



CITY OF MONTCLAIR  
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES  
REGULAR ADJOURNED MEETING  
APRIL 13, 2020  
VIA ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING PLATFORM

**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 Martinez, Commissioners Eaton, Sahagun and Sanchez, Community Development Director Diaz, Associate Planner Gutierrez, and Deputy City Attorney Holdaway

Excused: Deputy Director of Economic and Community Development Caldwell

**MINUTES**

The minutes from the February 24, 2020 regular meeting were presented for approval. Commissioner Eaton moved, Commissioner Sahagun seconded, there being no opposition to the motion, the motion passed 5-0.

**ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS**

None.

## AGENDA ITEMS

- a. PUBLIC HEARING - CASE NUMBER 2020-02  
(continued from the March 23, 2020 meeting)
- Project Address: NEC corner of Ramona Avenue and Brooks Street  
(4570 Brooks Street)
- Project Applicant: Realogic Investment, LLC
- Project Planner: Silvia Gutierrez, Associate Planner
- Request: Conditional Use Permit to allow wholesale indoor storage, a lot line adjustment, and a Precise Plan of Design for the site plan, architectural design and master sign program

Due to the COVID-19 virus and under Executive Order N-29-20 issued by Governor Newsom on March 17, 2020, this meeting was conducted remotely via the ZOOM virtual meeting platform.

Community Development Director Diaz thanked the Commission for their patience and extra effort in participating in the first ever ZOOM meeting for the Planning Commission, explaining it is new to all of us. He stated that a representative for the applicant, Sylvia Tran, was also participating in the meeting.

Associate Planner Gutierrez reviewed the staff report and presented exhibits through the virtual platform. Ms. Gutierrez stated the most important thing she wanted to make the Commission aware that the project consists of two parcels and the parcel to the west at Ramona and Brooks has a designation of Business Park and the parcel at Holt and Brooks has a designation of Commercial and Industrial zoning so this differentiation in zoning is what triggered a requirement for the Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for the project because in the Business Park zone, industrial warehouse use require approval of a CUP, they are not allowed by right, which is different from the Industrial zone which allows a warehouse use by right.

Community Development Director Diaz reminded the Commission that it previously approved a project at this site a few years ago that did not materialize and the owner decided to take a second stab at creating a project that could work and that is what is being presented now. This project would supersede the previous project that called for a couple restaurants on the Holt Boulevard side of the project. That is not the use that will be viable for this location at this time so this building will be open to commercial uses but will more likely be office space or service space tenants in the future.

Associate Planner. Gutierrez also stated she recommended a minor revision to the conditions of approval in Resolution No. 20-1937, the condition which addresses the approval of the CUP and PPD; the verbiage change will be more encompassing and provides that approval of this project does not waive the owner's requirement to comply with all state, county, and city regulations.

Community Development Director Diaz added that this project is a superior project compared to the one previously approved. Sometimes we are lucky to get a second stab at a project for a site and staff believes this is a vastly superior project and more beneficial to our community.

The buildings do not have a specific tenant at this time, they were designed for speculative purposes.

Sylvia Tran, thanked the Commission for their consideration and time and wished everyone well and commented that she never thought she would be presenting a project to a Planning Commission through her laptop. She felt staff did a very good job presenting their project and speaking to their intent to bring a high design business complex to this intersection at Holt, Brooks and Ramona because of the high street frontage visibility and they are really looking to enhance the quality of the architecture and work to create an aesthetically attractive and beneficial project to the City. They have started the marketing effort to really look for tenancy and fill the project. As they are right now, Building 1 has the ability to be divided into five suites. Building 2 uses a single-user, which they estimate should have about 100 employees.

Commissioner Martinez commented that he concurred with the developer's representative that this project is consistent with the Holt Boulevard Specific Plan and it's just a beautiful complement to all the great things happening on Holt Boulevard. This will be a jewel and is much needed in this area. Mr. Martinez asked if there will be additional driveways besides the westerly most driveway on Holt Boulevard. Community Development Director Diaz replied the driveways will be modified to accommodate this project as well as the project to the east that is partially shared and goes from Holt Boulevard to Brooks Street. There will be some customization and adjusting of those driveways to make sure everyone has access to their property. Commissioner Martinez clarified there will be access from Holt all the way to Brooks. Community Development Director Diaz stated that what is different about it is that right now it looks and functions like a street because people can go back and forth through that but with this development, even though they can get through there, it will change the character of how things are used there.

Associate Planner Gutierrez stated that was a good point. There is a fence running through between Building 1 and Building 2 and a gate that would restrict access and serve to prevent through-access from Brooks. There would be a gate with the intention of securing the area at night and not allow individuals to come back and park there so that all parking is visible from Holt Boulevard, to the public and patrolling. Using exhibits, Associate Planner Gutierrez illustrated and explained reciprocal access, exiting for box trucks, parking to the north, and a third gate between Building 2 and Building 3.

Commissioner Martinez asked about the westerly wall between the parcels on the Holt Boulevard side that is shared with the Jack-in-the-Box facility, asking what the plans are. Associate Planner Gutierrez answered the wall will remain; however, there is a condition requiring the applicant to come up with a fencing plan. We are going to require and request the applicant come up with a fencing plan and require an inspection of the wall to ensure it will be adequate. Whatever is decided with regard to that wall, the City will not allow a double fencing condition.

Chair Rowley opened the public hearing.

Sylvia Tran added the existing fencing will be shared between them and Jack-in-the-Box and, at least on their side, they propose a living green screen to deter any of the ongoing issues such as graffiti, etc. and have been working with staff on that.

Commissioner Sahagun commented he felt it was a beautiful project and thanked the applicant and staff for their work on the project. He thanked everyone for the bus shelter and felt it would be a major improvement for the area and he hoped this project will get completed.

Staff verified there was no one waiting to comment on the project and Chair Rowley closed the public hearing.

Deputy City Attorney Holdaway stated that because the meeting is being held remotely, the Governor's Order requires that the vote be conducted by roll call.

Commissioner Eaton moved that, based upon evidence submitted, the project is deemed exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The project qualifies as a Class 32 exemption under State CEQA Guidelines in that the project is consistent with the applicable policies of the General Plan, the development policies and criteria of the adopted Holt Boulevard Specific Plan, is less than five acres in size, has utilities present in the area to serve the development, and is similar to other existing industrial and commercial developments and uses in the vicinity. As such, there is no substantial evidence the project will pose a potential significant impact to the environment, seconded by Commissioner Sanchez, and yes votes by Chair Rowley, Vice Chair Martinez, and Commissioner Sahagun, approving the motion 5-0.

Commissioner Sahagun moved to approve the Precise Plan of Design, the request for the site plan, floor plan, elevations, colors, materials, conceptual landscape plan, master sign program for the proposed office and industrial building development and allowing wholesale, storage and distribution uses in the "Business Park" land Use district of the Holt Boulevard Specific Plan on the 3.97 acre site at NEC Brooks and Ramona Avenue and 4500 block of Holt Boulevard (4570 Brooks Street), per the submitted plans and as described in the staff report, subject to conditions of approval contained in attached Resolution No. 20-1937, subject to the amendment of Condition No. 5, seconded by Commissioner Eaton, and yes votes by Chair Rowley, Vice Chair Martinez and commissioner Sanchez, approving the motion 5-0.

Chair Rowley moved to approve the Conditional Use Permit request allowing wholesale, storage and distribution uses in the "Business Park" land Use district of the Holt Boulevard Specific Plan on the 3.97 acre site at NEC Brooks and Ramona Avenue and 4500 block of Holt Boulevard (4570 Brooks), per the submitted plans and as described in the staff report, based upon the findings and subject to conditions of approval contained in attached Resolution No. 20-1937, seconded by Commissioner Sanchez, and yes votes by Vice Chair Martinez, Commissioner Eaton and Commissioner Sahagun, approving the motion 5-0.

Chair Rowley congratulated and thanked the applicant and looked forward to this project going up and beautifying the area at Holt and Brooks. Ms. Sylvia Tran thanked the Commission.

## **INFORMATION ITEMS**

Community Development Diaz thanked the Commission for participating in our first ever remotely held Planning Commission meeting, very good job by everyone!

Commissioner Eaton commented it is a great project and she is looking forward to it and she and Hazel say hi and best wishes to everyone.

Commissioner Sanchez commented all is well and he hoped everyone was safe and hoped to see everyone soon.

Chair Rowley felt everything went very well considering this was a first and thanked the Commission and agreed that this was going to be a very nice project, bringing some commerce to that area and certainly beautifying it.

Chair Rowley adjourned the meeting at 7:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Laura Embree  
Recording Secretary