



Minutes

Lakewood City Council

Adjourned Regular Meeting held
October 23, 2018

MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER at 6:15 p.m. by Mayor Croft in the Executive Board Room at the Civic Center, 5000 Clark Avenue, Lakewood, California.

ROLL CALL: PRESENT: Mayor Steve Croft
Vice Mayor Todd Rogers
Council Member Diane DuBois (arrived at 6:19 p.m.)
Council Member Jeff Wood
ABSENT: Council Member Ron Piazza (excused)

APPEAL OF THE PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION DECISION REGARDING CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. 566, AMENDMENT NO. 3

Mayor Croft announced that Council Member Piazza recused himself from consideration of the item due to the proximity of his business to the car wash being proposed for renovation.

City Manager Thaddeus McCormack explained that the City had received an appeal of the Planning and Environment Commission's decision to approve a conditional use permit for the expansion and renovation of an existing carwash. He stated that discussion of the item would be limited to the record which had been presented at the Planning and Environment Commission meeting. He noted that at its last meeting, the City Council had given direction to bring back an ordinance that would limit the hours of operations for car washes from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. and that the initial conditional use permit that had been approved by the Commission granted from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. He stated that the recommendation would be to change the business hours to conform with the proposed ordinance and that the applicant was amenable to the modification.

Steve Skolnik, for the City Attorney, provided an explanation of the provisions of the Lakewood Municipal Code, which specified that when the City Council considered an appeal of a conditional use permit, no new matter or evidence should be received or considered and a determination would be made on the basis of the record brought before it, unless, by majority action at any time during the course of the review, the City Council determined that a de novo hearing was necessary for the purpose of taking new or additional evidence. He further noted that since the hours of operation had been discussed at the Planning and Environment Commission meeting, consideration of amending the closing time to 8:00 p.m. could be accomplished without convening a de novo hearing.

Council Member DuBois arrived and took her seat at the Council table.

APPEAL OF THE PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION DECISION REGARDING CUP NO. 566, AMENDMENT NO. 3 - Continued

Alan Gafford, Lakewood, explained that the appeal was based on issues with traffic congestion, noise and the hours of operation citing studies conducted on daily trips to and sound measurements at the area of the car wash site. He expressed concerns for the neighboring residences with regards to access and noise issues.

Responding to Vice Mayor Rogers' question, Mr. Gafford stated his opinion that the proposed wall was not sufficient to provide a sound barrier between the car wash and the residential properties.

Roland Spongberg, applicant and owner of Carwood Car Wash, stated that he had been working with staff for several months on the remodel project. He explained that in addition to the traffic and sound studies that were conducted, he had also organized several outreach efforts to the surrounding community. He reported that in checking with City staff, no complaints had been received regarding the car wash. Noting that the car wash had been built over twenty years ago, he asserted the importance of keeping current with industry technologies in light of the variety of available options from competing car wash businesses. Mr. Spongberg highlighted the increase in sales at his other businesses subsequent to remodeling improvements.

Steve Baldwin, owner of Me-N-Ed's Pizza Parlor, 4115 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, and John Ward, Lakewood, addressed the City Council in support of Mr. Spongberg and the car wash remodel project.

Alex Tabrizi, RK Engineering Group, Inc., Newport Beach, project engineer, stated that the traffic analysis of the area found that the intersection and roadway segments adjacent to the site were operating at an acceptable capacity level and would continue to do so with the proposed project. Mr. Tabrizi confirmed for Mayor Croft and Council Member Wood that the additional nine hundred cars assumed in the study were in addition to the existing number of vehicles traveling the area and would not impact the roadway system to a deficient level.

Sonia Southwell, Director of Community Development, and Mr. Tabrizi responded to Mr. Skolnik's inquiry by stating that the assumption was actually double what the normal methodology would estimate for the number of trips and had been considered the most severe possible outcome that could be projected to occur given those factors.

Responding to inquiries from Mayor Croft pertaining to neighborhood access, Ms. Southwell stated that typically when projects were evaluated, the surrounding streets were observed to determine the capacity of the street to handle traffic and that if there were a significant impact, mitigation measures would be implemented.

In response to Vice Mayor Rogers' questions regarding the traffic levels, Ms. Southwell explained that the analysis determined that drivers would not have to wait for additional red light cycles when exiting the car wash.

APPEAL OF THE PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION DECISION REGARDING CUP NO. 566, AMENDMENT NO. 3 - Continued

Detlef Stevenson, Custom Carwash Concepts, explained the significance of the traffic count in projecting the capture rate of potential customers already driving on Carson Street. He stated that the noise levels would be reduced since the existing outdoor vacuums would be replaced with newer models and located inside the building in the equipment room.

Ms. Southwell responded to Council Member Wood's questions regarding the noise measurements by stating that a Noise Impact Analysis found that the projected noise levels with the proposed project would be less than 65 decibels and that with the building and the enclosure, the noise measures indicated they would be 55 decibels at the highest point and 36.8 decibels at a further distance.

Roma Stromberg, Kunzman Associates, Inc., reported that a detailed analysis had been conducted which included the assumption of vacuums inside of the building as well as representative noise samples from the pressure blower and vacuums outside of the building.

Arthur Pinette, Lakewood, spoke regarding the requirements of the General Plan as they related to the provision of noise barriers for nearby residents.

Mr. Gafford expressed concerns with the use of the tunnel as a means to alleviate noise, graffiti and the homeless. He added that since the City did not derive any sales tax from such a business, there would be no money going back to fix the roads in the area of the car wash.

Dave Thompson, Thompson Design, stated that the Development Review Board architect had indicated that the ambient sound from Carson Street would bounce off of the wall and be louder for the neighbors and such a wall might cause traffic and security issues by creating a blind spot.

Responding to Vice Mayor Rogers' questions pertaining to the parking requirements and the use of the lot behind the business by El Pollo Loco as well as car wash employees, Ms. Southwell stated that the proposed design would meet the provisions included in the new ordinance. She acknowledged that parking issues existed with some of the older car washes in the City and emphasized the importance of complying with the parking requirements.

Mr. Thompson highlighted the landscape plans and identified the various species of trees which would be used to create a visual buffer as well as provide sound absorption.

Mayor Croft cited the difference between the proposed project with another car wash location which had previously been considered on appeal and required a wall between the property and the neighboring residents to serve as further separation from the tunnel to the property. He further noted the significance of receiving no objections from the residents who currently lived near the existing car wash facility and stated support for denying the appeal.

Ms. Southwell and Mr. Skolnik confirmed for Council Member Wood that notices were provided to the affected area. Mr. Sponberg explained that outreach efforts included project review meetings, an open house event and free car wash offerings to encourage site visits.

APPEAL OF THE PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION DECISION REGARDING CUP NO. 566, AMENDMENT NO. 3 - Continued

Ms. Southwell maintained that the considerable distance between the building with the tunnel and the residences did not necessitate the installation of a wall and noted that the proposed landscaping would suffice as a barrier and would be more attractive.

Council Member Wood expressed appreciation for the concerns raised by Mr. Gafford and Mr. Pinette and emphasized the importance of quality of life considerations.

Vice Mayor Rogers concurred with Council Member Wood's statements and conveyed the hope that the redesign of the car wash would allow for improved access to the drive thru at the adjoining El Pollo Loco business.

VICE MAYOR ROGERS MOVED AND COUNCIL MEMBER DUBOIS SECONDED TO APPROVE STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS TO DENY THE APPEAL AND AFFIRM THE PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION'S DECISION TO APPROVE CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. 566, AMENDMENT NO. 3, AND TO INCORPORATE LIMITING THE HOURS OF OPERATION FROM 7:00 A.M. TO 8:00 P.M. UPON ROLL CALL VOTE, THE MOTION WAS APPROVED:

AYES: COUNCIL MEMBERS: DuBois, Rogers, Wood and Croft

NAYS: COUNCIL MEMBERS: None

ABSENT: COUNCIL MEMBERS: Piazza

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ORAL COMMUNICATIONS: None

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ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to be brought before the City Council, Mayor Croft adjourned the meeting at 7:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jo Mayberry, CMC
City Clerk