

TOWN OF YUCCA VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES AUGUST 11, 2015

OPENING CEREMONIES

Chairman Vicki Bridenstine called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Commissioners present were: Jeff Drozd, Jeff Evans, Charles McHenry, Steve Whitten, and Chair Vickie Bridenstine.

Town of Yucca Valley Staff present were:

Deputy Town Manager Shane Stueckle, Project Engineer Alex Qishta, Planning Technician Diane Olsen, and Planning Secretary Allison Brucker.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chair Bridenstine

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

RESULT: **APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER: Steven Whitten, Vice Chairman
SECONDER: Jeff Evans, Commissioner
AYES: Bridenstine, Whitten, Drozd, Evans, McHenry

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approve the Planning Commission Minutes of July 28, 2015.

A request that the Planning Commission approves as submitted the minutes of the meeting held on July 28, 2015.

MOTION

That the Planning Commission approve the Consent Agenda.

RESULT: **ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER: Steven Whitten, Vice Chairman
SECONDER: Jeff Drozd, Commissioner
AYES: Bridenstine, Whitten, Drozd, Evans, McHenry

**2. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT, EA 06-15
CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT, CUP 02-15
HOPE ACADEMY**

Proposal to develop approximately 14,000 square feet of an existing approximately 71,000 square foot, excluding corridors, commercial structure into a charter school for grades K thru 12. The proposal includes ten classrooms and a multi-purpose room, with a maximum capacity of 428. The hours of operation are Monday thru Friday, 8AM to 4 PM.

RECOMMENDATION:

Environmental Assessment, EA 02-14: That the Planning Commission finds the project to be exempt from CEQA under Section 15301, class 01, Existing Facilities;

Conditional Use Permit, CUP 01-15: That the Planning Commission approves CUP 01-15 based upon the information contained within the staff report, the required findings and the recommended conditions of approval.

Commissioner Jeff Evans requested to be recused from this item to avoid any potential conflict of interest as an employee of the Morongo Unified School District.

STAFF REPORT

Deputy Town Manager Stueckle provided the staff report. He provided an overview of the proposed project, which was for the expansion of an existing charter school into a greater portion of an existing commercial structure. The expansion would include ten classrooms and a multi-purpose area with a maximum capacity of 428. The program includes a mix of elementary students attending a day program, and high school student participating in an independent study program. The program currently has approximately 450 students, and the expansion would allow the program to expand to approximately 620 students. The maximum number of attendees for the on-site elementary program would be 250, and there would be a maximum of 74 meeting a day for the independent study students.

Staff stated that the parking requirement for schools required 1 parking space for every ten students, and one space for every staff member. Staff determined that the project required 57 parking spaces based upon 250 elementary students, a daily maximum of 74 high school students, and 25 staff members. The site currently has 430 parking spaces, 263 of which are required for other additional uses on the site. The site currently has 110 spaces in excess of what is required.

Staff said that, at staff's request, the applicant had submitted a traffic study. The applicant was requesting the inclusion of a pickup dropoff area included on the site, and the study identified having cars enter from Warren Vista and stack as the best way to accomplish that. The study identified a total of 162 peak am trips and 34 peak pm trips.

Staff said that the item was noticed as a public hearing and that no comments in either support or opposition were submitted. Staff recommended that the Planning Commission find the project exempt from CEQA as an Existing Facility, and that the Commission approve CUP 01-15.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ITEM 2

- Kyle Hannah, the executive director of Hope Academy, and David Price, Board Member for Hope Academy, spoke in support of the project as representatives for the applicant. Mr. Price provided an overview of the program and the proposed project.

END PUBLIC COMMENTS

Commissioner McHenry asked if the traffic study showed any impact on the level of service at the intersection with the highway near Warren Vista. Staff said that there would be the level of service for the driveways and Warren Vista would not change.

Commissioner Drozd said that it was a straight forward project and that he had no comments or questions.

Commissioner Whitten asked for clarification on the original permit for the existing facility. He expressed concern over the project being located in the commercial corridor next to the highway and the control of the attending children. The applicant said that part of why they were requesting the expansion was to provide indoor play areas, and the applicant said that their program established drop off and pick up plans and provided an overview of their process.

Commissioner Whitten expressed concern over the potential safety issues and impacts on other tenants. Commissioner Whitten also expressed concern about the lack of an outdoor playground area. The applicant said that they had not been able to find a facility in Yucca Valley with a contiguous outdoor area.

Commissioner Whitten asked if they had a video security system on site. The applicant said that they didn't have much video on the site, and preferred to have staff present and onsite to provide security. The applicant said that they had recently added a new assistant principal whose primary concern would be security.

Commissioner Whitten expressed concern about students walking along Warren Vista, and asked if that was being considered as part of SRTS programs. He also expressed concerns about students crossing the highway mid-block and the attraction of the business across the highway from the site. Commissioner Whitten asked if the facility was fully ADA compliant and if it had fire sprinklers. The applicant said that it was.

Chair Bridenstine asked if the tenant improvements were currently in progress or when they expected to start them. The applicant said that the tenant improvements had been submitted to Building and Safety, and they would like to start construction as soon as possible. They said that they would have to schedule the work so that it was safe while school is in session. They

may begin work on the unoccupied area and either use temporary bathroom facilities or extend the work so that the bathroom renovations occur while school is not in session. The applicant said that they will not increase enrollment until the expansion and improvements are complete.

Chair Bridenstine asked if the creation of the stripped drop off lane would affect the current drive aisle, and if there would be enough space remaining for two way traffic. Staff said that the site plan indicated enough space to allow for the stripped drop of lane and two way traffic.

Chair Bridenstine asked about the condition to dedicate the additional right of way along Warren Vista; she asked how that would be handled, as the applicant was a tenant. Staff said that they would work with the applicant and the property owner regarding the additional 3 foot right of way dedication.

Commissioner Whitten said that he was aware that the Town was in the process of contracting consultant to conduct a traffic study which would include the intersection at Warren Vista and Yucca Trail. He asked if the information from the traffic study provided by the applicant would be included in that study. Staff said that it would.

MOTION

That the Planning Commission finds the project exempt from CEQA under section 1501, class 01, Existing Facilities; and that the Planning Commission approves CUP 01-15 based upon the information contained within the staff report, the required findings and the recommended conditions of approval.

- RESULT:** **APPROVED**
- MOVER:** Charles McHenry, Commissioner
- SECONDER:** Jeff Drozd, Commissioner
- AYES:** Bridenstine, Drozd, McHenry
- NOES:** Whitten
- RECUSED:** Evans

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

None

STAFF REPORTS AND COMMENTS

Deputy Town Manager Stueckle provided an overview of the status of current and upcoming projects.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS AND COMMENTS

Commissioner Drozd had no comments

Commissioner Evans asked for additional information on an upcoming project.

Commissioner McHenry thanked staff and wished Hope Academy well.

Vice Chair Whitten said that he would like to see the sign ordinance come back to the Planning Commission for revision. He asked for additional information on current and upcoming development projects, and he also thanked staff and wished Hope Academy well.

Chair Bridenstine thanked staff and wished Hope Academy well.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next regular meeting of the Yucca Valley Planning Commission will be held on Tuesday, August 25, 2015.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was closed at 6:56.

Respectfully Submitted,

Allison Brucker

Planning Secretary