



TUESDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2024
701 East Carson Street, Carson, CA 90745
Juanita Millender-McDonald Community Center
Carson Dominguez Hall
6:30 p.m.

MINUTES
MEETING OF THE
PLANNING COMMISSION

Members:	Dianne Thomas Chair	Louie Diaz Vice Chair	Frederick Docdocil
	Carlos Guerra	Del Huff	Richard Hernandez
	DeQuita Mfume	Clarence Johnson	Leticia Wilson
Alternates:	Jaime Monteclaro		
Staff:	Christopher Palmer, AICP Planning Manager	Benjamin Jones Assistant City Attorney	Laura Gonzalez Planning Secretary

“In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, if you require a disability related modification or accommodation to attend or participate in this meeting, including auxiliary aids or services, please call the Planning Department at 310-952-1761 at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.” (Government Code Section 54954.2)

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Thomas Called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Guerra led the Salute to the Flag.

3. ROLL CALL

Planning Commissioners Present: Thomas, Diaz, Guerra, Huff, Docdocil, Mfume, Johnson

Planning Commissioners Absent: Hernandez, Monteclaro, Wilson

Planning Staff Present: Planning Manager Palmer, Senior Planner Alexander, Assistant Planner Whiting, Assistant City Attorney Jones, Planning Secretary Gonzalez

4. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FOR MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

None

5. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FOR NON-PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS LISTED ON THE AGENDA (MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC)

None

6. CONSENT CALENDAR

A) Approval of Minutes – October 8, 2024

Planning Commission Decision:

Vice Chair Diaz moved, seconded by Commissioner Huff, to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

7. PUBLIC HEARING

A) Modification of Conditions of Discretionary Permit (MOD) 00001-24

Request:

A request to modify the conditions of approval for Tentative Parcel Map (TPM) TPM 100000-21, Tentative Parcel Map No. 82951

Staff Recommendation:

Assistant Planner Whiting presented the staff report and the recommendation to ADOPT Resolution No. 24-2879, entitled, "A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF CARSON FINDING A CEQA EXEMPTION AND APPROVING MODIFICATION OF CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL OF A DISCRETIONARY PERMIT NO. 00001-2024, FOR TENTATIVE PARCEL MAP NO. 82951 TO SPLIT ONE LOT INTO 2 LOTS LOCATED AT 22511 S. FIGUEROA STREET. / APN 734-103-0007."

Commissioner Guerra – Can you explain the difference between Tentative Tract Map and the Tentative Parcel Map?

Assistant Planner Whiting – The difference in general is the number of parcels that are created. I mentioned in my staff report that there is a Tentative Tract Map that is currently under review, which many of these conditions that are being requested to be removed from tonight are being considered. The Tract Map is for multiple units for a condo development. The parcel map is for four lots or fewer. This would be for two lots to be categorized as a parcel map.

Chair Thomas opened the public hearing. There being no input, Chair Thomas closed the public hearing.

Planning Commission Decision:

Vice Chair Diaz moved, seconded by Commissioner Docdocil, to approve staff's recommendation, thus adopting Resolution 24-2879. Motion carried, 7-0.

8. DISCUSSION

Arlington Rodgers (Director of Public Works) – I have been here for 18 months and on my first day in front of the Council I was tasked with the medians. The weeds were about 4 or 5 feet high. We've come a long way. At that time, I stated to the mayor and the council that I had a plan. This is the result of that, but we've gone a step further that I wasn't even expecting and that is why we are here. This started as a simple maintenance plan where we would have uniformity throughout the city. We would have a plant and a color palette that would be utilized by the public works maintenance team. It would be planted throughout the city with less maintenance so that we would never come back to the 5 feet high weeds in the medians. That was the whole goal of this. City Management staff thought this would be a good idea to add to the development code so that when new companies come in we look consistent throughout the city. That's how we got here.

Planning Manager Palmer – This is for the commission to give feedback so they can take it back to the consulting team and develop the final draft.

Des Mahoney (Breen Design Group) – We are very pleased to be here tonight to present the City of Carson Streetscape Mater Plan.

Analia Escobar Gomez (Community Works Design Group) – Provided a presentation.

Vice Chair Diaz – It looks great, but I think that the concept should start from Figueroa all the way down to Santa Fe. We don't have anything that looks like this at the east side of town. We don't have any medians. Can you create something at a smaller scale but continuity all the way through Carson?

Commissioner Huff – Is there any particular height of the plants that we are looking not to exceed?

Analia Escobar Gomez – We picked plants in the plant palette that could be 3 feet or less. There are a few different shrubs that would potentially grow a little bit taller than that.

Commissioner Huff – Are the trees that you are bringing full grown trees?

Analia Escobar Gomez – They would be matured trees. The trees that have been approved for the streets don't have a lot of root issues, they are small evergreen, and are slow growing to eliminate impact of those potential issues.

Commissioner Huff – Are the flowers annual or perennial?

Analia Escobar Gomez – We strategically selected plants and created a staggering variety so that every street has blooms at any given time.

Commissioner Guerra – I'm curious about the water usage and cost factors involved.

Alicia Escobar Gomez – We tried to select all plants that are drought tolerant. They are low to moderate water usage. In terms of areas where we are eliminating turf, it will drastically reduce the water use.

Arlington Rodgers – This will be a multi-year project. It will start a little bit in each district. I'm in the process of developing a long-term cost stream that we can continue to maintenance. One of the things that was presented to me was the Carson Street. I believe that was a CIP project with the medians. They did not do the best that they could do as far as the plants. We want to eliminate that by having a funding stream in perpetuity for maintenance so that doesn't happen. I haven't figure out all the details yet, but I'm working on it. We are looking at a grant to reclaim recycled water.

Commissioner Guerra – Do you have an estimated time when this project will be completed?

Arlington Rodgers – No, I don't want to rush it. This is something that's going to be in perpetuity and it's going to take time to do it right.

Commissioner Docdocil – You mentioned that you are selecting plants based on being drought tolerant, are these predominately native species?

Alicia Escobar Gomez – We have a small selection of natives. We wanted to create something that is vibrant and drought tolerant. Natives have a difficult time for long term durability. We wanted to consider what that would look like not only for long term durability but also making sure that we had a good selection of things that would not have to be replaced frequently.

Commissioner Docdocil – The big deal with having trees next to streets would be the root system. Can you talk about how that is planned so it does not post a problem down the line in terms of cracking of the pavement.

Alicia Escobar Gomez – We are leaving most of the mature trees that are healthy within the existing medians. If they need replacements in the areas where there are limited trees or maybe a problematic species, we will be looking to replace those. There are a lot of medians that have broken or other maintenance issues with the irrigation. Addressing that will greatly deter any issues with the roots. The roots come up to look for the water and that will be addressed with the irrigation.

Arlington Rodgers – Another foundational implementation that has been put into practice is that the maintenance team now operates in maintenance zones. Now we have a systematic way of approaching the maintenance. The goal is that with the systematic and methodical approach we will be able to see these things before they become a problem.

Commissioner Johnson – I noticed that date palms are on the list. Sometimes dates can attract pests.

Alicia Escobar Gomez – We specified that they are the non-fruiting variety that way we eliminate that issue.

Commissioner Mfume – I'm wondering about safety for people running across the street. Have you considered any fencing or deterrent?

Alicia Escobar Gomez – That is something that we brought up and it can be addressed when it comes time to do the construction plans for the project.

Vice Chair Diaz – The plan of action, the preventative maintenance from one end to the other and start all over again, and standardize procedures in place, that's the only way that would work and be in perpetuity. Thank you for that.

Chair Thomas – Do you have sculptures anywhere in your plans?

Arlington Rodgers – No, but if that's what the council desires we obviously wouldn't have a problem with that.

Chair Thomas – Sculptures make a great statement as well as the boulders. When you get to the Council, they will ask you if you have sculptures in the plans. With the Olympics coming to Carson, we want to make a statement.

Arlington Rodgers – My goal is to have something fantastic before 2028. One of the next foundational implementations that we'll be doing is a project specific maintenance agreement with Caltrans where we take some of those areas Caltrans does. I already had discussions on how we want potentially rockscape some of those areas. We will take over the maintenance of the way finder signs for Caltrans. Caltrans will supply the public works team with the signs, and we will replace them when there's graffiti on them. We want to make sure that everything that public works implements has a foundational foothold so that this can happen in perpetuity.

Chair Thomas – I like that we have a continuous color scape that's happening throughout the year.

Alicia Escobar Gomez – They are perennial plants that bloom annually, meaning they come back year after year. They won't need to be replaced.

Chair Thomas – I love what you have done. We are on the same page. We're getting ready to make Carson number one on the maps.

9. MANAGER'S REPORT

Planning Manager Palmer – October is National Planning Month. I'm taking this time to recognize the many valuable contributions made by the professional community and regional planning team from the Community Development in the city of Carson. I want to extend a heartfelt thanks to the Planning Commission for the work that you do and the continued commitment to Public Service. McKina is going to do a presentation for projects that were considered by the Planning Commission over the last year. This year the planning department produced 59 ADU's, 119 building permits were finalized, 1121 overall permits were pulled, 746 planning applications were received from January to October, and there are over 2000 applicants helped at our public counter yearly. We thank you for the work that you do. Congratulations and happy National Planning Month.

Senior Planner Alexander presented the video highlighting projects that were presented before the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Guerra – Will the presentation be available on YouTube? A lot of people want to know all this good stuff.

Chair Thomas – What is the availability? When is the council going to see it? Will it be on the website for the city?

Planning Manager Palmer – This was something that we did for our team. We can make it available on our website. We are doing this every October.

Chair Thomas – There's a lot of work being done by this department, and it needs to be shared.

Planning Manager Palmer – The council requested that the Chair and Vice Chair come to a City Council meeting and share what's been going on. The video will be available to you when we set the date to speak with the council.

Commissioner Huff – Please let all the commissioner know when that's going to happen. We would also like to show up. The video should be made available to our residents. This is valuable information, especially the numbers.

Chair Thomas – Thank you so much for all that you do.

10. COMMISSIONERS' ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Commissioner Johnson – Happy to be here, grateful to serve, and thank you for the presentation.

Commissioner Mfume – I really enjoyed the video. We don't realize how much work we're putting here. This is an awesome team. You take care of us. Assistant City Attorney you are awesome.

Commissioner Docdocil – Happy Planning Month. I appreciate the presentation that you all created. It's a nice reminder of all the work that we do collectively as a team for the city. I agree that this needs to be shared. Some of the facts and figures that were presented need to be out there.

Commissioner Huff – It's a blessing to be part of this commission but also to live in Carson. This is such a beautiful place. We have all types of new enhancements going up and things to look forward to. I thank you and congratulate every one of you.

Commissioner Guerra – I'm extremely pleased and honored to see the great work that your staff does. Your planners are excellent, dedicated, and hardworking people. Our Assistant City Attorney is amazing. He keeps us on our toes and makes sure that we do the appropriate things. I feel blessed that we have such a hard-working staff that's making the city of Carson amazing.

Vice Chair Diaz – Each and every night we have an opportunity to express our gratitude and admiration for the hard work that everybody does here in this great city. We are all in it to win and to make sure that the city continues to foster and grow. Thank you for preparing us for each of our meetings so that we can make those tough and right decisions.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:31 p.m.

Dianne Thomas
Chairperson

Attest By:

Laura Gonzalez
Planning Secretary