

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE STUDY SESSION OF THE
CITY OF SAN CLEMENTE
PLANNING COMMISSION
March 3, 2021 @ 6:00 p.m.
Teleconference Only via
www.san-clemente.org/live or Cox Channel 854**

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Ruehlin called the Regular Meeting of the Study Session of the Planning Commission of the City of San Clemente to order at 6:02 p.m. The meeting was offered teleconference only due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, and available to the public via live stream from the City's YouTube Channel or live on Cox Channel 854.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Donald Brown, Barton Crandell, Chris Kuczynski; Chair pro tem Zhen Wu, Vice Chair Michael Blackwell, Chair Jim Ruehlin (All Planning Commissioners participated via teleconference)

Commissioners Absent: None

Staff Present: *Gabriel J. Perez, City Planner
 *Christopher Wright, Associate Planner II
 *Eileen White, Recording Secretary

 *Participated in the meeting via teleconference

AGENDA

A. South El Camino Real Focus Area Standards – 2nd Session – (Wright/Webber)

This second study session will provide an overview of development standards for the South El Camino Real (West of Interstate-5) General Plan Focus Area that includes the Mixed Use 3.2 Zone. The Planning Commission requested an assessment to ensure the standards can fulfill City goals for the area and to identify potential development constraints.

Christopher Wright, Associate Planner II, narrated a PowerPoint Presentation entitled, "Planning Commission Study Session S, El Camino Real Focus Area, dated March 3, 2021." A copy of the Presentation is on file in Planning Division.

Chair Ruehlin opened the public hearing.

Gabriel J. Perez, City Planner, read aloud a letter dated March 3, 2021, from Shawn Denesh, owner of the property located at 1420 S. El Camino Real, supporting staff's recommendation to interpret the maximum number of residential units aspect of the code to use the net area calculations; read aloud a letter dated March 3, 2021, from Mark McGuire, resident, requesting the Commission support reducing the percentage of commercial required for mixed use development in several locations throughout the City.

Chair Ruehlin closed the public hearing.

During the ensuing discussion, the Commissioners, either individually or in agreement, provided the following commentary:

- Overall, the updated General Plan and Zoning revisions have shown positive growth in the area; favored more compact development that would free up more open space on site; gross area calculation should not apply unless there's public space; the number of units should not be limited if the project can meet development and parking standards; suggested staff consider an applicant's shared parking analysis as a norm for mixed use properties.
- Shared that the intent of the General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) discussion on coastal views from the freeway was to stop a proliferation of walls being built up against the freeway on the inland side of El Camino Real, such as the tower on the Ralphs project; the interpretation to prevent blocking views of the coast from the freeway evolved from that objective; noted the main purpose of revising the zoning on S. El Camino Real was to eliminate the blighted areas and make it more vibrant.
- Opined that the review of the project at 1010 S. El Camino Real in conjunction with establishment of zoning standards seemed to have placed outweighed emphasis on coastal views compared to the original policy focus.
- Support increasing the height ceiling in the Mixed Use 3.2 zone and reducing emphasis on coastal view protection from the freeway, especially when it results in a hindrance to development such as added structural cost to provide ceiling heights for commercial/residential units with constrained building height.
- Support maintaining the height limit for the MU 3.2 zone based on the results of the attractive mixed-use project approved at 1010 S. El Camino Real.
- Support a commercial percentage of a mixed use project rather than FAR restrictions.
- Support shared parking agreements and possibly parking design standard changes.
- Supported the use of net area calculations rather than gross for residential count and density within a mixed use project.

- Established that staff will consult with legal staff to determine whether a code amendment or interpretation should be pursued to continue precedent of applying a net acre residential density standard for projects that do not include a street or other right-of-way. This should consider state law, particularly considering the City’s Housing Element includes language for residential density in mixed use zones equivalent to the net acre density standard shown in the General Plan.
- Requested staff come back to a future Study Session for further discussion and to provide a recommendation to the City Council on the consideration and initiations of potential code changes for the South El Camino Real focus area.

This item was continued to a future Study Session.

COMMISSION COMMENT

None

RECESS

The Commission recessed until the start of the regular session.

Respectfully submitted,



Jim Ruehlin, Chair

Attest:



Gabriel J. Perez, City Planner