

**CITY OF LOS BANOS
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
MAY 28, 2008**

***ACTION MINUTES** – These minutes are prepared to depict action taken for agenda items presented to the Planning Commission. For greater detail of this meeting refer to the electronic media (audiotapes) kept as a permanent record.*

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Hammond called the Planning Commission Meeting to order at the hour of 7:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE. Commissioner McCauley led the pledge of allegiance.

ROLL CALL – MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION PRESENT: Donovan, McCauley, Mello, Napolitano, Viveros, and Chairman Hammond. Absent: Manzo.

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: City Attorney Vaughn, Planning Director Fitzgerald, Public Works Director/City Engineer Chisam, Assistant Planner Souza, and Planning Commission Secretary Fuentes.

CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Motion by Donovan, seconded by Viveros to approve the agenda as submitted. The motion carried by the affirmative vote of all Planning Commission Members present. Absent: Manzo.

CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF ACTION MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR MEETING OF MAY 14, 2008: Motion by Mello, seconded by Napolitano to approve the minutes as submitted. The motion carried by the following vote: AYES: Donovan, McCauley, Mello, Napolitano, Viveros, and Hammond; NOES: None, ABSENT: Manzo.

PUBLIC FORUM: MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC MAY ADDRESS THE COMMISSION ON ANY ITEM OF PUBLIC INTEREST THAT IS WITHIN THE JURISDICTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION; INCLUDES AGENDA AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS. NO ACTION WILL BE TAKEN ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS. SPEAKERS ARE LIMITED TO A FIVE (5) MINUTE PRESENTATION. No one came forward to speak, and the public forum was closed.

There were technical difficulties with the PowerPoint Presentation for Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG) Blueprint Presentation by Candice Steelman, Public Information Officer/Manager.

Chairman Hammond moved on to Public Hearing Item.

PUBLIC HEARING - CONSIDERATION TO REMOVE CONDITION NO. 28 OF SITE PLAN NO. 2006-10 FOR THE APPROVED TARGET STORE LOCATED AT 1405 WEST PACHECO BOULEVARD. Public Works Director/City Engineer Chisam presented the staff report.

Chairman Hammond opened the public hearing.
No one else came forward and the public hearing was closed.

Motion by Donovan, seconded by Viveros to continue the public hearing for the consideration to remove Condition #28 of Site Plan No. 2006-10 for the approved Target Store located at 1405 West Pacheco Boulevard to June 11, 2008. The motion carried by the affirmative vote of all Planning Commission Members present. Absent; Manzo.

Chairman Hammond asked if PowerPoint Presentation for Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG) was ready to be presented and there were still technical difficulties.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Chisam; suggested to reschedule Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG) Blueprint Presentation to next month and be fully prepared at that time to present PowerPoint presentation due to the technical difficulties; Chairman Hammond; asked if that is Public Works Director/City Engineer

Chisam's recommendation; Public Works Director/City Engineer Chnisam; stated that this is his recommendation to move item to preceding month; will work with applicant to schedule date; asked applicant if June 11, 2008 is fine; **Applicant: Candice Steelman, MCAG – Public Information Officer/Manager**; stated this would be fine.

Motion was given by Donovan to move presentation to June 11, 2008; a second was not given as PowerPoint presentation was brought up by Assistant Planner Souza. Commissioner Donovan withdrew his motion and PowerPoint Presentation was given.

MERCED COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS (MCAG) BLUEPRINT PRESENTATION – By Candice Steelman, Public Information Officer/Manager.

Candice Steelman presented the staff report, which included a PowerPoint presentation.

Applicant: Candice Steelman, MCAG – Public Information Officer/Manager; will be talking about the Regional Blueprint; this is a 3 year project funded by Cal-Trans to get 8 counties in San Joaquin County to agree on common vision for planning purposes; to agree on a vision that would last until 2050; will have different tools that local planners can use; helps to give direction; no one is obligated to follow blueprint; in the three year process, there have been almost 250 public meetings in the valley; over 10,000 people have participated; there is an average of 1400 babies born in San Joaquin valley; the blueprint is an opportunity to create a brighter future; will last next 40 years; envision changes; this is an opportunity to protect what makes a valley great; draws visitors from all over the world; most pressing challenges is growing population; valley predicted to triple to over 9 million people by 2050; another challenge we face is loss of productive farm land; despite improvements in the air quality, 57% of valley residents report that they would have at least one family member suffers from asthma; the potential of creating a blueprint for growth; helps us preserve what's great about the valley; provide a healthy environment for families; create vibrant communities; help us compete in the global economy; provides tools to plan transportation infrastructure; meet needs of diverse region, including roads, public transit, and high speed rail; will identify need for various housing options; promote more compact development to save on infrastructure costs.

Commissioner Viveros; how do you keep everyone attracted to the plan; **Applicant: Candice Steelman, MCAG – Public Information Officer/Manager**; local planning decisions will remain local; its not planned out fully; its just saying to preserve agricultural land; one scenario would be to look at more compact housing; another scenario would be no change; will find some people will buy into it, some people will say it would change the character of the community; Chairman Hammond; basically saying that money talks, in reference to Commissioner Viveros' question; **Applicant: Candice Steelman, MCAG – Public Information Officer/Manager**; depends on the program and grants.

Commissioner Napolitano; heard presentation in general; when will there be more specifics given; **Applicant: Candice Steelman, MCAG – Public Information Officer/Manager**; gone through one iteration of scenarios; other various scenarios will be brought around in August, September, part of October to all communities.

Commissioner Mccauley; stated that she is aware of six counties involved in this project; knows that if local entities do what needs to be done, what kind of buy in will there be from neighboring counties; where will standard be as far as this blueprint goes; **Applicant: Candice Steelman, MCAG – Public Information Officer/Manager**; in the August thru October timeframe when scenarios are brought back, applicants contributions will go with the other counties in the valley to work out what will be brought to the valley.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Chisam; this blueprint process has worked in other areas; this is an opportunity that started at state and/or local levels; it's a visionary process; majority of people involved in process understand that you have to lay aside some of your personal wants and needs for greater good of what the plan will bring to the region; first stepping stone to a regional approach; will be able to assign infrastructure of support; have to look at it as willing to give a little and take a little; its a

give and take process as we go forward; whatever scenario we go with, it will give us a guide line of where to go; direction of where we are going.

Commissioner Viveros; would like to see more meetings happen regarding this plan in future; he would attend; **Applicant: Candice Steelman, MCAG – Public Information Officer/Manager**; will let everyone know via emails and/or newspaper of upcoming meetings/workshops; Commissioner Viveros; attended workshop in Fresno, California; was a great workshop and excited to see what happens.

Chairman Hammond; what kind of response is applicant receiving from the valley regarding these ideas; **Applicant: Candice Steelman, MCAG – Public Information Officer/Manager**; everyone knows we need to plan; when you get to the specifics, people take a step back to think about it, look at it, and decide if they can support it.

Commissioner Mccauley; assuming that there have been contact with other areas that have developed blueprints; we have a lot of agricultural areas around here that are still good; have there been some ways of determining what agricultural land areas are worth giving up; there may be some that do not want to give up that land; how do you make those choices; **Applicant: Candice Steelman, MCAG – Public Information Officer/Manager**; do have maps that show prime farm land; in this county what isn't farm land and not developed on, isn't environmentally rich; challenge is preserving farm land; how do you preserve it when owners want to sell; is a large, complicated issue; more communities are looking at more agricultural belts around the communities; we are one of last areas in the state to have a regional blueprint; Riverside was one of the first; bay area counties have gotten together on certain issues; Sacramento as well.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Chisam; commented that if any property owner wants to maintain their farming interest, there is nothing in this proposal that states they are required to do urban development; there is no requirements with regards to this.

Commissioner Napolitano; when mentioning farming belt, what is a farming belt; Public Works Director/City Engineer Chisam; in certain areas of the state, they have developed what is called a green belt area; where they have restricted urban development; they provide an open space; in our case, we have issues with new city concept that is being proposed in the county; we will try to move forward with the blueprint plan and try and have defined communities.

Commissioner Mello; commented that this is a good idea; have already lost good farmland in California; this is something that's way past due.

Chairman Hammond opened the public hearing.

No one else came forward and public hearing was closed.

Informational item only, no action to be taken.

PLANNING MANAGER'S REPORT: Public Works Director/City Engineer Chisam; introduced new Planning Director, Paula Fitzgerald; will take over at next planning commission meeting; brings much knowledge and experience in both private and public sector; has good grasp of planning issues; will be great asset; looking forward to working with her and making transition; thanked Assistant Planner Souza and Planning Department staff for hard work during his Interim period; Planning Director Fitzgerald; looking forward to working with Planning Commission.

COMMISSIONERS REPORTS:

ERASMO VIVEROS: Welcomed planning director; attended the first day of the Rail Corridor Workshop and stated it was interesting and great.

JOSE MANZO: Absent

ANN McCAULEY: Welcomed new planning director; attended first day of rail corridor workshop; commented that it was a positive thing.

TOM MELLO: Welcomed new planning director; thanked Public Works Director/City Engineer Chisam for his work during his Interim Planning Director period.

SHIRLEY NAPOLITANO: asked Public Works Director/City Engineer Chisam a question regarding Racquet Club area; was approached by 3 citizens that live in the Racquet Club area; they commented to her that they are upset about a wooden fence that is being put around a development on the corner of San Luis and Racquet Club; little portion of it is a stucco fence; remaining part of fence is solid wood fence; is there a process regarding permit renewals; a review; Public Works Director/City Engineer Chisam; will have to speak about this at a later time; will be happy to meet with her regarding this matter.

VICE CHAIR NORM DONOVAN: Welcomed new planning director; glad to see stop light working; now need to get rest of Overland Road paved.

CHAIRMAN HAMMOND: Welcomed new planning director; look forward to working with her.

ADJOURNMENT. The meeting was adjourned at the hour of 7:40 p.m, to Thursday, May 29, 2008, at 11:00 a.m., to attend a Los Banos Rail Corridor Workshop being held in the Caesar Chavez Community Room at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Child Development Center, 1624 San Luis Street, Los Banos, California.

Motion by Donovan, seconded by McCauley to adjourn meeting to Thursday, May 29, 2008, at 11:00 am, to attend a Los Banos Rail Corridor Workshop being held in the Caesar Chavez Community Room at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Child Development Center, 1624 San Luis Street, Los Banos, California. The motion carried by the affirmative vote of all Planning Commission Members present. Absent; Manzo.

APPROVED:

/s/ Stephen Hammond
Stephen Hammond, Chairman

ATTEST:

/s/ Norma Fuentes
Norma Fuentes, Planning Commission Secretary