



PLANNING COMMISSION
MARK HAMMERNES, CHAIRPERSON
STACY MENDOZA, VICE CHAIRPERSON
ALICE ABATTI, COMMISSIONER
VERONICA HARVEY, COMMISSIONER
RUBEN RIVERA, COMMISSIONER

MINUTES

**PLANNING COMMISSION
TRAFFIC COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING**

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 22, 2021
6:30PM**

A. PLANNING COMMISSION CALL TO ORDER:

CHAIRMAN HAMMERNES CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER AT 6:30 PM

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: ABATTI, HARVEY, RIVERA, MENDOZA AND HAMMERNES

STAFF PRESENT: MORITA, BROWN, HOLBROOK, MORA, AND CAPT. LOPER

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE LED BY CHAIRMAN HAMMERNES

B. PUBLIC APPEARANCES

B-1. Matters not appearing on the agenda.

NONE

B-2. Matters appearing on the agenda.

NONE

C. CONSENT CALENDAR

a. Approve Planning Commission Meeting Minutes for November 10, 2021.

ACTION:

VICE CHAIR MENDOZA MOTIONED TO APPROVE CONSENT CALENDAR AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY RIVERA.

AYES: HARVEY, RIVERA, MENDOZA AND HAMMERNES

NOES: NONE

ABSTAIN: NONE

ABSENT: ABATTI

MOTION CARRIED: 4-0

D. PLANNING COMMISSION NEW BUSINESS: (DISCUSSION/ACTION –RECOMMEND/DENY)

D-1: Public Hearing, Discussion/Action: Conditional Use Permit (CUP 21-11) to allow for the use and operation of an indoor/outdoor restaurant and bar including serving alcohol for on-site consumption, cigar lounge and occasional indoor/outdoor live entertainment at the following address: 2393 Highway 86, Imperial, CA 92251, APN#:064-352-004.

CHAIRMAN HAMMERNESS OPENED THE PUBLIC HEARING AT 6:34 PM.

MORA introduced Yvonne Cordero “CORDERO” Planner I for the City of Imperial. CORDERO presented a summary of the proposed project’s conditional use project. MENDOZA asked if the parking lot was only going to be dirt and if there was going to be striping. MORA clarified there was asphalt but it needs repair. MENDOZA further asked if there was onsite drainage as she could recall pooling of water during heavy rain. MENDOZA asked for clarification on item no. 1 states that the business is a “nightclub” but that it in fact is presented as a nightclub restaurant. MORA referenced the revised agenda lists the appropriate business entity. HOLBROOK stated that the updated resolution referenced by MORA also includes cigar lounge as additional language. MENDOZA asked for clarification on Imperial County’s comments as to what additional conditions would be proposed because the were not included in the CUP or IC Fire response letter. LOPER informed the Commission that additional improvements would include fire sprinklers, ventilation and furnishings would need to be a certain standards and fire would require a plan as to how the owner would dispose of the ashes from the cigar lounge. HAMMERNESS asked if that was in accordance with a State Code. LOPER stated the comments are only a recommendation of Imperial County Fire.

ABATTI JOINED THE COMMISSION MEETING at 6:43 PM

HARVEY asked for clarification as to what a Cigar Lounge is. STEWART (applicant) provided information as to what a cigar lounge is. ABATTI asked if the lounge was going to be separated from the restaurant so the smoke doesn’t interfere with the restaurant. STEWART stated that the lounge must be separated In accordance with ABC. HARVEY asked what will be the hours of the restaurant and what is the concept of the business. STEWART clarified that the intent is to provide an upscale experience serving lunch and dinner with artisan foods and drinks. STEWART provided examples of restaurants in San Diego with similar concepts and stressed that this would be safe environment and no a sports bar concept. MENDOZA asked why Fire doesn’t want the business. LOPER stated the recommendation is based on the current mitigation measures in place. The installation of fire sprinklers would make the department much more comfortable. MENDOZA expressed concerns of the price tag to add a sprinkler system. STEWART stated that at this time they are not seeking a cigar lounge because of the additional costs. HOLBROOK provided direction to the Commission as to the options they had in amending the CUP. MARCO (applicant) stated that they are working through the process and right now the are concentrating on the restaurant and bar. HAMMERNESS referenced that the

plans show an outdoor area and in the interim patrons can smoke outside. MENDOZA asked if it is possible to move forward with the approval of the CUP to include a cigar lounge with the contingent that if the applicant proceeds that they incorporate the recommendations included in Fire's comment letter. MORITA clarified that the staff's recommendation is to approve the CUP and include the Fire Departments recommendation as a condition on should the applicant pursue the cigar lounge use. HARVEY asked if there was also a sprinkler system in the kitchen. LOPER confirmed there was a sprinkler system, but it needs to be brought up to code. RIVERA asked if further amendments were necessary to the Resolution or CUP. MORITA clarified that the resolution to be amended to include all uses identified by the applicant. No further discussion was held by the Commission.

CHAIRMAN HAMMERNESS CLOSED THE PUBLIC HEARING AT 7:03 PM.

ACTION:

VICE CHAIR MENDOZA MOTIONED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION NO. PC 2021-16 APPROVING CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT (CUP) 21-11 TO ALLOW FOR THE USE AND OPERATION OF A RESTAURANT/BAR AND CIGAR LOUNGE AT 2393 HIGHWAY 86, IMPERIAL CA WITH THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS: AMEND CUP TO REPLACE "NIGHTCLUB" WITH "RESTAURANT/BAR AND CIGAR LOUNGE" AND INCLUDE REQUIREMENT OF A FIRE SPRINKLER/SUPPRESSION SYSTEM AS PROPOSED BY IMPERIAL COUNTY FIRE BE IMPOSED SHOULD THE LOUNGE BECOME OPERATIONAL. SECONDED BY ABATTI.

AYES: HARVEY, RIVERA, ABATTI, MENDOZA AND HAMMERNESS
NOES: NONE
ABSTAIN: NONE
ABSENT: NONE

MOTION CARRIED: 5-0

E. REPORTS:

E-1: Commissioners Reports.

ABATTI – Commented on the history at the location of the new business and expressed her enthusiasm for the concept presented this evening.

MENDOZA – wished everyone a safe and wonderful time during the Christmas holiday.

RIVERA – looking forward to serving on the arts commission and Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all.

HAMMERNESS – Expressed his appreciation to everyone on the Commission.

HARVEY – Merry Christmas to all and thank you to the City staff for supporting the Commission and keeping everyone informed. Welcome to our City Planner.

E-2: Staff Reports.

HOLBROOK – None

MORA – Merry Christmas Everyone

MORITA – Happy Holidays

BROWN – provided an update on the Paseo Del Sol work party, Arts District and SR 86 Stakeholders Group Meeting and next steps with those related projects.

ADJOURNED THE PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING AT 7:13 PM UNTIL NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING ON JANUARY 12, 2022.