



**CITY OF FOWLER**  
**SPECIAL PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**  
**April 2, 2015**  
**MINUTES**

Meeting called to order at 6:32 p.m.

**Commissioners Present** Craig Mellon, Mark Rodriquez, Juan Mejia,  
**Commissioners Absent:** Henry Fernandez, Gary Mukai  
**City Staff Present:** Deputy City Attorney, Gary Bell, City Manager,  
David Elias, Planning Consultant, Bruce O'Neal  
and Planning Secretary, Corina Burrola

**Public Presentation:**

There were no public presentations (Public Presentation closed at 6:32 p.m.)

**Agenda Item No. 5:**

**Public Hearing to Consider Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) No. 15-01 to Permit Laundromats in the Downtown Form Based Code Area**

Mr. O'Neal presented to the Commission that an application was submitted by Mr. Singh, the owner of Lee's Market, to permit laundromats within an area where they are now prohibited by the Form Based Code. Such uses are not permitted in the downtown area bounded by 4<sup>th</sup>, Tuolumne, Golden State Blvd and Main Street. For several weeks now it has been discussed with Mr. Singh the possibility of constructing a laundromat in the downtown area but this particular clause in the zoning ordinance prohibits us from accepting a Conditional Use Permit within this area. Mr. Singh has been made aware that if he is successful with the Zoning Text Amendment that the next step in the process would be a Conditional Use Permit Application which would be presented to the Planning Commission for approval. The Zoning Text Amendment is a recommendation by the Commission to the City Council which would take place on Tuesday, May 5<sup>th</sup> for a final decision, so tonight's Planning Commission decision is a recommendation to the Council. Laundromats are permitted in other commercial zone districts specifically by CUP in the C-1, C-2 and Form Based Code Area outside this prohibited area and by right in the C-3 Zone. The ban within the prohibited area is long-standing, and was carried over from the previous zoning ordinance. The Commission is being asked to remove this restriction from the geographical area, there is not specific location within that area it can be anywhere within the area. Even though Mr. Singh has a particular location in mind, the Commission should not discuss in detail that particular location with the overall concept of allowing laundromats within this now prohibited area.

Joginder Singh, owner of Lee's Market approached the lectern. He has contacted SKF regarding the sewer line which he is willing to spend the extra money to comply with the requirements. Mr. Singh's son, Rupinder Singh, approached the lectern to support the Zoning Text Amendment and feels that having a laundromat would benefit the city and its residences.

Andy Gonzales, owner of Fowler Barber Shop supports the project.

**Public Presentation:**

Public presentations (Public Presentation closed at 6:48 p.m.)

Vice Chair Rodriguez moved to recommend approval of Zoning Text Amendment 15-01 to remove the restriction, allowing laundromats by CUP in the downtown with the exception that no laundromats may be located with a storefront on Merced Street, this was second by Commissioner Mejia, passed by roll call vote of 3-0-0-2

**Agenda Item No. 6:**

**Public Hearing to Consider Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) No. 15-02 to Implement the Provisions of Senate Bill 2 (Government Code Section 65583)**

Mr. O'Neal presented to the Commission that on February 5<sup>th</sup> there was a brief discussion of Senate Bill 2 and bringing it back to the Council now for your recommendation to the Council, Council will hearing this amendment on May 5<sup>th</sup>. The City is part of a group preparing the update of the housing element and we expect a draft of the housing element in June. That will either come to a joint workshop to the Commission and the council or to the Commission, which hasn't been decided yet. SB2 deals with Emergency Shelters and Transitional Housing, State Law now requires that every city must have a zone which an emergency shelter is allowed by right. We are recommending that the M1 Zone District be that zone district where in by right a primarily none profit agency could either go into an existing building or construct a new emergency shelter. It is estimated that Fowler has six homeless individuals. Staff has concurred that this is a reasonable estimate. What is recommended is that we provide a minimum of one emergency shelter to have ten beds. General standards are outlined on page 5.

**Public Presentation:**

There were no other public presentations (Public Presentation closed at 7:04 p.m.)

Chair Mellon moved to recommend approval of Zoning Text Amendment 15-02; this was second by Vice Chair Rodriguez passed by roll call vote of 3-0-0-2.

**Agenda Item No. 7:**

**Public Hearing to Consider Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) No. 15-03 to Permit A-Board Sign in the public Right-of-Way by Administrative Approval**

The Zoning Text Amendment has been initiated by the City to deal with a long standing issue with the downtown A-Board signs in front of individual businesses. The decision of the Planning Commission is a recommendation to the Council. The City defines A-Board signs as a "portable sign capable of standing without support or attachment." Such signs are also called "Sidewalk Signs" or "Sandwich Signs" and are common on sidewalks in many cities. The bottom line is they are prohibited in Fowler in the public right-of-way. In 2014, the City adopted standards for sidewalk displays allowed by Administrative Approval, including a reduced application fee to encourage compliance. The standards, however, did not include signs. The Zoning Text Amendment would permit A-Board sign on the public sidewalk subject to Administrative Approval (minor) and location standards in the C-2, Form Based Code, and C-3 Zone District. Staff recommended the following amendments to Article 22 (Signs) of the Zoning Ordinance. A sign permit would be required to make sure it makes the locational and size criteria. The Administrative approval process is done by staff there's no public hearing involved. Based on the application it would be approved administratively. The Administrative approval and sign fee are one time fees.

**Public Presentation:**

There were no other public presentations (Public Presentation closed at 7:18 p.m.)

Commissioner Mejia moved to deny Zoning Text Amendment No. 15-03; this was second by Vice Chair Rodriguez passed by roll call vote of 1-2-0-2.

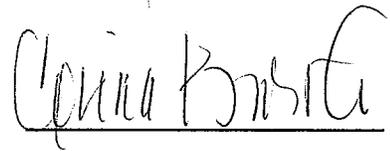
**Communications:**

A Planning Commission hearing is scheduled for May 7<sup>th</sup>; several Conditional Use Permits will be on the Agenda for this date.

Chair Mellon gave an update regarding the Planners Institute he attended, he enjoyed the training and presentations more this year than the previous years he's attended.

No other business was discussed and the meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

  
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