



CITY OF MONTCLAIR
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
REGULAR ADJOURNED MEETING
June 24, 2019

COUNCIL CHAMBERS
5111 Benito Street, Montclair, California 91763

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Rowley called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Rowley led those present in the salute to the flag.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Rowley, Vice Chair Flores, Commissioners Martinez and Sahagun, City Planner/Planning Manager Diaz, Assistant Director of Housing/Planning Manager Caldwell and Deputy City Attorney Holdaway

MINUTES

The minutes from the April 22, 2019, regular meeting were presented for approval. Vice Chair Flores moved to approve, Commissioner Sahagun seconded, there being no opposition to the motion, the motion passed 4-0.

ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

None.

AGENDA ITEMS

- a. PUBLIC HEARING - CASE NUMBER 2019-03
Project Address: 9399 Autoplex Street
Project Applicant: Montclair Dealership Group Properties, LLC
Project Planner: Silvia Gutierrez, Associate Planner
Request: Conditional Use Permit, Variance, and Precise Plan of Design to allow a new freeway-oriented identification sign and electronic board (EMC).

City Planner/Planning Manager Diaz reviewed the staff report.

Commissioner Martinez commented that it just so happens that we are going to have a couple new signs in that area also and he was curious of the proximity of this sign to the ones that will be at Montclair Place. City Planner/Planning Manager Diaz replied that they will not be in direct alignment with each other, probably offset so you will have an opportunity to see each one individually without having any direct conflict and there's just one electronic message board on the mall site and this one. Commissioner Martinez clarified that it will not be like going through a field goal post. The reason he asked is because with all this new stuff, would be an impact on drivers and the shock and awe. City Planner/Planning Manager Diaz stated staff did not anticipate that will be the case but he did not have any technical backup.

Commissioner Sahagun felt the signs across the freeway would complement each other. He was glad the representative from Nissan was present at the meeting. He wondered if the sign would cover all the dealerships. City Planner/Planning Manager Diaz replied that Lexus and Toyota are not part of this. He asked about the individual canopies and whether they are permitted, right next to the freeway. City Planner/Planning Manager Diaz answered that sometimes they have special events, such as for the July 4th holiday, and they sometimes set up tents for those events, they have some working tents in the back and in time, they may be remodeling. Commissioner Sahagun said he was talking about the working ones, not the ones for the special events they bring out and have balloons, foods, etc., but the ones he was talking about was primarily for shade for the workers. City Planner/Planning Manager Diaz stated he was going to let Ms. Deverio answer that question.

Chair Rowley opened the public hearing.

Ariana Diverio, representing Metro Nissan of Montclair, commented that she is with EMI Signs and with Dave Jones of YESCO for this project and that is separate from what she was there to speak about but it is a part of Nissan's pain point right now, the remodel that they need to do and the work that they will be doing in the future so that's definitely something they can talk to Nissan about and come back with a more detailed answer. City Planner/Planning Manager Diaz stated that their remodel would come back like Acura and Honda's did, they come back to the Planning Commission for review and approval, usually a Precise Plan of Design, sometimes a modification of a CUP, but we handle that situation at that point in time.

John Hawkins, the dealer principal at Acura and Honda, was grateful for the opportunity to speak with the Commission about this project. Just a couple of things about this new sign.

These things do wear out, they have a shelf life and when they wear out, they have the effect of making people think you are not quite state of the art, you have fallen behind. So, instead of being something that is still out there with your name, it can fall into a look and feel that you are not state of the art, you are not portraying adequately to the public the kind of service or the kind of cars you have. So, that is one reason to do this, it was time to re-do it. They have gotten more mileage, so to speak, out of this than you would normally get and, for years, they have had sign people coming to them and saying that it's time to re-do. They are in this community for the long haul and they see the community doing things and expenses have risen and they felt they did not represent their brand or the direction of our community, which was going upscale, doing things that are not done in other communities. The second reason is the aspect ratio of materials you put on signs has changed. Remember when our TV's were square and now they're elongated and flatter. They have what we call is a different aspect ratio. Well, materials for signs have different aspect ratios that are a little wider and not so high so it gave us an opportunity to bring down the total height. Change the width and change the new aspect ratio that most materials are made in. So, it helps them, it helps their programmers and that's part of the new look. The third thing is to let people know that they are in Montclair. They wanted to put on this sign in a way that you could not miss it, City of Montclair. So, right up front, right under the reader board, above the makes of cars, "Montclair." The last thing they have retained on this sign is a time – temperature module. They found that it was important because there are a lot of people that drive by that sign and say in minutes I know that when I pass that sign, in 30 minutes I will be at work, or on their way home they know that in eight minutes from the time they pass that sign, they will be home. They talked to a lot of people. talked to their customers, talked to their programmers and the people concerned about aspect ratios and finally people who say you need to look more upscale because your city if moving and you are looking stodgy. Just in case anyone thinks this is a hair-brained idea, these are hundreds of thousands of dollars, much time and effort goes into it, and they have tried to bring some additional elements and take some elements out. So, a little background and thank you to staff for all the help you have been to us over all the years and letting us put up things we think represent their products and this community and that is important to them, to be good citizens.

Commissioner Sahagun thanked Mr. Hawkins for treating Montclair like his community. He realized that it takes a lot of people and a lot of businesses to make a community.

Hearing no other comments, Chair Rowley closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Sahagun moved that, based on the evidence submitted, a finding is made that the project is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 153302(b) and 15303(e) Class 2, in that the new freestanding freeway-oriented identification sign and EMC will be located on the same site as the existing sign replaced, and adjoining landscape area, and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity as the structure replaced, including but not limited to the replacement of a commercial structure with a new structure of substantially the same size, purpose, and capacity; and, accessory (appurtenant) structures. Further, the project does not result in the physical expansion of any existing building and the project site is in an area where all public services and facilities (including ample supply of off-street parking) are available to allow for maximum

development allowed as allowed by the underlying commercial zoning and the regional commercial land use designation assigned by the Montclair General Plan, seconded by Vice Chair Flores, there being no opposition to the motion, the motion passed 4-0.

Vice Chair Flores moved to approve a Conditional Use Permit to allow for the installation of a new 68' high (reduced from 75') by 32' wide freestanding freeway-oriented identification sign and EMC thereby replacing the existing auto center EMC and identification sign, seconded by Commissioner Martinez, there being no opposition to the motion, the motion passed 4-0.

Commissioner Martinez moved to approve a Variance to allow an EMC screen size of 607 square feet, seconded by Commissioner Sahagun, there being no opposition to the motion, the motion passed 4-0.

Commissioner Sahagun moved to approve a Precise Plan of Design request under Case No. 2019-03, for the new freestanding freeway-oriented identification sign and EMC, subject to the conditions of approval contained in Resolution No. 19-1930, seconded by Vice Chair Flores, there being no opposition to the motion, the motion passed 4-0.

b. PUBLIC HEARING - CASE NUMBER 2019-08

Project Address: 10575 Central Avenue

Project Applicant: Monte Vista Water District

Project Planner: Michael Diaz, City Planner

Request: A Resolution of the Planning Commission of the City of Montclair making responsible agency findings pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act.; and approving a Conditional Use Permit, Variance, and Precise Plan of Design under Case Number 2019-08 for the proposed use and the site plan, floor plans, elevations, conceptual colors and materials, and conceptual landscape plan for the renovation of the Monte Vista Water District's (MVWD) existing facility, including the construction of a new administrative building and corporate yard facilities.

Deputy City Attorney Holdaway commented that although the Commission is short-handed at this meeting, two new commissioners have been appointed who will take office and being to function at the next meeting. Currently the item before you involves an applicant that is the employer of the Chair and Commissioner Martinez also has a position with them and those would constitute potential conflicts of interest and he would recommend recusal on this matter going forward, which would leave us with only two Commissioners, which would not be a quorum to move forward so if the commissioners do so state their intention to recuse themselves, then it will be necessary to continue the item to the next meeting and we would want to specify the date on the record as part of that motion. The conflict on handling the motion in the future does not apply to your handling of the agenda tonight so you can certainly participate in and make the motion to continue the item is you see fit to do so.

Commissioner Sahagun moved to continue Case No. 2019-08 to the July 8, 2019 meeting, seconded by Vice Chair Flores, there being no opposition to the motion, the motion passed 4-0.

Chair Rowley opened the public hearing.

Hearing no other comments, Chair Rowley closed the public hearing.

INFORMATION ITEMS

City Planner/Planning Manager Diaz wanted to make note that a copy of the latest contact sheet was placed on the dais in front of each commissioner to make reaching staff or each other handier. Staff thought it would be a better venue because the City Council wanted to be a part of it and there will be a lot more people attending to help celebrate.

City Planner/Planning Manager Diaz also took the opportunity to publicly thank Luis Flores for his many years of service. The part is not happening tonight but will be on July 1st at the City Council meeting.

Assistant Director of Housing/Planning Manager Caldwell thanked Mr. Flores, stated that it has been a long time, noting that she started working here 31 years ago and Mr. Flores was already on the Commission and it was her, Deputy City Attorney Holdaway and Mr. Flores. They have been wonderful years, Mr. Flores has been a fantastic Commissioner and she thanked him for everything.

Deputy City Attorney Holdaway also extended his well wishes, commenting that one of the things Mr. Flores will not need to worry about anymore was potential conflicts of interest and with that in mind, he suggested that with the two new members coming onboard, it might be a good time to refresh our recollections on those rules that do apply and, as you know, every commissioner is required to undergo the AB1234 training, which is available online if anybody needs to refresh that every two years. He can provide the links to the websites and you can do that for free on your own time on your own and he was also always available to answer questions and he would also be happy to do the presentation he sometimes do to review those things with the commission as a whole.

Commissioner Sahagun thanked Mr. Flores very much for all his service; it has been wonderful having him here and working with him.

Vice Chair Flores stated that for him it is never going to end and he hoped to keep coming in as long as he can.

Commissioner Martinez commented that he learned a lot from Mr. Flores, he has been nothing but a gentleman to work with and very kind man who always shared his experience and

background as well when it was relevant to the applications that came before the Commission. Thank you very much, we are better off because of you.

Chair Rowley commented that his time (*with Mr. Flores*) was so much shorter than his colleagues, but it was truly an honor and he thanked him very much.

Chair Rowley adjourned the meeting at 7:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Laura Embree". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Laura Embree
Recording Secretary