

LARKSPUR PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES OF JULY 10, 2007

The Larkspur Planning Commission was convened at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers by Chair Heitkamp.

Commissioners Present: Chair Helen Heitkamp, Monte Deignan, Richard Young

Commissioners Absent: Chris McCluney, Jeff Stahl

Staff Present: Nancy Kaufman, Planning Director
Neal Toft, Senior Planner

OPEN TIME FOR PUBLIC EXPRESSION

There were none.

PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- Staff received two appeals of the Planning Commission decision regarding 7 Palm Court. The appeal is scheduled to be heard by the City Council in mid-August.
- The City Council agenda for July 18th would include consideration of the Green Building Ordinance and associated Resolution, the In-Lieu Affordable Housing Fees, the CLASP Specific Plan Fees, and a second reading of the EAH Ordinance. They will also be considering the various options for the Greenbrae Interchange Project.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT CALENDAR ITEM

No items on the Consent Calendar

PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

- 1. DR/UP/HT/ER 06-69: 250 Doherty Drive (AP #22-120-07 & 12); Twin Cities Police Authority and City of Larkspur, applicants; City of Larkspur, property owner. Request for the following permit approvals to demolish and reconstruct the Twin Cities Police Department (TCPD) facility and the City of Larkspur Corporation Yard in a similar location: (1) Use Permit for modifications to public service uses and buildings (LMC Section 18.20.025E); (2) Design Review for new public service structures subject to other discretionary permits (LMC Section 18.64.020); and (3) Heritage Tree Removal Permit to remove 10-12 heritage trees, mostly pine trees, two liquid amber, and potentially two Chinese elms (LMC Section 12.16080). A Mitigated Negative Declaration of environmental impact has been prepared for the project pursuant to the**

requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act. Prior to taking action on the merits of the above listed agenda items, the Planning Commission will consider adoption of the Mitigated Mitigation Declaration.

Senior Planner Toft presented the staff report. He noted there was an errata sheet to the staff report with recommended amendments to the Initial Study, Finding (2) and condition numbers 12/MMP 7-5 and 23/MMRP 7-4, regarding lead paint and asbestos remediation, based on comments provided to staff from Commissioner Deignan. The City Council has retained final authority on Design Review and the Heritage Tree Removal for the project due to on-going issues. The Commissions' comments would be of an advisory nature for these permits, but the Commission would be taking action on the Mitigated Negative Declaration and the Use Permit application.

Chair Heitkamp referred to pages 4 and 11 and noted a few typographical errors.

Commissioner Young referred to page 61 of the Initial Study and stated the reference to Oakland should be deleted. He referred to page 17 and asked for clarification on the dimensions of the concrete masonry wall. Senior Planner Toft stated it would be 10'4" high.

Chair Heitkamp stated there was no landscaping plan at this time and she was concerned about the corner at the northwest end of the Corporation Yard where it turns into the parking lot. There is currently a problem with the sight line due to the angle of the entrance road and how one turns out of the parking lot.

Chair Heitkamp had questions about the grading, the height level of the floor, and the ground level. She asked about the foundation for the project. Senior Planner Toft stated the floor level would be 8.5' above sea level. There would be surface grading within the area of the proposed building which is proposed to be 4" below the floating slab-on-grade foundation. It is not intended to be a pile-supported structure at this time. The design has not been fully determined.

Chair Heitkamp asked if the level of the access road would be changed. Senior Planner Toft stated the road would be slightly realigned but the level would be maintained.

Commissioner Deignan asked if the Police and Corporation Yard operations would relocate during construction. Planning Director Kaufman stated the access road and Corporation Yard would be the first portion of the project to be constructed. The Police operations would continue to function while the new facility was under construction. Commissioner Deignan was concerned about traffic along the access road during construction.

Commissioner Young stated it appeared that the site plan was determined by the location of the tennis courts and that was unfortunate. He stated there was a sidewalk adjacent to the school across from the Police Station that was interrupted by a Chinese Elm. If the tree were removed,

he would like the sidewalk to continue straight to Doherty Drive. He noted there would be a large development across the street. He asked about traffic control at that intersection during construction. Senior Planner Toft stated the project would be done by private contractors and managed by the City. There would be great attention paid to traffic management.

Chair Heitkamp opened the Public Hearing.

Mr. Eric Glass, architect, made the following comments:

- They spent a lot of time with the civil engineer regarding the finished floor elevation with regard to flood levels. The floor would be set at elevation 8.5' which is about one foot higher than the existing Police Station.
- The building could settle as much as 6" over 30 years.
- Changes to the ingress and egress along Doherty Drive was beyond the scope of this project, but there is a new bridge planned for Doherty Drive and there would be some changes to the elevation of the road at that time.
- Flooding typically occurs to the east of the Police Station.
- The access road would not be raised significantly. Final grading plans have not been completed.
- The level in the Corporation Yard would be raised as well.
- Commissioner Young had questions about the materials. Mr. Glass stated the materials include a fiber cement shingle siding with a split-face concrete masonry (CMU) base. Above that would be cement fiber which is a durable material. These materials would make the building more pedestrian friendly and inviting to the public.
- The color split-face block would be a warm gray color, single score with an 8" X 8" tile like appearance. The Corporation Yard building walls would be the same. The fiber shingles would be a warm gray tone, the trim an off-white, and the window frames inside of the trim would be a medium gray. The roof would be a standing seam metal material in a medium green color.
- The south facing roof of both buildings would have solar photovoltaic panels.
- The buildings would meet at least a LEED Silver Certification. They would be environmentally sensitive in both the materials and site development.
- Chair Heitkamp had questions about the access between the Corporation Yard and the Police Facility and stated it seemed awkward. Mr. Glass stated it was intentional to have no direct connection between the secure Police parking lot and the Corporation Yard itself. There was a desire for vehicular separation.

Mr. Rich Adler, William Avenue, made the following comments:

- He stated this project was a bad idea.
- The area floods and the Police Facility and Corporation Yard would not be available in an emergency.
- The area is fill and subject to earthquakes.

- Doherty Drive is a very weak road and is sinking, and subject to the same conditions.
- The building does not look very “Green”. It should be energy self-sufficient with solar panels and batteries.
- There are a lot better places to building; the Police Facility should be located on the Nazari property.
- With the income levels in Marin, there should be enough money from the community to build a proper facility.
- The Commission can recommend against the project.
- Trees should be replaced at a ratio of 10:1.

Chair Heitkamp closed the Public Hearing.

Planning Director Kaufman referred to the access between the two buildings and stated staff recommends a condition be included that would require a sidewalk be added between the Police parking lot and the Corporation Yard building. There should also be a sidewalk connection from the Police Facility to Doherty Drive.

Commissioner Deignan provided the following comments:

- The Heritage Tree Permit request makes sense as long as the replacement plan compensates for the loss.
- The design is typical for a public facility and it seems to blend in. He could support it.
- He could support the Use Permit and noted the staff report gave a good rationale for approval.

Commissioner Young provided the following comments:

- If the Chinese Elm is removed then the sidewalk across from the Police Facility, then the sidewalk should be straightened out.
- He has a problem with the project and feels this is the wrong site. However, he realizes the need for this new facility and the time that has gone into finding a location and planning the project, and he could support it.
- It is unfortunate, that the project, which includes permanent facilities, is being dictated by the location of the tennis courts.
- The architectural design is uninspiring.
- He would hate to see the trees removed.

Chair Heitkamp provided the following comments:

- The trees to be removed are mostly Monterey pines, which are considered to be junk trees.
- Other alternative sites were explored for many years and they drew a blank.
- She is glad they protected the tennis courts.
- The project respects the park activities and works the new facilities into the park location.
- The Police Station has been there for a number of years.

- She is concerned about protection of the site from flooding and access during an emergency.
- She could approve the Use Permit and the Mitigated Negative Declaration.

Commissioner Young asked about the proposed date of construction. Captain Mike McDuffy stated a ballot measure could occur in March or April of next year. They did a professional poll in both communities and found they were at about 64% approval. The bond would need a super majority and they anticipate that it would pass.

M/s, Deignan/Young motioned and the Commission voted 3-0 (McCluney and Stahl absent) to approve the Mitigated Negative Declaration with the amendments shown in the July 10, 2007 Staff Report Errata Sheet.

M/s, Deignan/Young motioned and the Commission voted 3-0 (McCluney and Stahl absent) to approve the Use Permit subject to the conditions and findings set forth in the staff report.

M/s, Deignan/Young motioned and the Commission voted 3-0 (McCluney and Stahl absent) to recommend approval of the Heritage Tree Permit and Design Review to the City Council with the following conditions: 1) there shall be a sidewalk/pedestrian route along the access road between the Police parking lot and the Corporation Yard building and from the Police Facility to Doherty Drive, and 2) special attention shall be given in the landscape plan with respect to the sight line at the northwest corner of the Corporation Yard where it turns into the parking lot.

Chair Heitkamp stated there was a 10-day appeal period.

BUSINESS ITEMS

1. Commissioner Reports

There were no reports.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Toni DeFrancis
Recording Secretary