

**CITY OF TAFT PLANNING COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6, 2016**

SPECIAL MEETING

6:00 P.M.

The April 6, 2016 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 Chairman Orrin at [6:00:36 PM](#). The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Orrin, followed by an invocation given by Chairman Orrin.

PRESENT: Chairman Ron Orrin, Vice Chair Shannon Jones,
Commissioners, Bob Leikam, Jerry Livingston and Robert Thompson
Planning and Community Development Director Mark Staples
City Attorney Jason Epperson and Recording Secretary Brenda Johns

1. CITIZEN REQUESTS/PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were none.

2. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARING – CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. 2016-04

Planning Director Staples presented his staff report and recommendation, along with the additional conditions requested by the Planning Commission.

Leikam noted the question had been raised if aquaponics could be used to grow marijuana, he appreciates the disclaimer but after doing his own research has found the system can be used to do so and for that reason he does not trust the information. Leikam also asked what the hours of operations would be for the business.

Ms. Rightmer stated business days and hours would be Thursday thru Sunday 4-6 hours a day.

Leikam is concerned with the limited business hours; he believes a business on Kern St. should be open fulltime not part time.

Rightmer stated she had no problem opening additional hours.

Jones asked if Rightmer would be differentiating the business from the residential.

Ms. Rightmer stated there would be no access to the residence from the business side.

Orrin asked if the restroom structure required a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a zero lot line.

Staples stated commercial zoning has zero setbacks and did not require a CUP.

Jones asked if the restroom was a requirement.

Staples noted the restroom was not required but the applicant was opting to provide one.

Orrin expressed concern with vagrancy in the community and asked if the applicant would replicate Solutions for Change in providing a homeless program in hopes of training them with different skills; he does not want to contribute to the increased vagrancy and crime in Taft.

Ms. Rightmer noted that was not the intention for her business, she stated 5% of her proceeds would be donated to the Shar-On Corporation which is not only for the homeless but also for the rest of the community in providing instructional classes.

Leikam asked if the applicant had commitment letters from Albertsons or other stores.

Ms. Rightmer said she had been in contact with Ron Sousa the manager of the local Albertsons and was advised once the CUP was approved an appointment could be made with headquarters. Rightmer has also spoken with Chef Jeff of Taft College which is interested in purchasing produce.

Orrin asked if Kimberley Jackson of EcoCentric Farms was profitable in her aquaponics business.

Ms. Rightmer believes Kimberly Jackson profits 4,000 to 6,000 a week in produce and is the director and manager at Moo Creamery as well.

Jones asked for clarification on condition two in the Planning Department section of the CUP.

Staples stated this CUP is solely for the aquaponics operation and any other conditional use for this location would require a separate CUP.

Orrin asked if fire sprinklers were required for the project.

Staples stated the Kern County Fire Department will review the project for fire and safety compliance and make the determination.

Jones asked if the applicant could expand the commercial portion of the property in the future.

Staples noted to expand the applicant would require a revision or a new CUP.

Rightmer agrees to the additional three conditions that have been added to the CUP.

The Public Hearing was opened at [6:10:32 PM](#) to receive testimony from proponents and opponent. Seeing none the public hearing was closed.

Motion: Moved by Thompson, seconded by Livingston to adopt **A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF TAFT APPROVING CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. 2016-04 TO ESTABLISH A MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT BY CONSTRUCTING A 309 SQUARE FOOT COMMERCIAL ADDITION ON THE FRONT OF AN EXISTING 675 SQUARE FOOT SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCE, FOR THE AQUAPONICS GROWTH OF AND RETAIL SALES OF ORGANIC PRODUCE; ON A 0.11 ACRE LOT, WITHIN THE DOWNTOWN COMMERCIAL (DC) ZONE DISTRICT LOCATED AT 610 KERN STREET (*Resolution No. 2016-04*).**

AYES: Orrin, Jones, Livingston, Thompson
NOES: Leikam
PASSED: 4-1

3. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Leikam wishes Shari Rightmer the best of luck with her business and announced the Rotary Club is holding their reverse drawing next Wednesday.

Jones stated she is pro-business and wants to see the community thrive also the Chamber raised \$3,200 dollars for the fireworks show and is looking to do additional fundraisers the first Friday in May and June.

Livingston would like to see more businesses along Kern Street and support of the mixed use properties.

Thompson stated he has served on the Planning Commission over eight years and this has been one of the most difficult CUPS to review.

Orrin agrees with the rest of the Commissioners and thanked Director Staples on a job well done and announced the Bakersfield Symphony Orchestra will be performing at Taft Union High School on Sunday the 17th.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to conduct it was moved by Livingston, seconded by Jones and approved unanimously, to adjourn the meeting at [7:00:18 PM](#).

Brenda Johns, Recording Secretary

Ron Orrin, Chairman