

**CITY OF TAFT
PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
JUNE 18, 2014**

The June 18, 2014, regular meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Taft, held in the City of Taft Council Chamber, 209 E. Kern Street, Taft, CA 93268, was opened by Vice Chairman Robert Thompson at 6:04 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Rene Hill, followed by invocation given by Bob Jordan, Light House Church.

PRESENT: Vice Chairman Robert Thompson;
Commissioners Renée Hill, Shannon Jones and Bob Leikam.
Planning and Community Development Director Mark Staples;
City Attorney Jason Epperson, City Clerk Alina Megerdom.

ABSENT: Chairman Ron Orrin

I. CITIZEN REQUESTS/PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were none.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Consider approval of minutes for the May 21, 2014, Regular Planning Commission Meeting

Recommendation: Approve as submitted.

Motion: Moved by Hill, seconded by Leikam, to approve the minutes of May 21, 2014, Regular Planning Commission Meeting.

AYES: Hill, Jones, Leikam, Thompson

APPROVED: 4/0

III. PUBLIC HEARING

Mark Staples, Community and Planning Director of Planning asked the Commissioners if item number two on the Public Hearing can be reviewed first. All Commissioners concurred.

New Items

1. Site Plan Review 2014-08 – Proposal for a 2,200 square foot restaurant, on a 0.62 acre portion of a 2.55 acre lot, within the General Commercial (GC) Zone District located on the south side of Kern Street approximately 300 feet east of Hillard Street (APN 032-152-12).

Recommendation: Motion to adopt Resolution 2014-07 approving Site Plan Review 2014-08.

Staples presented the staff report on Site Plan Review 2014-08.

The Public Hearing (PH) was opened at 6:10 PM to receive testimony from proponents and opponents.

Rick Jhaj, property owner and applicant of proposed restaurant introduced himself and his family and spoke on their behalf. He stated that he is available to the Planning Commissioners for any questions they might have on the proposed project. He stated that they are Taco Bell Franchisees and they want to bring a Taco Bell restaurant to City of Taft. They are looking to employ twenty five people at the Taft location.

No one else spoke for or against the item. The Public Hearing was closed.

Hill asked if there is going to be a turn lane going in for the left turn.

Staples stated that they have a tentative driveway location. But, being that Kern Street is also Highway 33 that is subject to Caltrans review and approval. When they do the street improvement plans, they will go through Caltrans engineering review process. Everything will go through them in regards to design, construction, location of drive-way, signals, etc. At the moment there is no barrier anywhere on Kern Street for making left turns across the traffic lanes. There will probably be a left turn lane, but more for Hillard Street.

Thompson asked who owns the balance of the property that is not being developed. Applicant stated that he owns the lot and is looking forward to adding future development.

All the Commissioners welcomed the applicant to Taft and are looking forward to the opening of Taco Bell.

Motion: Moved by Hill, seconded by Jones to adopt Resolution 2014-07 of the Planning Commission of the City of Taft approving Site Plan Review 2014-08 to Construct a 2,200 square foot drive-thru restaurant, on a 0.76 acre portion of a 2.55 acre lot, within the General Commercial (GC) Zone District located on the south side of Kern Street approximately 300 feet east of Hillard Street.

YES: Hill, Jones, Leikam, Thompson
APPROVED: 4/0

Continued Items

2. Zoning Ordinance Amendment 2014-06 – Consideration of a zoning ordinance amendment consisting of an amendment to Chapter 15 of Title 6 of the City of Taft Zoning Ordinance, regarding Sign standards.

Recommendation:

1. Re-open the public hearing
2. Receive public and Commissioner comments
3. Motion to continue item to next regular meeting, with comments and suggested edits incorporated into proposed amendment.

Staples presented a Power Point Presentation on Zoning Ordinance Amendment 2014-06, Sign Regulations. 6:19 PM

Leikam had concerned with flags and banners, would it be referring to allowing only product images?

Staples stated that it is basically referring to any type of print on the flag that they cannot have any association with the business advertisement. If business owner stays under the lower limit of size regulation, they would not need a permit for it. But, once they get above twenty square foot and fifteen foot height, that's when you will need a Temporary Sign Permit.

Hill asked what can be done for signs that are in disrepair. Staples stated that he has given directions to City Code Enforcement Officer to cite anyone who has banners in disrepair. They do have a thirty day window to fix it or remove it.

The Public Hearing was reopened at 6:42 PM to receive testimony from proponents and opponents.

Rick Jhaj stated that they are normally required as a franchise to run promotions that come down from corporate and they want them to run the promotion normally for forty five days. They usually put banner signs for sixty days. Throughout the year, they run minimum of six promotions. Thirty day banners are too limited for them due to the fact that they cost over \$100 for a general banner. His opinion is to do sixty day window and up to six permits a year for temporary signs.

Staples stated that when it comes to temporary signs, they can have anything on the banner; company signs, logo, whatever the promotion is, etc. Based on what Mr. Jhaj has stated, the Planning Commission has the option of proposing something different. They can increase number of occurrences; get rid of the individual event, etc.

Hill asked if A-frame and sandwich board signs are under the exempt section. Staples stated that he did not make changes but, he will incorporate it under the exempt section for a two by three feet and four feet high A-frame sign as long as it does not block pedestrian or vehicular traffic.

Staples also stated that he will make changes on the Ordinance that adds exempting or accepting work trucks or other vehicles that are primarily used for the operation of the business; they are not permanently parked at the business.

No one else spoke for or against the item. The Public Hearing was closed.

Motion: Moved by Jones, seconded by Hill to continue item to next regular meeting, with comments and suggested edits incorporated into proposed amendment.

YES: Hill, Jones, Leikam, Thompson
APPROVED: 4/0

IV. PLANNING DIRECTOR REPORT 6:57 PM

1. Project Updates – Best Western Hotel, Blackgold Court, West Side Health Care District,

future projects via Coats Consulting.

- Best Western Hotel: They have their permits approved and fees paid on everything from building permits and grading permits. The groundbreaking is scheduled for June 30th.
- Blackgold Court: The industrial buildings are starting to get occupied. The businesses are all related to oil. By the next meeting, they might have another Site Plan for a new building.
- West Side Health Care District: The City met with them a few weeks ago and they are looking into getting a temporary office building on the site.
- Staples presented a handout for the Commissioners, a letter from Geary Coats, Master Developer for Rails to Trails area. The letter was entered into record. Mr. Coats attended the International Conference of Shopping Center (ICSC) in Las Vegas on May 18th through May 20th. He was able to meet with 32 different retail sales and service providers. Of the 32 contacts, he has 19 follow up calls and information requests. The letter provided a list of retailers that he met with.

2. National APA Conference – Defining Small Town Character 7:03 PM

Staples provided a handout from the National APA Conference which he attended in April. He gave a brief summary of the sessions he attended.

V. CITY ATTORNEY STATEMENTS

There were none.

VI. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Jones invited everyone to attend the 4th of July Fire Works on Rails to Trails; it will be a fun event for the whole family.

Identification of Representative to the City Council.

Commissioner Hill stated she would attend the Council Meeting and report on Planning Commission meeting updates on Tuesday, July 1, 2014.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Moved by Hill, seconded by Leikam and approved unanimously, to adjourn the meeting at 7:12 PM.


Alina Megerdom, City Clerk


Robert Thompson, Vice Chair