

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL JOINT MEETING OF THE LA PALMA CITY COUNCIL
AND DEVELOPMENT AND CIRCULATION COMMITTEE

September 26, 2017

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Steggell called the Special Joint Meeting of the La Palma City Council and Development and Circulation Committee to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Royal Palm Room in the La Palma Community Center, 7821 Walker Street, La Palma, California.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Mayor Steggell

ROLL CALL:

Council Members Present: Council Member Goodman, Mayor Pro Tem Hwangbo, Council Member Kim, and Mayor Steggell

Council Members Absent: Council Member Goedhart

Committee Members Present: Chairperson Almendralo, Committee Member Baker, Committee Member Jensen, Committee Member Lew, Vice Chairperson Luu, and Committee Member Vaughn

Committee Members Absent: Committee Member Ortega

City Officials Present: Laurie Murray, City Manager
Joel Kuperberg, City Attorney
Mike Belknap, Community Services Director
Chet Corbin, Support Services Manager
Kathy Graham, Community & Economic Development Consultant
Terry Kim, Police Chief
Cindy Robinson, Assistant to the City Manager
Sea Shelton, Administrative Services Director
Ron Wilkerson, Police Captain
Kimberly Kenney, Deputy City Clerk

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

No members of the public wished to speak.

REGULAR ITEM:

1. Study Session: Land Use and Zoning Workshop

City Manager Murray introduced the Item.

Development and Circulation Committee Member Ortega joined the meeting at 7:02 p.m.

Kathy Graham, Community and Economic Development Consultant, announced that the goals of this meeting are to review land use and zoning tools, possible future housing location opportunities, and visual preferences for future housing types. She presented the framework in the General Plan and housing requirements.

Council Member Kim inquired about the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) number needing to be reached by the end of the seven year requirement.

City Manager Murray responded that we have to identify that segment of land by the seven year deadline, but do not have to have it built out by that date in 2021.

Ms. Graham continued with her presentation by reviewing the Zoning Map; Zoning Districts; discussed the City's statistical summary of acreage; reviewing the General Plan Housing Element Goals; the high quality of development standards the City maintains; and removing constraints for good development.

City Manager Murray presented a report on the background and history of the project at 5062 La Palma Avenue that started the discussion on revisiting the City's zoning issue; that the proposal sparked significant opposition because of the density; that the Development Committee voted to deny the project; that the City Council approved moving forward with purchasing the property; that while negotiating the settlement, the City initiated an Interim Development Moratorium Ordinance; explained how these properties got their high density zoning designation; that part of these zoning changes include parking requirements; and that Staff is looking at other ways to meet the City's RHNA's requirements.

Ms. Graham continued with a detailed presentation on the Zoning history for just 5062 and 5064 La Palma Avenue. She closed by asking the members present to

indicate their preference of parcels that should be considered priorities for land use or zoning changes.

City Manager Murray announced that the public will be invited to their own community workshops based on their address where they will be able to give their feedback and input on zoning changes and design standards for development projects.

Discussion ensued regarding why the City is bothering with revisiting the zoning; that the State of California can mandate laws that override any decision by the City; and clarification of property owners' rights.

City Attorney Kuperberg explained that although the City is built out, the City has to comply with certain State requirements as do all cities in California; that they designate the amount of low and moderate income housing a city is required to have; that there are penalties if cities do not comply; that the City cannot force someone to change the use of an existing land; but, the City can say that if the property is to ever be 'rebuilt or redeveloped', the use could be changed and the new use would apply for that rebuild or redevelopment.

Ms. Graham explained that the purpose of this discussion is not to identify affordable housing sites within the City; that this exercise is to look at existing properties the City would like to see redeveloped, whether it be commercial or residential; and that it doesn't have to be redeveloped into a high density residential complex, it could be commercial or mixed use.

City Manager Murray added that part of this process is to address the aging retail centers; where by allowing proper property zoning, developers could construct a new and better retail center; that some properties could be rezoned to encourage the property owners to redevelop the site; and that some sites could be developed into new housing units with a retail component.

City Attorney Kuperberg explained the exercise in designating land uses and zoning could help the new property buyer decide on development possibilities; that the State can put requirements and restrictions on cities without their consent or approval; and that noncompliance puts the City at liability.

Discussion continued regarding the potential redevelopment of the medical buildings on Walker Street and La Palma Avenue.

The City Council and Development and Circulation Committee participated in the zoning exercise.

City Manager Murray requested a five minute recess at 7:36 p.m.

The Special Joint Meeting of the City Council and Development & Circulation Committee reconvened at 7:40 p.m. with Council Member Goedhart being absent.

City Manager Murray announced that the City plans to move forward with similar exercises for the smaller community group meetings; that these are options for redevelopment; and whether there are any other opportunities for sites within the City that were not put on the review list that need to be evaluated.

Discussion ensued regarding adding the entire Hospital lot including the medical buildings for redevelopment and rezoning; a need for senior housing whether at the hospital site or another site; and a place for residents to meet and socialize.

City Manager Murray explained that there was discussion of the hospital property during the General Plan; that the site was considered as a mixed use format with a senior living component to include shops and restaurants; that the idea did not get approval from the City Council during the discussions; whether this group would like to include that as an option during these meetings; and that the City is also looking at the current Brookside Apartments for redeveloping this aging site to include senior housing, mixed retail, and mixed uses at that site.

Discussion continued regarding the green space adjacent to the 91 Freeway not being an option for redevelopment.

Mr. Ed Byrne, a La Palma resident, addressed the City Council and Committee Members by asking what the State's acreage requirements are for the City of La Palma towards affordable housing; whether the empty lot on Moody Street and Crescent Avenue would satisfy the demands from the State for our RHNA number..

Ms. Graham explained that every city has a RHNA number for affordable housing needs that they need to achieve over the housing element period which is a 7 year period; that La Palma was supposed to achieve 9 dwelling units; that we have currently achieved 7, which leaves 2 dwelling units left to be designated as affordable housing by the year 2021; and that although the Moody Street and Crescent Avenue lot is a key commercial corridor, she cautioned giving up a key commercial site and suggested adding a mixed use so you don't eliminate the key commercial business opportunities. She commented further that in regards to senior housing, there could also be opportunity for growing professionals; that as the population ages, the available product becomes limited; and that as the City looks at potential changes and diversity that may be available is definitely key.

Mayor Pro Tem Hwangbo commented that because La Palma is such a small city, we don't have a lot of options and still want young families to come here to live and stay. He closed by asking whether we are going to have a different discussion on affordable housing.

Ms. Graham responded that this meeting was not planned as an affordable housing workshop; a future workshop on that topic will be held; and that any input from the community regarding affordable housing will be brought back to the City Council for their review.

City Manager Murray noted that the City currently has a few seniors who are trying to manage their single family residences; that these residents are very low income; that providing a place for senior housing enabling them to still reside in La Palma would be a welcome opportunity; and expressed appreciation for all of the suggestions received.

Discussion continued regarding the possibility of rehabilitating the industrial park commercial buildings north of Orangethorpe Avenue on Walker Street; that the area is mostly occupied; but that staff will look for new tenant or development opportunities as they arise.

Ms. Graham continued her presentation with reviewing style and density of existing housing/dwelling units in La Palma; and ask the members present to designate their visual preference for housing project designs.

The City Council and Development and Circulation Committee Members participated in the architectural design exercise.

City Manager Murray noted that the direction was clear from the exercise which styles were highly supported or opposed; announced her appreciation for the input given at tonight's meeting; that the next step is Community Workshops; that after the community gives their input, Staff will come to the City Council with the results; reviewed the next steps in this process; reported that Staff will review updated housing laws; clarify current zoning; and address parking, setback, and height requirements; and identify any other sites for possible development.

Mayor Pro Tem Hwangbo noted his concern about La Palma's future vision being able to stay the same or whether it is impacted by regional issues; that most cities are building higher density homes; that since we do not have land available, does that mean future development is building vertically; that the community needs to make this decision and decide whether we want to change the City's vision; that some residents stay because of their Proposition 13 designation; that he has been monitoring this situation over the years; and that there are macro issues that need to be discussed.

City Manager Murray clarified that Affordable Housing will be a separate discussion from this issue.

Mr. Ortega asked whether any of the architectural examples in the community meeting exercise will be mixed use.

City Manager Murray responded affirmatively.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Steggell adjourned the Special Joint Meeting of the City Council and Development and Circulation Committee at 8:15 p.m.