

April 7, 2021

THE WALNUT CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

A regular Meeting of the Walnut Planning Commission (PC) was held on the above-referenced date. Chairperson Koo called the Meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

FLAG SALUTE: Commissioner Dy

ROLL CALL: Commissioner(s): Dy, Koo, Fernandez, Perez

ABSENT: Commissioner: Wang

ALSO PRESENT: Assistant City Manager – Development Services Tom Weiner; City Planner Justin Carlson; Assistant City Attorney David Mann; City Engineer Dave Gilbertson; Senior Planner Chris Vasquez; Senior Management Analyst Joelle Guerra; Associate Planner Chun-Chien Yang; Assistant Planner Corinne Munoz; Community Development Technician Gabriel Katigbak.

CORONAVIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19) ADVISORY:

C/Koo presented information regarding the California State Department of Health Services' guidance and the County of Los Angeles Public Health Officer's Order for the control of COVID-19. Additionally, C/Koo informed all attendees of the necessary procedures to be taken when submitting comments.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

C/Koo opened oral communications for Public Comment(s).

Ken Mengel thanked the Commission for considering their Item which is on the Agenda.

C/Koo closed oral communications for Public Comment(s).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. March 3, 2021 (Regular Meeting Minutes).

MOTION ON ITEM 1

PC/Dy moved to approve the Minutes of the regularly scheduled PC Meeting of March 3, 2021. PC/Perez seconded.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Koo, Fernandez, Dy, Perez

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Wang

Motion passed 4-0.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

2. West Valley Loft Mixed-Use Project: Development Agreement (DA) 2021-001; Vesting Tentative Tract Map (VTTM) 82985; Site Plan Case/Architectural Review (SPC/AR) 2020-011.

AP/Yang presented the Staff Report.

PC/Dy inquired about the square-footage of the retail space and referenced the West Valley Specific Plan (WVSP).

AP/Yang noted that the square-footage of the retail space was configured to help meet the needs of the market in addition to creating more housing opportunities for the City.

ACM/Weiner mentioned that the two (2) nodes (identified within the WVSP) allow for commercial and residential opportunities and indicated that viable commercial will not be suited if Valley Boulevard does not have the density to support ample commercial/retail space(s). ACM/Weiner explained the square-footage of commercial space is required between both nodes.

PC/Dy suggested the Project remove the retail component completely or add additional square-footage to the retail space.

ACM/Weiner made note of the increase in parking that would be required for a larger commercial/retail space.

The Commission and Staff further discussed the proposed commercial/retail component of the Project.

VC/Fernandez inquired about zero lot line(s) and if a connection was explored to Lemon Creek.

AP/Yang verified that the WVSP allows for zero lot line(s) and that the option for a connection to Lemon Creek was not explored.

PC/Perez inquired about the retail component and if it will be held by the developer or sold as a retail space.

AP/Yang referred that question to the Applicant.

C/Koo inquired about the amenity area(s) and if they are accessible to the public or only Project residents.

ACM/Weiner confirmed that the amenities are only for the Residents.

The Commission and Staff discussed the proposed streets within the Property.

C/Koo opened the Item for Public Comment(s).

Resident/William Harrison asked for clarification on the location of the Project and mentioned that the retail component is too small in size and that a gated community should not be allowed.

ACM/Weiner explained that the proposed Development is not a gated community. ACM/Weiner further confirmed that the Project is located west of Lemon Avenue and that the current density (within the area) would not support a large commercial component.

Resident/Mr. Harrison and Staff further discussed the retail component in terms of size.

Resident/Steven Davis spoke in support of the Project on behalf of fair housing in California.

Applicant/Feng Xiao explained that the retail component will be held by the Developer and most likely will be a café establishment. Ms. Xiao stated that more retail can be provided but a larger retail unit will not survive at this location.

PC/Dy asked if the retail component be removed or the entire first-floor of the building be retail space.

C/Koo echoed that the east facing ground-floor should have more retail space.

The Commission and Staff further discussed the square-footage applicable for commercial/retail space at this specific Site and density.

C/Koo asked if the amenity area be proposed next to Lemon Creek with the possibility of revitalizing that area.

ACM/Weiner mentioned the trail-head adjacent to the Property and explained that any intrusion into the Creek would require an environmental study/review.

CE/Gilbertson noted that the Creek is within private property and that access is located east of the Property.

The Commission and Staff further discussed the Lemon Creek.

Ms. Xiao confirmed that the Lemon Creek area was explored for incorporation into the Project but the scale of the Project would impact the Creek area. Ms. Xiao noted an open patio concept that was incorporated to help engage the Lemon Creek area.

The Commission and Applicant discussed the common area(s) and amenity area(s).

PC/Dy asked if the residential units located on the first-floor could be small retail space(s).

Ms. Xiao explained that an additional, smaller retail space may be viable but more parking spaces will be required.

The Commission, Staff, and Applicant further discussed parking requirements, density, and the adjacent Parcel.

C/Koo asked if a Variance is needed to allow for the proposed commercial space. The WVSP calls out a target number of 24,000 square-feet of commercial and the density stating that in order to have 24-28 units per area, 10,000 to 50,000 commercial space is to be provided.

ACA/Mann stated that the numbers provided are target numbers for the WVSP area.

ACM/Weiner reiterated and explained that the target numbers listed in the WVSP are per nodes, not per parcel.

The Commission and Staff discussed the density numbers and nodes within the WVSP.

PC/Perez shared his insight on the future of viable commercial uses within the WVSP and his support for the Project as presented.

VC/Fernandez also stated his support for the Project and noted the commercial/retail hardships that may possibly arise if there is not sufficient density within the WVSP area. VC/Fernandez further noted the following:

- The previous mixed-use Project that was approved by the Commission.
- The utilization of a different color scheme for the loft buildings with the bold colors being used as accent colors.
- A possible connection to Lemon Creek.
- Implementing zero lot lines (located to the west of the Property) and possibly enhancing the west elevation of the Project.

Mr. Harrison reiterated the need to revamp Lemon Creek and the common area(s) of the Project should be open to the Public.

C/Koo closed the Item for Public Comment(s).

C/Koo noted the difference with the previously approved mixed-use Project in terms of size and nodes and explained possible businesses that can occupy the retail portion of the development. C/Koo asked for clarification on the development standards not being satisfied.

ACA/Mann explained that a Variance would not be suitable, but rather a Specific Plan Amendment. ACA/Mann further stated that if flexibility is not seen by the Commission, then research will be done to see if an Amendment is needed.

PC/Dy echoed the comments and concerns shared by C/Koo.

PC/Perez explained the ability for the City to adapt and evolve with the current market conditions as it relates to the Project.

VC/Fernandez mentioned redevelopment opportunities coming through the City to help revamp the commercial buildings off Valley Boulevard and the importance of comparing the new Projects versus the current state of the site(s).

C/Koo shared his reasoning for continuing the subject Item:

- Explore expanding the commercial/retail space on the southeast corner (fronting Valley Boulevard).
- Additional parking for the Project.
- The possibility of incorporating additional amenity area(s) per the standards listed in the WVSP.

PC/Dy stated for the front building to be entirely commercial on the first-floor and for the parking to be reconfigured in order to allow for the extra space(s), if feasible.

MOTION ON ITEM 2

PC/Dy motioned to continue the West Valley Loft Mixed-Use Project to the regularly scheduled May 5th, 2021 PC Meeting. VC/Fernandez seconded.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Koo, Fernandez, Dy, Perez
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: Wang

Motion passed 4-0.

3. Conditional Use Permit (CUP) 2021-002 (Fore Fitness) - A request to establish a child-related business within an existing building located at 20748 Carrey Road (APN: 8720-026-021).

AP/Yang presented the Staff Report.

VC/Fernandez asked if any exterior modifications are proposed.

AP/Yang confirmed that no exterior modifications are proposed.

C/Koo opened the Item for Public Comment(s).

Applicant/Ken Mengel explained his proposed business and confirmed that only interior modifications are proposed.

C/Koo asked if the main target audience of the business is youth students and inquired about the swing bays.

Mr. Mengel confirmed that fifty percent (50%) of the students are youth and the swing bays are self-contained stalls that will be installed inside the Unit with video simulators.

PC/Perez inquired if the existing location of the business in City of Industry is being relocated to Walnut or if the business is expanding.

Mr. Mengel confirmed that the location in City of Industry is relocating to Walnut. Mr. Mengel further inquired about Live Scan requirements for employees.

AP/Yang mentioned that Staff will provide the Applicant with the correct paperwork for the Live Scan at a later time.

C/Koo closed the Item for Public Comment(s).

The Commission shared their support for the proposed business.

MOTION ON ITEM 3

VC/Fernandez motioned to adopt PC Resolution No. 21-02, approving CUP 2021-002, subject to the attached COA's. PC/Perez seconded.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Koo, Fernandez, Dy, Perez
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: Wang

Motion passed 4-0.

OLD BUSINESS:

4. Continuance – Site Plan Case/Architectural Review (SPC/AR) 2020-030 (Zhang) - A request to construct an 898 square-foot two (2) story addition, a 146 square-foot garage extension, and a 33 square-foot front-entry porch at 227 Maryville Drive (APN: 8720-028-013).

CDT/Gatigbak presented the Staff Report.

PC/Perez and PC/Dy shared their support for the revised Project.

C/Koo opened the Item for Public Comment(s).

Resident/Eric Chow asked if a specific type of window glaze can be enforced and inquired about a window on the first-floor.

C/Koo asked how high the second-floor window is on the south elevation.

CDT/Katigbak indicated that the window is six (6') feet, possibly six and a half (6'-6") feet.

C/Koo closed the Item for Public Comment(s).

The Commission and Staff further discussed different window types.

MOTION ON ITEM 4

PC/Dy motioned to approve SPC/AR 2020-030, subject to the attached COA's. VC/Fernandez seconded.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Koo, Fernandez, Dy, Perez
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: Wang

Motion passed 4-0.

NEW BUSINESS:

5. Site Plan Case/Architectural Review (SPC/AR) 2019-068 (Shum) - A request to demolish an existing home and construct a new single-family residence located at 456 Camino De Gloria (APN: 8722-012-021).

AP/Munoz presented the Staff Report.

C/Koo opened the Item for Public Comment(s).

PC/Dy asked if the staircase can be redesigned with a different material for the handrails.

Applicant/Allen Shum indicated that the stairway can be redesigned with different materials.

C/Koo closed the Item for Public Comment(s).

The Commission collectively agreed that a landing area will be suitable for the stairway with a different material used for the railing.

MOTION ON ITEM 5

PC/Dy motioned to approve SPC/AR 2019-068 (subject to the attached COA's) with the additional Condition(s) that the stairway be redesigned with a landing area and that a long lasting material for the railing be used. PC/Perez seconded.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Koo, Fernandez, Dy, Perez
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: Wang

Motion passed 4-0.

REPORTS AND COMMENTS:

- ACM/Weiner informed the Commission of the possible reopening of the State (due to COVID) on June 15th, 2021 which shortly after, the City of Walnut's in-person Meetings may return.
- VC/Fernandez inquired about vaccinations before returning to in-person Meetings.
- ACM/Weiner noted that once the date becomes closer, more information will be available to the Commission.

ADJOURNMENT:

The Meeting adjourned at 9:44 p.m. The next Planning Commission Meeting is set for a regular Meeting on Wednesday, May 5, 2021, at 7:00 p.m., via teleconference. The Agenda will be posted on the City's website and at City related public facilities, including Walnut City Hall (21201 La Puente Road).

Passed and Approved on this 5th day of May, 2021.



Chairperson, Tony Koo



Tom Weiner, Assistant City Manager – Development Services