

PLANNING COMMISSION
Minutes of Study Session
Westminster Council Chambers
8200 Westminster Boulevard
Westminster, CA 92683
March 30, 2005
8:00 p.m.

Call to Order The Planning Commission of the City of Westminster met in a study session on Wednesday, March 30, 2005, called to order in the Westminster Council Chambers Conference Room, at 8:00 p.m. by Chairman Turro.

Roll Call Commissioners present: Turro, Cruz, Krippner, Nguyen,
 Commissioners absent: Bertels

Staff Attendance Bonny Lay, Planning Director, Jennifer Mansur, Planning Technician

Oral Communications None

Business Discussion of Commercial Rehabilitation Design Standards for Special Architectural Design Districts.

Staff made a presentation pertaining to the implementation of the City's design standards in special districts for commercial rehabilitation projects. Staff briefly went over the required architectural styles for the two special design districts (Civic Center and Little Saigon). Staff showed photos of some of the new developments that have met the design standards. However, most of the buildings in Little Saigon and some of the buildings in the Civic Center were built before the design standards were created and therefore do not meet the standards.

Staff asked the Planning Commission the question: to what extent should commercial rehabilitation projects meet the requirements for architectural style in special districts? The planning staff came up with three different possible answers to the question A) Require same standards as a new development, B) Require sufficient adherence to design standards to maintain a recognizable architectural style, and C) Include architectural elements that are compatible with the required architectural style.

The Planning Commission discussed the architectural styles for both the Little Saigon and Civic Center areas. The Commission agreed that the goal of the Civic Center special design district was

to protect and promote the unique Old English architectural style. The goal of the Little Saigon special design district was to create a tourist destination that would promote economic growth in the area.

The Planning Commission felt that the special design themes were appropriate and that it was important for all new projects to meet the intent of the special district design standards. Although it was not the intention of the Planning Commission to require all buildings to look the same, the Planning Commission believed that it is important to adhere to the design principles, so that special district themes can be established in the two districts.

It was discussed that commercial rehabilitation projects should also be required to meet the intent of the design standards, while recognizing the cost limitations of property owners and the structural limitations of the existing building.

Planning Commission concluded that commercial rehabilitation projects should have sufficient adherence to design standards to maintain a recognizable architectural style.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m. to the next regular meeting on April 13, 2005.

Respectfully submitted:

Jennifer Mansur
Planning Technician