

**CITY OF DANA POINT  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR ADJOURNED MEETING MINUTES**

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November 18, 2013  
5:05 – 9:00 p.m.

City Hall Offices  
Council Chamber (#210)  
33282 Golden Lantern  
Dana Point, CA 92629

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**CALL TO ORDER** – Chairman Newkirk called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Commissioners Present: Vice-Chairwoman Liz Claus, Commissioner Denton, Chairman Gary Newkirk, Commissioner April O'Connor, and Commissioner Susan Whittaker

**CLOSED SESSION**

**Chairman Newkirk** recessed the Planning Commission meeting to a Closed Session at 5:06 p.m.

- A. Conference with legal counsel – anticipated litigation, significant exposure to litigation, Government Code § 54956.9 (b), (1 case)

**RECONVENE PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**

**Chairman Newkirk** reconvened the Planning Commission meeting at 5:37 p.m. with all members present.

Staff Present: Ursula Luna-Reynosa (Director of Community Development), John Tilton (City Architect/Planning Manager), Brad Fowler (Director of Public Works), Jennifer Farrell (Assistant City Attorney), Christy Teague (Economic Development Manager), Saima Qureshy (Senior Planner), Erica Demkowicz (Senior Planner), DyAnne Weamire (Administrative Secretary), and Denise Jacobo (Planning Secretary)

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** – Vice-Chairwoman Claus led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**REPORT ON CLOSED SESSION**

**Jennifer Farrell** (Deputy City Attorney) stated that there was nothing to report.

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**A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**ITEM 1: Minutes of the regular Planning Commission Meeting of October 28, 2013.**

**ACTION: Motion made (Denton) and seconded (O'Connor) to approve the Minutes of the regular Planning Commission Meeting of October 28, 2013. Motion carried 4-0-1. (AYES: Denton, Newkirk, O'Connor, Whittaker NOES: None ABSENT: None ABSTAIN: Claus)**

**B. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no Public Comments.

**C. CONSENT CALENDAR**

There were no items on the Consent Calendar.

**D. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

There were not Public Hearings items scheduled.

**E. PUBLIC MEETINGS – STUDY SESSIONS**

**ITEM 2: Study Session on Parking Management Plan for Town Center Area Presented by Nelson Nygaard Consulting Associates.**

Applicant/

Owner: City of Dana Point  
Location: Town Center Plan Area

Recommendation: That the Planning Commission receive and file the presentation and provide input to Staff and the Consultant in the preparation of a Parking Management Plan for the Town Center Area.

Patrick Siegman (Nelson Nygaard Associates - Consultant) provided a PowerPoint presentation to the Commission.

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**Public Comment:**

**Norma Lococo** (Dana Point) indicated that parking enforcement needs to be addressed; she suggested more effective signage around the businesses near Luxe Restaurant and Bar for customers' parking, to protect residential parking in the neighborhood.

**Allen Abersman** (Dana Point) spoke about offsite parking and suggested making the cross streets safer for sight impaired (i.e., audible directions). He recommended consideration be given to safety and crossing the street. He asked to prevent planting trees on the path of the sidewalk, or having other obstructions which makes it difficult to walk single file.

**Harold Kaufman** (Dana Point) indicated that he does not feel that there is a lack of parking in Town Center. He recommended that the City look into location and management of parking. Town Center business should be required to park employees and residents onsite and allow customers offsite parking to have a pedestrian friendly sidewalk.

**Robert Theel** (Dana Point) followed up on Mr. Kaufman's comments noting that the City's urban design consultant shared a vision of urbanism in the Town Center. For example; City parking lots could be leased for visitors to park and use the sidewalk with pedestrian friendly activities and spontaneous shopping.

**Rhonda Handke** (Dana Point) spoke of her concern with living adjacent to the area. She does not want the City to follow Laguna Beach, where the tourists and visitors park in front of residences at all hours of the day and evening. She stated that she appreciates Mr. Theel's suggestion and solution to support the residents.

**Brad Gross** (Dana Point – O.C. Dana Point Harbor) stated that he agrees with the comments as a resident of the City, but as a Harbor Director he asked to dissuade from using the Harbor parking to draw people up to the Town Center.

**Chairman Newkirk brought the discussion back to the Planning Commissioners:**

**Commissioner Denton** spoke about impacts to the neighborhoods. He encouraged bike-friendly, safe parking and easy access to multiple locations. He would like parking time limits considered, and if parking lots should be free or paid. If paying, credit card enabled parking meters for ease of use to explore.

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**Vice-Chairwoman Claus** spoke about protecting the residents, issuing City permit parking for residents to alleviate the neighborhood overcrowded parking. She spoke of San Diego's downtown revitalization plan as an example to solving parking on a street by street basis.

**Commissioner O'Connor** asked Patrick Siegman (Consultant) to ensure that the parking analysis consider the residential parking as part of Town Center parking to protect adjacent neighborhoods from impacts by the Town Center.

**Commissioner Whittaker** stated that she shares the concerns of the Commission and those comments raised by the community. She asked for a better understanding about future parking problems, hotspots, parking lots, and what is being addressed and managed and the connections with these types of recommendations.

**Commissioner Denton** noted that some office buildings close early. He asked if there are ways to encourage businesses to not to chain off parking lots and have them remain open for evening use.

**Chairman Newkirk** gave examples of bike racks that encompasses art in public places (AIPP). He stated that it's a great opportunity to integrate the two, encouraging cyclists that ride through town daily, to linger. As for residential protection with signs, he encourages that the village side get equal parking protection to that of the bluffs' side.

**Patrick Siegman** (Consultant) thanked everyone for their comments and input.

**Chairman Newkirk declared that the Planning Commission officially received and filed the Town Center presentation.**

Chairman Newkirk recessed the Planning Commission meeting at 6:45 p.m.

Chairman Newkirk reconvened the Planning Commission meeting at 6:57 p.m.

**ITEM 3: Study Session on the Doheny Hotel Project.**

Applicant/

Owner: Michael Draz/Beverly Hills Hospitality Group

Location: 25325 Dana Point Harbor Drive, 34297 and 34292 Pacific Coast Highway

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Recommendation: That the Planning Commission receive and file the presentation and ask questions or request clarification of any aspect of the project that will assist in future deliberations of the project.

**Erica Demkowicz** (Senior Planner) presented the study session, and introduced Michael Draz (Applicant) with his team of project consultants Coralee Newman, (Government Solution) and Robert Keeler (Langdon Wilson Architects).

**Public Comment:**

**Kirsten Reynolds** (Dana Point) stated her concern about the scale of the hotel noting that the height is excessive and could set a bad precedent. She said the approval of the variance would set a bad precedent.

**Dan Snipes** (Dana Point) stated that the views shown on the presentation are all from above noting lack of images/renderings shown from the street level or pedestrian viewpoint. He circulated and submitted a scaled, colored photo from a pedestrian vantage point stating the project is oversized; and suggested keeping a 35 foot height limit.

**Oscar Banda** (Dana Point) stated his concern about height and view impacts, and concerned that it would affect views of other structures and set a negative precedent. He asked to limit the building height to 35 feet.

**Jim Johnson** (Dana Point) stated that his concern with height is the creation of the “tunnel effect”. He inquired about parking and number of employees, parking for employees in addition to hotel guests. He also asked about the staging of taxicabs and limousines. He indicated that more detail was needed about traffic and the need for a traffic study.

**John Hazelrigg** (Dana Point) state that he assumed that the Planning Commission takes variance requests very seriously. He asked about the ratio of letters of support versus those that opposed the hotel.

**John Murphy** (Dana Point) inquired about the financial ability to develop the project. He questioned the weight of the building on land, and was concerned with the size. He stated that the project deserved more data.

**Ken Yoshino** (Dana Point) reiterated the tunnel effect, and does not want to see a South Beach Miami look. He stated that there are significant impacts to traffic and potential impact when all four corners are developed.

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**Bob Behling** (Dana Point) stated that the story poles/staking blocked his white water views from his residence.

**Chairman Newkirk brought the discussion back to the Planning Commissioners:**

**Commissioner Whittaker** asked for a more detailed understanding of how the loading zone worked; and how parking for the restaurant will factor in overall parking; more information about pedestrian experience along PCH (width of sidewalk); more information about Harbor signage, what it would look like, and about where limousines would be staged.

**Commissioner Denton** inquired about the variance findings, mainly with the height variance. He commented on the former Makar mobile home site and future development limited to 35 feet. He remarked on the Makar traffic study that was completed at the intersection of Pacific Coast Highway and Del Obispo which was rated as a “C” intersection by the County, and moved to a “D”. He asked for clarification on the new traffic study with the new right turn lane to understand the impact. He noted a topic mentioned this evening about limos, taxicab waiting parking areas when special events are held at the hotel. He asked for clarification about employee parking for hotel. He expressed concern about “tunnel effect”, its traffic, employee parking and parking for guests not staying at the hotel, conference facilities, and loading of buses for Disneyland or other destination trips.

**Chairman Newkirk** reiterated the importance of the loading area, its size, loading times for deliveries, small loading area to service the hotel and where taxis and buses will queue up and wait. He voiced a concern about how often cyclists get forgotten, how will cyclist traverse this area; can the applicant prepare a schematic with typical loading times? He asked to provide a more detailed breakdown of parking – 275 spaces for 258 rooms – how many employees for the hotel? He would like to see a pedestrian view of hotel at street level.

**Commissioner O’Connor** spoke regarding South Coast Water District offsite parking spots and offsite shuttles during peak times.

**Vice-Chairwoman Claus** questioned the number of employees for the hotel; 30-40 employees estimated for the proposed hotel; asked that the applicant would qualify the number of employees.

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**Ursula Luna-Reynosa** (Director of Community Development) reiterated that more information would be needed regarding loading zone, curb cuts, and cumulative impacts with the traffic consultant who will be present at the next Planning Commission meeting.

**F. NEW BUSINESS**

There were no New Business items.

**G. STAFF REPORTS**

There were no Staff Reports.

**H. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

**Commissioner O'Connor** reported that she went to Lantern Bay Park to see the display of the Elephant Parade this past weekend and noted there was good music and food, and is proud to live in Dana Point.

**Vice-Chairwoman Claus** stated that in addition to the Elephant Parade, she saw the approved public art project "Offshore (Kelp) Forest" at Lantern Bay Park and encouraged everyone to see the art piece.

**Commissioner Denton** reported that he watched a news program that covered the story about the elephants in Asia, and the show televised our City's golf courses, parks, and beaches a number of times but they, not once, mentioned Dana Point by name.

**Chairman Newkirk** thanked everyone who attended the meeting, and stated how important it is to attend City meetings.

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**I. ADJOURNMENT**

**Chairman Newkirk** announced that the November 25, 2013 meeting of the Planning Commission has been cancelled due to the Thanksgiving Holiday. The *next regular* meeting of the Planning Commission will be held on Monday, December 9, 2013, beginning at 6:00 p.m. (or as soon thereafter) in the City Council Chamber located at 33282 Golden Lantern, Suite 210, Dana Point, California.

**The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.**

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Gary Newkirk, Chairman  
Planning Commission

THESE PROCEEDINGS WERE RECORDED AND A COPY OF THE TAPE IS ON FILE WITH THE CITY OF DANA POINT PLANNING DIVISION.