called a property based business improvement district, which  
32 is good for marketing downtown and coordinating capital improvement programs. The  
33 city is also considering a percentage (half to one percent) for the arts program. It's a  
34 fee on top of the construction costs, and the public can also contribute. These plans  
35 can be redefined. Under the enhanced infrastructure financing district, they did a 20-  
36 year projection and there are about five and a half million dollars to be collected. Also  
37 suggested is coordinating with the county, as they have 13 percent and the city has 18  
38 percent. That would bring in another four million. Other funds to be collected include  
39 sales taxes, motel/hotel occupancy taxes and property taxes and other development  
40 related revenues.

41  
42 Chairman Gifford asked if it would be possible to receive a matrix of these funding  
43 possibilities as to their value and availability.

44  
45 Mr. Hoffman noted that cap and trade is a tougher one, but important to go after. The  
46 RCTC should be easier, and SCAG would also be important.

47  
48 Vice Chair Perciful thanked the consultants for their great job on the plan. Now the  
49 important step is to get people to invest in it and start to build. He stated the Specific  
50 Plan is a thick book and he is going to be studying it carefully.

1 Chairman Gifford opened the work study to DAC members for their comments.

2  
3 Sharyn Dana with the Arts Association asked why two streets, Harvard and Carmelita,  
4 are both northbound, as they are next to each other.

5  
6 Mr. Davidian explained that it had to do with future projected volumes and trying to  
7 provide more northbound capacity, more parking and more walkability.

8  
9 Lori Van Arsdale commented that she thought there was momentum now to do these  
10 types of improvements to the downtown area. She noted that historically the  
11 leasing/rental rates for downtown were much lower than elsewhere in the city. She  
12 also commented that the hospital and medical facilities were a huge help and/or factor  
13 to what happens downtown.

14  
15 Linda Krupa had questions about traffic flow south of Florida Avenue, Harvard,  
16 Carmelita and Juanita, and why these were not considered for one-way streets.

17  
18 Planner Running explained the reasons for the current plan, but indicated it could be  
19 looked at again in order to make a final decision. Mr. Davidian further explained that  
20 the existing one-way street, Harvard, was taken as a separate item, but the one-way  
21 couplet of Juanita and Carmelita focused on the historic downtown area. One of the  
22 reasons for the decision was the amount of residential south of Florida.

23  
24 Ms. Krupa reminded them that south of Florida has a great deal of commercial and  
25 should be treated in the same way as the historic district.

26  
27 CDD Elliano said if there is a desire to change the plan, it should be studied now and  
28 included it in the environmental analysis. It can still be a policy decision, but it would  
29 have been studied.

30  
31 Mark Dunn asked if North Harvard should be closed for a pedestrian walkway.

32  
33 Chairman Gifford offered the reason was being able to block the street off for certain  
34 special occasions and make it only for those occasions.

35  
36 Mr. Morrison explained if it was blocked permanently as a closed street to traffic,  
37 parking for the businesses would also go away.

38  
39 Mr. Dunn commented that there was ample parking for the businesses and said he was  
40 interested in where the small pocket parks would be placed.

41  
42 CDD Elliano explained that the focus was to address the pedestrian experience, create  
43 safe places, and balance that with the vehicular needs.

44  
45 There was discussion between Vice Chair Perciful and Mr. Morrison regarding the one-  
46 way traffic north of Florida, with Mr. Morrison indicating it can be further studied.

47  
48 Chairman Gifford opened the discussion to the general public and George Sararu  
49 commented on the benefit of work on Carmelita, as it has been poorly lighted, had old  
50 cracks and needed refreshing.

1 Rosemary Sears asked if the median going down Florida would detract from wider  
2 sidewalks and landscaping.

3  
4 Ms. Ward explained in detail the advantages and disadvantages of medians and how  
5 they affect traffic flow and landscaping decisions. These are all decisions that are  
6 being weighed.

7  
8 Chairman Gifford expressed his concern with traffic calming and medians; CDD Elliano  
9 brought up the issue of signalization and its effect on traffic calming.

10  
11 Judith McPherson reported that her family owns commercial buildings in the block  
12 between State and Harvard on the south side, and she requests that two-way traffic  
13 patterns still exist because State Highway 79 is two-way. She also mentioned that their  
14 parking lot is the largest privately owned in the downtown village area, with illumination  
15 as required by the city. Her last comment had to do with a bank building owned by the  
16 family that could be easily converted into an educational locale, if one came to town.

17  
18 Judy Rice had concerns about access to the hospital if traffic was slowed and  
19 landscaping was increased. She noted that in health care, time is lifesaving.

20  
21 CDD Elliano responded that both police and fire representatives had seen the plan,  
22 and Florida Avenue will continue to be four lanes so there is nothing within the travel  
23 lanes being removed as far as public safety accessibility along Florida. She also  
24 thanked the DAC and public for their contributions to the work study and outlined the  
25 future meetings to which they will be invited.

26  
27 Chairman Gifford closed the work study and asked for a ten minute recess.

28  
29 (The work study concluded at 5:57 p.m.)

30  
31 **REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION**

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34 **3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

35  
36 **A. Minutes for the Planning Commission Meeting of September 6, 2016**

37  
38 It was **MOVED** By Vice Chair Michael Perciful and **SECONDED** by Commissioner  
39 Vince Overmyer to **ADOPT** the Minutes of the September 6, 2016 Hemet Planning  
40 Commission Meeting.

41  
42 The **MOTION** was carried by the following vote:

43  
44  
45 **AYES:** Chairman John Gifford, Vice Chair Michael Perciful, and Commissioner  
46 Vince Overmyer.

47 **NOES:** None

48 **ABSENT:** Commissioner Greg Vasquez.  
49  
50

1                    **B. Minutes for the Planning Commission Meeting of September 20, 2016.**

2  
3 It was **MOVED** By Commissioner Vince Overmyer and **SECONDED** by Vice Chair  
4 Michael Perciful to **ADOPT** the Minutes of the September 20, 2016 Hemet Planning  
5 Commission Meeting.

6  
7 The **MOTION** was carried by the following vote:

8  
9 **AYES:**            Chairman John Gifford, Vice Chair Michael Perciful, and Commissioner  
10 Vince Overmyer.

11 **NOES:**            None

12 **ABSENT:**        Commissioner Greg Vasquez.

13  
14 **4. PUBLIC COMMENTS:** There were no members of the public who wished to  
15 address the Commission regarding items not on the agenda.

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**DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

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21 **5. CITY ATTORNEY REPORTS:**

22                    **A.** Discussion of the Brown Act Items.(This item was continued to the  
23 October 18, 2016 Planning Commission Meeting.)

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27 **6. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR REPORTS:** (This item also was  
28 continued to the October 18, 2016 Planning Commission Meeting.)

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31 **7. PLANNING COMMISSIONER REPORTS:**

32                    **A.** Commissioner Gifford (Nothing to report)

33                    **B.** Commissioner Perciful (Nothing to report)

34                    **C.** Commissioner Overmyer (Nothing to report)

35                    **D.** Commissioner Vasquez (Absent)

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39 **8. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:**

40                    **A.** ZOA 15-007 - Landscape Work Study

41                    **B.** CUP 16-005 - Circle K at Florida Promenade

42                    **C.** ZDC 16-004 - Work Study Zoning Consistency Industrial

43                    **D.** EOT 16-006 - TTM 33858, Eaton between Sanderson & Kirby

1 **9. ADJOURNMENT:**

2  
3 It was unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 6:10 p.m. to the regular meeting  
4 of the City of Hemet Planning Commission scheduled for **October 18, 2016 at 6:00**  
5 **p.m.** to be held at the City of Hemet Council Chambers located at 450 E. Latham  
6 Avenue, Hemet, CA 92543.  
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16 John Gifford, Chairman  
17 Hemet Planning Commission  
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21 **ATTEST:**

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24 Gabriela Hernandez, Records Secretary  
25 Hemet Planning Commission  
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