

**PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**Minutes of Regular Meeting**  
**Crafts Room, Community Services and Recreation Building**  
**8200 Westminster Boulevard**  
**Westminster, CA 92683**  
**August 10, 2005**  
**6:30 p.m.**

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**Call to Order** The Planning Commission of the City of Westminster met in a regular session on Wednesday, August 10, 2005 called to order in the Crafts Room, Community Services and Recreation Building, at 6:30 p.m. by Chairman Turro.

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

**Staff Attendance** Steve Ratkay and Judy Kollar, Associate Planners; Chris Wong, Planning Technician; Maria Moya, Department Secretary; and Christian Bettenhausen, Deputy City Attorney

**Salute to the Flag** All persons present joined in the Salute to the Flag, conducted by Chairman Turro.

**Oral Communications** There was no Oral Communications received.

Commissioner Nguyen arrived at 6:40 p.m.

**Public Hearing** A. Mixed Use Strategy Study – CONTINUED. The Mixed Use Strategy Study identifies areas of the community that are most appropriate for mixed use development. The study also includes the steps that the City would need to take in order to accommodate mixed use projects.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Planning staff recommends that the Planning Commission adopt Resolution 2005-36 recommending City Council approval of the Mixed Use Strategy Study and directing staff to initiate the appropriate implementation process.

Mr. Steve Ratkay indicated that this public hearing is a follow-up to the July 6 meeting when the Commission deferred consideration of the Mixed Use Strategy Study for further review and comments. Mr. Ratkay explained the purpose and key findings of the study. In conclusion, he recommended that the Commission adopt the draft resolution recommending City Council acceptance of the Mixed

Use Study and directing staff to initiate the appropriate implementation strategy.

The public hearing was opened.

Ms. Kathy Buchoz of Bridgecreek Development, 8907 Warner Avenue #108, Huntington Beach, stated that they had brought up this issue for Little Saigon with staff and Council members before, however, there were some concerns on how to control it. She indicated the mixed use development would be appropriate for the Little Saigon area where the business owner would own and live on the same property. Ms Buchoz believed that many business owners in Little Saigon will be interested since there is a good market for condominiums and commercial properties, and if the mixed use is planned correctly, it will be successful. She added that many in the Vietnamese American community are comfortable with mixed use development and Westminster is ready for this.

A resident and property owner in Westminster, Mr. Charles Ponti of 5091 Berkeley Avenue, expressed his opposition for the mixed use development in the Civic Center and the Goldenwest/Westminster focus areas because there are no large parcels to be developed in those areas. However, he concurred with Ms. Buchoz that Little Saigon would be suitable for mixed use. Mr. Ponti expressed that if mixed use development is approved, the City can exercise the power of eminent domain. He felt there are already a number of good developments ongoing in the City.

Ms Vivian Kirkpatrick Pilger of 6811 Tillamook noted that Mr. Ratkay's presentation did not provide the "Cons" of the mixed use study and asked if anyone had considered if older mixed use developments have turned into slums. She contended there is already heavy foot traffic along Westminster Boulevard and Goldenwest Avenue and the mixed use development will only increase density in that area and aggravate the traffic.

Ms. Kathy Cole disagreed with combining businesses and residences together. She stated it was fitting for the cities of Orange and Fullerton due to the nature of the businesses in their areas, such as antique, coffee, and novelty shops. However, Goldenwest/Westminster focus area has an abundance of automotive businesses that generates noise pollution which would not be conducive for mixed use development. It would only cause traffic problems.

Mr. Arthur Ponti of 5172 Berkeley Avenue concurred with Ms. Cole, but stated that it has merit with Little Saigon because of the cultural understanding and pedestrian traffic in that area.

Ms. Virginia Ponti of 5091 Berkeley Avenue was opposed to developing the Civic Center and Goldenwest/Westminster areas into mixed use development due to a lack of large parcels unless the City exercises its power of eminent domain .

Ms. Marilyn Wellington of 6821 Tillamook is a long-time resident of Westminster. She did not like Westminster to experience the same problems brought about by mixed use development in Huntington Beach where traffic is a problem.

In rebuttal Ms Buchoz was appreciative of those who spoke in support for mixed use in the Little Saigon area. She concurred that the Civic Center was not the place to develop it.

The public hearing was closed.

In his opinion, Chairman Turro stated there are no other large and open properties in Westminster except the area between Willow and Edwards Streets owned by several owners. He pointed out that parking is a big problem in the City especially in Little Saigon area. Chairman Turro felt that having the same person operate the business and live on top of the business would be desirable as it would assure the property will be maintained.

Commissioner Krippner stated that areas with noise generating businesses such as automotive repairs should not be combined with residential uses. He felt that the City should allow for true mixed use with rules and regulations. He stated that the City could experiment with Little Saigon and not rush into other areas.

Commissioner Bertels stated that the City is already a hodge podge by itself and is not the place to start mixed use development. Although it has worked with other cities, he felt it would not work for Westminster. According to Commissioner Bertels, it will only cause many problems especially if there is no enforcement of rules and regulations.

Commissioner Nguyen concurred that mixed use is appropriate only for the Little Saigon area not because of the cultural nature of the residents, but because the area is growing fast and there is not enough space for the businesses to grow. The only way to expand is to go vertical as the City of Santa Ana. Commissioner

Nguyen agreed with Commissioner Bertels that policing the regulations was necessary. It could take time to develop mixed use but he believed the City could use Little Saigon as a model. He expressed his appreciation with staff on researching on this matter.

Commissioner Krippner indicated that businesses and residences can be combined by controlling the clusters on a geographical basis. He stated there should be no restriction that resident and business owner be one person. He cited "The Old World" in Huntington Beach where the resident and business owner are not related.

Chairman Turro felt that the people who live and work in the area would be feasible because they will care about the property.

Commissioner Cruz mentioned he was in New York recently and observed that the mixed use development there had been maintained and well kept. It would depend on the types of business and the location as in the Little Saigon area. He indicated he would vote in favor of this study.

**Motion** Commissioner Bertels moved that the Commission not adopt the Resolution 2005-36 recommending City Council acceptance of the Mixed Use Strategy Study. No one seconded and the motion died.

**Motion** Commissioner Krippner moved that the Commission adopt Resolution 2005-36 recommending City Council acceptance of the Mixed Use Strategy Study limited to Little Saigon Area at this time, and directing staff to initiate the appropriate implementation process. Commissioner Cruz seconded and the motion carried, 4-1, Commissioner Bertels dissented.

**New Business** There was no New Business scheduled for review.

**Old Business** There was no Old Business scheduled for review.

**Administrative Approvals** The Planning Commission received notification that there was no administrative approvals during this reporting period.

**Reports and Comments:**

**Planning Director** Mr. Ratkay informed the Commission that the newly hired Part-Time Planning Technician is starting on Monday. Also, he mentioned Mr. Chris Wong has accepted the full-time Planning Technician position.

**City Attorney** None

**Planning  
Commissioners**

Commissioner Bertels commented it seemed contrary to him that the other Commissioners voted for the Mixed Use Study because he had the impression that they were against it.

Commissioner Krippner commented that every person is entitled to their own individual opinion.

Chairman Turro agreed that the study has a lot of pros and cons but the final decision rests upon the City Council and the City Attorney. He commended staff for the work they have done.

Commissioner Bertels mentioned the rabbit hutch at 15721 Candlewood for code enforcement action.

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maria Moya  
Department Secretary