



Planning & Economic Development Department - Planning Division

205 S. Willowbrook Ave., Compton, CA 90220 (310) 605-5532 Fax: (310) 761-1488 www.comptoncity.org

**PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2013
7:00 P.M.
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
205 SOUTH WILLOWBROOK AVENUE**

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

2) **ROLL CALL**

Commissioners Present:

Juanita Green-Wright
Michael Hill
Cleo Turner
Elizabeth Atkinson

Staff Representatives Present:

Robert Delgadillo – Planning Department
Anita Aviles – City Attorney’s Office

3) **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – The minutes were presented for approval for September 11, 2013.

On a motion by Commissioner Hill, seconded by Commissioner Turner, the Planning Commission adopted the minutes of September 11, 2013.

Ayes: Commissioner Green-Wright
Commissioner Hill
Commissioner Turner
Commissioner Atkinson

4) **NEW BUSINESS:**

A. Determination for Unlisted Use – A request of Bob Combs to have the Planning Commission determine whether a community garden is a use similar to a nursery/horticultural which is a permitted use in the Limited Commercial (C-L) zone. The site is located at 1317 S. Long Beach Blvd.

Robert Delgadillo, Interim Planning Director, addressed the Planning Commission regarding this item. Mr. Delgadillo stated that the Commission will listen to the applicant’s presentation and determine if the use is similar in nature to that of nursery/horticultural.

Bob Combs, Metro Community Development (Applicant), addressed the Planning Commission regarding his intention to place a community garden in the Limited Commercial zone. Mr. Combs introduced his team on this project; Mike Herman – Metro Community Development, Deb Walkemeyer – Master Gardener, U.C. Davis Cooperative Extension, Dr. Sherridan Ross – Master Gardener. Stacy Barnes – City of Compton Emergency Management Coordinator, was present and signed up to speak in favor of this project.

Deb Walkemeyer, Master Gardener, addressed the Commission regarding the benefits of having a community garden at that location. Ms. Walkemeyer stated that research concludes that community gardens benefit the community by way of land usage, bringing about collaboration with local businesses and the community, an

education tool for children to learn to eat healthier foods, and a socialization tool for neighbors to get together and get to know one another.

Mike Herman, Metro Community Development, addressed the Commission in favor of the community garden. Mr. Herman stated that the garden can educate and support the community to healthy food options. He also stated that the American Heart Association is in favor of community gardens, and have funded gardens in schools with grants up to ten thousand dollars (\$10,000).

Bob Combs, Metro Community Development, stated that the City has a large obesity rate of approximately 39% and it is obvious that people need to eat healthier. Also, he stated that the gardens will produce organic fruits and vegetables which can be eaten, sold or donated. The project will fund the employment of approximately four (4) youth between the ages of 16-24 to maintain the gardens.

Mike Herman stated that sixty (60) percent of the property will be used for community garden rental at fifty (50) dollars/six months or one hundred (100) dollars per year. The garden will provide the opportunity for youth to receive education through their Leadership Development program and Mr. Herman wants to eventually have the garden apply for and receive its "organic" certification.

Stacy Barnes, Emergency Management Coordinator, addressed the Commission in favor of the garden project. Ms. Barnes stated that the Department of Public Health stated that there is possible food insecurity during a catastrophe and it is important for people to know how to grow their own food. The Fire Department will assist as a partner in providing education to the gardener and they are currently researching grants for funding certain aspects of this project.

Dr. Sherridan Ross, Master Gardener, addressed the Commission regarding the community garden project. Dr. Ross stated that as a master gardener he has worked with several communities to create and maintain sustainable gardens. Dr. Ross stated that they will provide workshops to advise and demonstrate how to grow and maintain the garden.

Commissioner Turner asked the applicant about the water source for the garden. Mr. Combs responded that the water will be provided through the Compton Water Department and the gardeners will be responsible to water their own garden plots, there will be no automatic watering system installed.

Commissioner Green-Wright asked the applicant about the size of each garden plots. The Mr. Combs responded that plots will be sized at 4ftX8ft or the size can be adjusted to accommodate specific uses.

Commissioner Hill suggested that the applicant video tape the gardens and its progress to be used as an advertising tool. Also, Commissioner Hill inquired if a soil analysis would be required prior to beginning the garden. Dr. Ross responded and stated that the soil for the garden would be brought in and the existing soil would never be disturbed therefore making a soil analysis unnecessary. Ms. Walkemeyer stated that the garden plots will be above ground to make them accessible to senior citizens, disabled persons and prevent the gardens from having to bend a lot during the gardening process.

Commissioner Atkinson inquired if the items produced will be for sale, or if it will be for the gardener's personal use. Mr. Herman responded stating that there is an opportunity for the gardeners to sell their merchandise at the local farmers market, or to local restaurants to earn their rental fees to continue and maintain their garden.

On a motion by Commissioner Atkinson seconded by Commissioner Turner the Planning Commission closed the Public Hearing.

Ayes: Commissioner Green-Wright
Commissioner Hill
Commissioner Turner
Commissioner Atkinson

5) OLD BUSINESS:

Robert Delgadillo, Interim Planning Director stated there was no old business to discuss, but he did have two informational items to communicate convey to the Commission.

- 1) The City has request an RFQ (request for qualifications) for possible future adoption citywide for development impact fees which will assist the community in funding for parks, street repair, and the Compton Creek maintenance.
- 2) The Mayor, City Manager, City Controller, City Treasurer and he attended a meeting at LAFCO (Local Agency Formation Commission) regarding the annexation of the Rancho Dominguez area of Los Angeles County which borders Compton city. Mr. Delgadillo stated that the City will begin the process of submitting an annex plan to LAFCO to receive the “sphere of influence” or that area. Next meeting scheduled November 13, 2013.

6) COMMISSION COMMENTS:

Commissioner Green-Wright voiced her displeasure regarding the Commissioners not attending any Planning conferences or workshops. Ms. Green-Wright stated that it is imperative for the Commissioner to keep up current trends in the Planning field. Robert Delgadillo, Interim Planning Director, stated that the Planning Department budget has been cut and funds for those purposes are no longer available.

Commissioner Hill asked if it was possible to find out which sister cities attended the conferences and possibly confer and network with them for information they may have missed. Robert Delgadillo stated he would check on this for the Commission.

Both Commissioners Hill and Turner discussed the need to annex the Rosewood area of Compton, because of the services the City could provide to them more efficiently and more effectively than Los Angeles County because of its location.

Anita Aviles, City Attorney Office, address the Commission regarding voting “abstention”. Attorney Aviles stated that unless an item on the agenda is a “conflict of interest”, the Commissioner should vote “yes” or “no” on items appearing on the agenda. Attorney Aviles also stated that if a Commissioner believes he/she needs clarity or additional information on an item, the Commissioner can request that the item be continued and be brought back when the requested information is received.

On a motion by Commissioner Atkinson seconded by Commissioner Turner the Planning Commission adjourned the meeting of October 9, 2013.

Ayes: Commissioner Green-Wright
Commissioner Hill
Commissioner Turner
Commissioner Atkinson

7) AUDIENCE COMMENTS:

None