

**APPROVED ACTION MINUTES
CITY OF WOODLAND
PLANNING COMMISSION
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2008**

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT: Wurzel; Murray; Barzo; Gonzalez

VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT: Sanders; Spesert

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: MacNicholl; Stillman

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 PM.

1. Director's Report:

- Robert MacNicholl, Planning Manager: He reminded the Commissioners to complete and turn in their biographies for the City's website. He indicated that there is already a group photograph posted and some of the biographies.
- Commissioner Barzo: He said that he believes that he has already submitted his.
- Commissioner Murray: She said that she knows that she still has to write hers.

2. Approval of Planning Commission Meeting Minutes of June 19, 2008:

It was moved by Commissioner Murray, and seconded by Commissioner Barzo, that the minutes of June 19, 2008 be approved. The motion was carried by the following vote:

AYES: Murray; Barzo; Wurzel; Gonzalez
NOES: None
ABSENT: Sanders; Spesert

3. Public Comment:

- Bryan Bonino: He said that he agreed with some of the Commissioner's comments from the previous meeting. He said that he would like to public art that is visible to the public. He provided the example of Carl's Junior and how not all of the public patrons this restaurant. He would like the Commissioners to consider art that the general public could view.

4. Communication – Commission Statements and Requests:

- Commissioner Gonzalez: She asked when the City would be filling the vacant Planning Commissioner position.
- Robert MacNicholl: He said that the City is discussing this issue now.
- Commissioner Gonzalez: She asked if there are candidates for this position.
- Robert MacNicholl: He said that there are multiple candidates.
- Commissioner Barzo: He had no comments or announcements.

- Commissioner Murray: She said that she stayed at a Bed and Breakfast recently. She feels that this would be good for Woodland. She asked that this item be moved up the agenda as it has been on the bottom for the last six years. She said that some of the City's Victorian's could be fixed up. She also asked that this idea be presented to the Historical Preservation Commission to get their thoughts.
- Commissioner Wurzel: He said that it would be good to add this item to the General Plan update as a goal. He had no other comments or announcements.

5. Subcommittee Reports:

- None

6. Elections:

- Commissioner Wurzel: He proposed that the elections be postponed to the next Planning Commission meeting as only four of the six Commissioners are present. He asked Staff to move this agenda item to the next scheduled meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

7. Fairfield Inn Conditional Use Permit and Design Review:

The applicant is requesting a Conditional Use Permit to allow the construction of a 63,275 square foot, 105-room hotel, Fairfield Inn & Suites, on a 2.46± acre parcel along Freeway Drive (APN: 024-300-45 & 54) in the City of Woodland. The proposed hotel will include a porte-cochere entryway, welcome center, three (3) conference rooms and a coffee shop. This project qualifies for a Categorical Exemption from the provisions of CEQA as a Class 32-Infill Development (CEQA Guidelines, § 15332).

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| Applicant/Owner: | Bryan P. Bonino/Woodland Lodging, LLC. |
| Environmental Document: | Categorical Exemption |
| Staff Contact: | Jimmy A. Stillman, Associate Planner |
| Recommended Action: | Conditional Approval |

DISCUSSION:

- Jimmy Stillman, Associate Planner: He indicated that there is a correction to the agenda as this is a Conditional Use Permit and Design Review. He presented the project and design changes made since the September 4th meeting.
- Commissioner Wurzel: He asked if the Commissioners had any questions for Staff. There were none.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Arvind "Andy" Patel, Owner/Hampton Inn: He provided the Commissioners and Staff with copies of a letter. He said that a City Planner denied their request for a four-story hotel and it was denied. He said that they had to compromise with a

three-story only. He said that his hotel could have had more rooms and there will be a financial impact for years to come.

- Commissioner Barzo: He asked Mr. Patel if his hotel is fully booked every night.
- Andy Patel: He said no.
- Commissioner Barzo: He asked then how there will be a financial impact then.
- Andy Patel: He said that if the hotel had more rooms, then they could bring in bigger groups but can not accommodate them with 70-80 rooms.
- Commissioner Barzo: He asked again if the hotel has ever been fully booked.
- Andy Patel: He said that hotel has been sold out since it opened 1 ½ years ago.
- Dr. Ram Sah, Owner/Comfort Suites: He also provided the Commissioners and Staff with copies of a letter. He said that the approval process for Fairfield Inn happened too fast and did not follow the normal process. He read a portion of his letter which quotes City ordinances that he feels this hotel is not meeting. He discussed the 40-foot height limit and how the Fairfield Inn has a 50-foot wall parapet. He said that there is not a uniform standard so people are treated like second class. He stated that a four-story hotel would not be harmonious with the surrounding buildings.
- Commissioner Gonzalez: She asked Dr. Sah if he would be ok with it if it was only 44-feet.
- Dr. Sah: He said yes.
- Commissioner Gonzalez: She identified that the issue then is not about the hotel being four-story.
- Dr. Sah: He said no. They should treat Fairfield Inn the same as the previous hotels.
- Commissioner Barzo: He asked Staff if they would like to comment first.
- Robert MacNicholl: He said that treat as hearsay and can't comment. He stated that the sites were constrained and there are parking requirements for the rooms generated by a fourth floor. He said that no reference was made to the number of floors but height only. He said that Staff considers the tower not to be a parapet. The previous hotels are 57-feet and 75-feet high and Fairfield Inn is 50-feet or less. He said that this project does conform to the standards and has not been treated differently. He said that there are no guidelines on how long before a project can be brought to the Planning Commission. He added that it would be boring if the buildings replicated one another.
- Commissioner Wurzel: He said that the only remaining comment regarding the buildings being harmonious is that downtown has varying heights.
- Jimmy Stillman: He said that all the design standards, heights and landscaping together create harmony.
- Rohit Ranchhod/Woodland Lodging LLC: He said that his project went through the entire process. He said that the quick turn-around was due to Staff efficiency. He said that he is local and can fast-track this project. He said that the hotel's height is 40-feet and meets the requirements. He stated that Comfort Suites has elements that are taller. He feels that there is great synergy.
- Commissioner Gonzalez: She asked Dr. Sah what step in the process was missing and referred to item No. 3 specifically in his letter.

- Dr. Sah: He again stated that the project has not gone through the normal process. He said that the project here at Planning Commission discussing and then making changes. He said that in the past changes were done before coming to Planning Commission. He said that they are distorting the definition of “height”. He said that a four-foot parapet is allowed but this is not the situation.

COMMISSIONERS DISCUSSION:

- Commissioner Barzo: He said that they have now spoken two times in opposition of this project. He said that the applicant and owner have been very patient. He said that have excellent Staff so the negative comments are not correct. He feels this is a good infill project and it is a nice area out there. He said it is a good design.
- Commissioner Murray: She said that two weeks ago she thought that they needed more time. She feels that the project should go forward.
- Commissioner Gonzalez: She had no additional comments. She said that it is what it is.
- Commissioner Wurzel: He discussed the noticing of the design review and the public’s ability to prepare comments. He said that he hopes they maintain that standard. He also discussed the height requirements in the zoning ordinance. He stated that these are guidelines and not laws, which need interpretation. He said that the Planning Commission is there to use their discretion. He said this project is in correct compliance to these requirements. He stated that there are no rules or guidelines that restrict the number of stories, such as three- or four-story. He said that they are not to determine if Staff did incorrectly in the past and they can not do anything about it now. He supports the project.

It was moved by Commissioner Barzo and seconded by Commissioners Murray and Gonzalez, and unanimously carried that the Planning Commission approves the Conditional Use Permit for the Fairfield Inn & Suites project based on the identified findings of fact and subject to the identified Conditions of Approval, by taking the following actions:

- Confirmation of finding of exemption from the provisions of CEQA. This project is considered Categorical Exempt, Class 32, In-fill Development per Article 19 §15332 of the Public Resources Code.
- Determine that the project, as conditioned, is consistent with the General Plan.
- Determine that the project, as conditioned, is consistent with the Zoning Ordinance.
- Determine that the project, as conditioned, is consistent with the Community Design Standards.
- Approve the Conditional Use Permit for Fairfield Inn & Suites allowing for the construction of a 63,275 square foot hotel in the Entryway Overlay Zone (EOZ C-H/PD) zone.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:49 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert MacNicholl
Planning Manager