

Item 3



Planning & Economic Development Department

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PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 13, 2010

7:00 P.M.

CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
205 SOUTH WILLOWBROOK AVENUE

1) **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** - The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Hill.

2) **ROLL CALL**

Commissioners Present:

Juanita Green-Wright

Lillie P. Darden

Michael Hill

Kim Saunders

Cleo Turner

Staff Representatives Present:

Derek Hull

Anita Aviles

3) **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – November 11, 2009. It was moved by Commissioner Turner that the minutes of November 11, 2009 be approved. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hill and carried unanimously.

1) **PUBLIC HEARING ITEM(S)**

A. **ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT NO. 09-03/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION NO. 923/FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT NO. 001** – A request of the City of Compton to redevelop a 5.11 gross acre site (222,772 square feet) which includes the following improvements: 1) the demolition of the existing MTA Transit Center; 2) the construction of a two-story Transit Management Operation Center that will contain 7,600 square feet that will be fronting along North Willowbrook Avenue; 3) the construction of a new Transit Plaza along North Willowbrook Avenue; 4) the construction and installation of three (3) forty (40) foot bus bays along North Willowbrook Avenue; 5) the construction and installation of five (5) sixty (60) foot bus bays along Palmer Street; 6) the construction and installation of a new Bus Canopy that will cover 12,175 square feet along North Willowbrook Avenue and Palmer Street; 7) the construction and installation of right-of-way street improvements, including parkways and landscaping, on North Willowbrook Avenue, Palmer Street, North Tamarind Avenue and East Carson Place; 8) the construction and installation of off-site street improvements, including parkway hardscape and landscaping, along North Willowbrook Avenue, Palmer Street, North Tamarind Avenue and East Carson Place; 9) the installation of a new “COMPTON” identification sign along North Willowbrook Avenue; 10) the construction and installation of off-site infrastructure improvement; and, 11) temporary construction activities, including temporary lighting,

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limited vehicular and pedestrian circulation, and temporary road closure at 300-310 N. Willowbrook Ave., Compton, in the C-L (Limited Commercial) zone.

Commissioner Darden moved that the public hearing regarding Environmental Assessment No. 09-03/Mitigated Negative Declaration No. 923/Finding of No Significant Impact No. 001 be opened. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Saunders and carried unanimously.

City Attorney Aviles stated that the City Attorney's office is requesting that this matter be continued. One of the issues is that the Commissioners are being asked to approve these environmental documents directly and the Attorney's Office believes that it is not within the Commission's power under Section 1008 of the Charter, at most they will be able to recommend approval to the City Council. The second issue is that the environmental documents that have been attached, the CEQA and NEPA documents, both appear to have internal inconsistency between the boxes that were checked, indicating that there were environmental impacts and Mitigated Measures that were identified. Therefore, they would like the opportunity to meet with the consultant that prepared these documents and find out what appear to be those discrepancies.

Staff Representative Hull asked the Commission if they want to proceed with the presentation due to that there is an audience present.

City Attorney Aviles stated that it is up to the Commission to proceed with the presentation being that there are members of the public present that would like to be heard.

Commissioner Turner moved that the public hearing regarding Environmental Assessment No. 09-03/Mitigated Negative Declaration No. 923/Finding of No Significant Impact No. 001 be opened. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Saunders and carried unanimously.

Staff Representative Hull stated that this project is located at 300-310 North Willowbrook Avenue in the Second Council District. Nearest cross street are Compton Boulevard and Willowbrook Avenue.

Staff Representative Hull stated that project site's land use designations are Public/Quasi Public (P) and General Commercial (GC). Adjacent land uses are to the North, General Commercial (GC); South, General Commercial (GC); East, High Density Residential (HR); and West, Mixed Use (MU).

The project site's zoning is currently Limited Commercial (CL). Adjacent zonings are to the North, Limited Commercial (CL); South, Limited Commercial (CL); East, High Density Residential (RH) and Limited Commercial (CL); and to the West, Limited Commercial (CL).

Staff Representative Hull stated that the project is located in within the Redevelopment Project Area and the Enterprise Zone.

Staff Representative Hull stated that the project site consists of two (2) city-owned properties that contain a total area of approximately 5.05 acres. It is currently vacant but previously housed the Martin Luther King Transit Center.



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Staff Representative Hull stated that the transit center will include the following improvements:

- the closure of Willowbrook Avenue between Vernice Dredd Street and the southern property line of the Willow Walk;
- the creation of a pedestrian plaza;
- the re-routing of vehicle traffic along Vernice Dredd Street to Tamarind Avenue;
- the extension of Carson Place to Tamarind Avenue to accommodate for the re-routing of buses;
- the construction of a 7,600 square foot, two-story, traffic management and operations center (TMOC);
- a new temporary parking lot and the eventual construction of a new parking structure;
- a new bus depot; and
- various off-site improvements (i.e. hardscape, landscape and irrigation).

Commissioner Saunders asked who was Municipal Resource Center, stating that she did not see any contact information for this consultant.

Staff Representative Hull stated that Municipal Resource Center is the consultant that prepared the documents on behalf of the City. Mr. Marc Blodgett is the president of that organization.

Commissioner Saunders asked if Mr. Blodgett representing a different company or if he had change the name of his company.

Staff Representative Hull stated the Municipal Resource Center is a joint partner with Marc Blodgett. The individual that is working in this particular project is Oliver Mujica, who signed the environmental documents.

Resident, Ulysses Terry, 708 South Corlett Avenue, questioned where Carson Street was located.

Commissioner Saunders stated that Carson Street is located past Alameda Street, a continuation of the Palmer Street, west of Alameda.

Resident, James Liggins, 1800 West Brazil Street, asked if there are any plans to put back the Televillage Technology Center in the new Transit Center. He mention that there are many kids falling behind and asks the Commission to take that into consideration when new projects come into the City and to look for some type of math and science academy option. He was concerned whether that facility will be part of the new development.

Mr. Michael Antwine, Deputy Director, Community Redevelopment Agency, stated that the new transit center does not have that service. However, staff is working with the Planning and Economic Development Department to create some type of social services center. The previous Transit Center had a large square footage that was approximately 10,000 sq. ft. and the new Transportation Operational Center is only about 1,200 sq. ft. on the ground floor, which has very limited office space that can provide those types of services. Staff is working with the Planning and Economic Development Department to create a smaller business incubator type of program that could be housed temporarily in the new Transportation Management Operational Center.

Commissioner Saunders requested clarification regarding what is meant by educational center in paragraph 2 of the Analysis that reads, "The security office is located within a glass box that



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allows wider visibility for security as well as allowing visual display monitors enabling the security office to become an educational center as well”.

Mr. Antwine stated that the description is a generic description but the primary use for that area would be for security related activities and services.

Commissioner Saunders stated that educational center cannot be used as a generic term because when the public sees that, they will assume that an educational use is being proposed. She recommends that if that is not intent not to use it.

Staff Representative Hull stated that it could have been that at one time the project did proposed an educational center, but now it doesn't. The description could have been captured from what was previously proposed.

Commissioner Green-Wright agreed with Commissioner Saunders that the description not be use.

Mr. Antwine stated that Redevelopment Agency will make those recommendations to the Planning and Economic Development Department's Director.

Commissioner Hill asked if staff had looked into bringing the facility up to date with new technology.

Mr. Antwine stated that Redevelopment Agency is working with the architect and contractor to insure that facility has infrastructure necessary to support these new technologies. As previously stated they are working with the Planning and Economic Development Department in setting up an incubator program and hope to have certain area within the facility that will allow for Wi-Fi access. CRA is currently working with the City's IT Department to identify the amount of infrastructure that will be needed in the data ports. It is currently within the design, features, and equipment's budget for telecommunicated and computer related equipment in the second floor, were all the traffic lights will be managed for rail and bus related activities. In the first floor the plans are to have available some of that infrastructure of the 21st Century technological advances for residents and passengers.

Commissioner Hill recommended that they allow sufficient space in the infrastructure for years to come.

Mr. Antwine stated that he will provide more detail information in the staff report for next month meeting.

Commissioner Saunders stated that she is concerned about the management of the property. She is concerned how the Commission will decide what the retail mix will look like and the functionality of the two-story Transportation Operational Management Center and the proposed technology education center. But she feels uncomfortable how there are a lot of variables that are the same of what was in place with the old transit center. She asks that if a new building is being created that more thought should be put into it to take this into the 21st Century. She stated that new does not necessarily mean better, if is going to be better our way of thinking should be more sophisticated and not just provide our citizens a new building that will have the same dysfunctional manner of operation it had in the past.

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Mr. Antwine stated that he certainly understands her concern and that he will work with Mr. Hull's office to delineate her concerns in the staff report.

Resident, Vicki L. Johnson, 1712 West Brazil Street, asked if the residents would be involved in what retail stores that will come into the facility.

Mr. Antwine stated that he would have to come back in February with the answer to that question since the project will have very minimum retail space.

Resident, James Liggins, 1800 West Brazil Street, asked how the new Transportation Operational Center benefit the community because it seems like it will benefit the Transportation Authority more than the City.

Staff Representative Hull stated that part of the development of the new Transit Center is help the actual circulation and creation of a pedestrian promenade. People will actually be able to get off the rail and will no longer have to go across Willowbrook Avenue to catch the bus. The promenade will solely be dedicated for pedestrian activities. The pedestrian promenade will minimize the pedestrian accidents as what has occurred in the past while trying to get to the bus from the rail. In addition there is a need to update the facility itself. Staff Representative Hull stated that the new transit center will have a series of canopies that will be located on Willowbrook Avenue and along Tamarind Avenue that will offer a more aesthetic design. There will be identifications installed along the rail to identify that this stop is Compton, a very large 16 foot individual letters identifying that you are approaching the City of Compton either from the south or north. There will be better circulation of the buses; one lane will be dedicated for buses only. It is a complete redesign. Then, at a later phase the City is going to create a Compton Cart Program that will provide goods and services to the people who will be utilizing the transit center.

Mr. Liggins stated that he understands the transit and logistic benefits, but he believes that it is in opportunity lost, if we are going to have that much traffic activity, more retail activity should be involved. Mr. Liggins asked if this will benefit the City by bringing in more jobs.

Staff Representative Hull stated (inaudible)

Commissioner Green-Wright stated that those jobs will basically be filled already because they will only be coming from a different location.

Staff Representative Hull mentioned that the finance portion of the project is that MTA has donated approximately \$3.2 million to fund the project.

Mr. Antwine stated that all City operated public transportation will be operating from this facility, as well as, Greyhound and MTA. The Transportation Operational Facility will be centrally located so that public related transportation that passes through the City will be managed through this center.

Mr. Antwine stated that Redevelopment Agency is planning to build at a later phase a 15,000 sq. ft. building next the new transit center that will hold at least 10,000 sq. ft. of retail space. At that time the City will have a diverse amount of retail services for the residents of the City of Compton. Mr. Antwine stated that Redevelopment Agency is very excited about this project and the benefits that it will bring to the residents of Compton.



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Commissioner Darden asked if the \$3.2 million was the only contribution from MTA.

Mr. Antwine stated that for this particular project that will all, all other sources will be coming from the Redevelopment Agency and other federal dollars that will possibly be used for the project. MTA's portion is a one-time contribution.

Commissioner Green-Wright asked if there were any meetings on this particular project.

Staff Representative Hull stated that there were a series of meetings when the Redevelopment Agency undertook the Downtown Specific Plan. At that time the public had the opportunity to comment. A series of meetings are going to start this month with stakeholders to discuss some additional retail opportunities.

Commissioner Green-Wright asked how would that information go out to the community.

Staff Representative Hull stated that it will be available via the internet, flyers at City facilities, and will continue to be mentioned at the City Council meetings.

Commission Turner moved to continue Environmental Assessment No. 09-03/Mitigated Negative Declaration No. 923/Finding of No Significant Impact No. 001. The motioned was second by Commissioner Darden. Environmental Assessment No. 09-03/Mitigated Negative Declaration No. 923/Finding of No Significant Impact No. 001, was continued until February 10, 2010 to allow the City Attorney's Office to review the Environmental Assessment and Mitigated documents.

City Attorney Aviles stated that for the Commissioners consideration that they review the environmental documents. The Commission does not have the authority to approve them directly and that it will have to go for recommendation to the City Council. Commission might see conditions of approval attached in the staff report but the City Attorneys do not believe that those are proper because this is not a conditional use permit. Commission will only be recommending approval of the environmental documents and mitigated measures that are included within those documents.

- B. CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT CASE NO. 2637** – A request of T-Mobile to construct a wireless facility consisting of a 47' high mono-pole with 12 panel antennas, a parabolic antenna and an equipment enclosure at the base at 1909 W. Compton Blvd., Compton, in the C-L (Limited Commercial) Zone.

Staff Representative Hull stated that staff received an email from the applicant requesting that this item be continued until February 10, 2010 to allow them more time to submit their revisions.

It was moved to by Commissioner Darden, second by Commissioner Saunders to continue Conditional Use Permit Case No. 2637 until February 10, 2010.

5) INFORMATIONAL ITEM (A Report of Previously Approved Cases)

Commissioner Green-Wright asked status on the project located at 950 West Alondra Blvd.



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Staff Representative Hull stated that the church is about 95% complete and the townhomes are about 50% complete. The applicant, the Bedford Group has come to the City to see if the City can assist with financing to complete a portion of the project. Staff has indicated to the applicant that they will look at available funding sources. Staff has also recommended that they contact Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas' Office, Assembly Hall's Office, and Congresswoman's Laura Richardson's Office for assistance.

Commissioner Green-Wright asked how much money they were asking for.

Staff Representative Hull stated that they need approximately \$1.8 million to complete the residential portion of the project.

Commissioner Green-Wright stated that the wood that is there right now seems rotted and does not look like it will be able to resist whatever its purpose is. Therefore, it is not 50% complete if they have to replace all of that.

Staff Representative Hull stated that Building Department has come out to assess the property and has determined that should construction resume in a certain amount of time the wood that is currently there will be okay.

Staff Representative Hull stated that staff has contacted the applicant and a meeting is scheduled to discuss additional funding for the project.

Commissioner Green-Wright requested that staff inform the applicant that they are still required to maintain the property while everything is in hold.

Commissioner Darden asked regarding the status of the carwash on Long Beach Blvd. requesting that the Redevelopment Agency talk to the applicant and find out what is going on with the project.

Commissioner Darden asked for a status on the appeal of the Charter School at 4301 East Rosecrans Ave. and if it has been resolved.

Staff Representative Hull stated that it has not been resolved. Staff has met with the City Attorney's Office to discuss the implications of the project. The school is apparently in operation. The applicant is operating two additional schools in Inglewood and in City of Los Angeles. Mr. Hull stated that he was contacted by the City of Los Angeles for a similar issue where the applicant has opened a charter school and has not obtained the appropriate permits. The City Attorney's Office advised staff to send out a letter to the applicant to submit a formal variance application. He stated that staff followed up with applicant at the end of December and applicant informed staff that they were not ready to submit the application. Therefore, staff will follow-up with a letter to inform the applicant that they will have a certain amount of time to submit their application or staff will take other actions.

6) OLD BUSINESS

7) NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Hill stated that he is concerned about the shopping center behind Fresh and Easy and how can the City assist them in leasing out those empty spaces.



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Staff Representative Hull stated that the Economic Development Division offers technical assistance and can direct the owner as to where he can find the available resources.

Commissioner Darden suggested that the Commission take issues like that into consideration when approving the projects.

Commissioner Saunders stated that the applicant assured the Commission that he had the tenants for the shopping center. Ms. Saunders stated that there is a resource that the City can give out to the applicants, Buxton. Buxton is an international and national well known company that works with communities and assist with retail development; they help with tenancy mix and having the right tenants using the psychological of the community.

8) COMMISSION COMMENTS

Staff Representative Hull stated that the Planning and Economic Development Department encourages the Commission to submit comments in relates to the **(inaudible)** Plan, if the Commission could submit those comments by the last Monday of January or first week of February.

Staff Representative Hull stated that he holds a position as an Election Chair in the American Planning Association (APA) and this year APA will be having their 40th Anniversary right before the National Planning Conference on April 8 through 10, 2010. Therefore, if any of the commissioners interested in running for any of the position, he can send their names in for nominations. The positions are: Chair Elect, Vice-Chair of Policies, Vice-Chair of Programs, Secretary, Treasurer, and Sergeant of Arms.

Commissioner Saunders asked if the committee was national or just for California.

Staff Representative Hull stated that it is national.

Commissioner Saunders stated that when she was at the last meeting they had mentioned that they were going to have their 40th Anniversary for two days right before the National Conference. Is that the case?

Staff Representative Hull stated that it is correct. The announcements have already gone out announcing the 40th Anniversary from April 8 to the 10.

Commissioner Green-Wright stated since the conference is coming up the commission needs to decide in who will be the two delegates.

Staff Representative Hull stated that he will be hosting two presentations, one for the African American Planning Directors Conference on Wednesday, and the other at the National Conference on Saturday. The National Planning Conference is from the April 10th to the 13th.

Commission Green-Wright asked the Commission who will be interested in attending the conference stating that she would be interested.

Staff Representative Hull suggested that two commissioners attend the African American Planners Conference and two attend the National Conference.

Commissioner Green-Wright suggested that the individuals attending take advantage of both conferences.



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The Commission agreed that Commissioners Green-Wright and Darden attend the APA conferences in New Orleans.

9) AUDIENCE COMMENTS

City Attorney Craig Cornwell stated that he really enjoyed the Planning Commission meeting and that he will switching roles with his Deputy City Attorney so that he can also be part of the these meetings.

Commissioner Green-Wright thanked the City Attorney for providing legal representation at the meetings.

Ms. Barbara McComb stated that she will be submitting an application within next couple of months for a church project.

Mr. Ulysses Terry, Oversight Committee, stated that he is present as interested community member and invited the Planning Commissioners to their Oversight Committee meetings.

It was moved by Commissioner Turner that the meeting be adjourned. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Darden and carried unanimously.

DEREK R. HULL, DIRECTOR
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

JUANITA GREEN-WRIGHT,
CHAIRPERSON

