



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: June W. Catalano, City Manager

DATE: January 24, 2013

SUBJECT: **WEEKLY UPDATES**

PUBLIC WORKS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Building Division

- Nordstrom's Rack (703 Contra Costa Boulevard) – A permit has been issued for the exterior improvements for Nordstrom's Rack. Tenant improvement plans will be submitted at a later date.
- Tenant Improvement (3266 Buskirk Avenue) – A tenant improvement permit has been issued to Ponytail Company, Inc. (for office, retail and warehouse).
- Ellinwood Office Park (300 & 400 Ellinwood Way) – A permit for each building has been issued to remodel the reception area for the Contra Costa County Employment and Human Services Department (EHSD).

Engineering Division

- Buskirk Avenue Widening Phase 2 Improvement Project – The City is accepting construction bids for this roadway improvements project. Additional information about the project construction work can be found on the City's web site. A pre-bid conference for bidders was held on Tuesday, January 7th at 2:00 pm in the Community Room. There were over 20 interested people in attendance, a good turn-out for a pre-bid conference.

The City has received over 50 written bidder's Request for Information (RFI) regarding the project. Staff and the consultant have been working aggressively to address and provide a formal response to each RFI. Staff has issued two project

Addendums to date. Information including Plan Holders lists and project updates can be found on the City's web site (www.ci.pleasant-hill.ca.us/projects_under_bid).

The Project's bid opening time and date has been changed to 2:00 p.m. on January 31st. This will allow bidders more time to review RFI responses and modify their bids accordingly. It is anticipated (pending reasonable bids and no bid protest) that the City Council will consider awarding the project at their regular February 25th meeting.

- Golf Club Road Bridge Replacement – Water Main Relocation – Phase 2 of the Golf Club Road Bridge replacement project began late this week. Last summer, the contractor for the Contra Costa Water District completed Phase 1 of the water line relocation, which included installing a 24-inch water main in the creek channel. This water main replacement is necessary in order for the City to widen and replace the Golf Club Road Bridge in 2014.

Phase 2 of the project requires the contractor to connect the new 24-inch line to the existing main line along Golf Club Road. CCWD scheduled to complete this phase during this low demand period. In order to accomplish this, it is necessary for the contractor to close one eastbound lane on the south side of the bridge during construction hours. It is anticipated the work will be completed in approximately four weeks. Pedestrians will also be detoured and will need to cross the bridge on the north side during construction. Traffic from Diablo Valley College during peak hours will experience some delays.

- Encroachment Permits

Arrow Construction – Multiple crews continue to work along Geary Road potholing to expose existing utilities between Putnum and Pleasant Hill.

PG&E – Replace deteriorated poles and installation of one a new pole at Elinora Drive and Betty Lane, and also at Pleasant Hill Road and Hamilton Drive.

PG&E – Replace existing transformer at 1011 Pleasant Valley Drive.

PG&E – Subcontractor is replacing deteriorated poles for PG&E at Strand/Pleasant Hill Road, Contra Costa Boulevard/Doray Drive and Monument Boulevard/Crescent Plaza.

PG&E – Two crews working on Buskirk; one on the eight-inch transmission main and the other on the distribution line. The transmission main should be completed by the February 7th according to the field foreman.

Maintenance Division

- Weed Spraying – Staff is continuing to take advantage of the weather to spray the weeds along the roadsides and in the medians.

- Agriculture Inspector – The Contra Costa County Agriculture Inspector visited the City’s landscape maintenance employees that were in the process of applying herbicides in their areas. The inspector looks for proper labeling on the spray tank, proper use of PPE (personal protective equipment), safety spill prevention materials, personal spill cleanup and eye wash equipment, and display of emergency medical information. All was in order and passed inspection.
- Tree Maintenance – Staff is continuing with the annual tree trimming and pruning throughout the City. With proper pruning, the health and shape of the trees will be greatly enhanced.

Planning Division

- Planning Commission

Study Session for DVC Plaza Pylon Sign Use Permit (61 Chilpancingo Parkway), PLN 13-0011 – The Planning Commission held a study session to provide feedback on a Use Permit request for two *Major Sign Adjustments* related to a 67-foot tall pylon sign associated with a future mixed-use redevelopment project. More specifically, the Use Permit is requesting: (1) a 67-foot tall freestanding sign, where a maximum 8-foot tall freestanding sign is permitted in an *RB Retail Business District*, and (2) approximately 610 square feet of sign face area (305 square feet per sign face) on a double-face freestanding sign, where a maximum 32 square feet per sign face or a maximum 64 square feet for two sign faces, is permitted. The proposed pylon sign is intended to provide highway-oriented tenant-identification signage, for the future redevelopment of the DVC Plaza, in addition to providing signage for pedestrian/vehicular traffic along nearby public right-of-ways such as Contra Costa Boulevard and Chilpancingo Parkway. In addition, the project site is located in Airport Safety Zones 3 and 4. Assessor’s Parcel Number: 153-270-001.

Action: No action was taken as this item was a study session. Comments provided by the Planning Commission included the following (no members of the public spoke):

- Provide additional information that clarifies the orientation of the sign on the site. More specifically, provide perspectives as to how the sign’s orientation relates to northbound and southbound traffic along Contra Costa Boulevard and Interstate 680
- Provide photos of a story pole, or story poles, at the project site to better simulate the proposed sign height and/or alternative reduced sign heights. Also, include visual simulations from all directions (including from northbound Contra Costa Boulevard at appropriate points when the sign would first become partially visible and when the sign would be fully visible).
- Provide the height of Interstate 680, above that of grade level, at the adjacent Concord Avenue public right-of-way.

- d. Provide a revised site plan to indicate the proposed setbacks from each property line and to indicate Airport Safety Zones 3 and 4 on the project site (provide setbacks to the base of the sign structure and to the base of the stairway pedestal).
- e. Provide a conceptual site plan to indicate other site improvements such as plants/trees, hardscape, pedestrian pathways, lawn furniture, public art, etc.

Appeal Period: Not applicable as no action was taken.

Study Session Concerning Miscellaneous Zoning Ordinance Amendments, City-Wide – The proposed amendments address miscellaneous updates, corrections, clarifications and minor substantive revisions to the zoning ordinance for the purpose of improving the clarity and administration of the ordinance.

Action: No action was taken as this item was a study session. The Planning Commission provided input on the topics for the proposed amendment. One member of the public spoke regarding revisions to the tree ordinance, and one email was received from a member of the public suggesting various modifications to the ordinance.

Appeal Period: Not applicable as no action was taken.

Discussion Item Regarding Report on 2012 Planning Project Activity – The report summarizes highlights of projects reviewed in 2012. For the year, 432 permits were processed by the Planning Division. From May through December, over 1,200 counter and phone inquiries were addressed. For the year, 754 code enforcement investigations/follow-ups occurred, and 34 non-operational vehicles were towed.

Action: Reviewed by the Planning Commission. No action required.

Appeal Period: Not applicable.

- **Zoning Administrator**

No meeting scheduled.

- **Administrative Actions**

Toman Minor Exception (345 Skander Lane), PLN 12-0450 – Minor Exception request for an adjustment to the height standard for gates/fences within the required front-yard setback. Section 18.20.040 of the Zoning Ordinance provides that the maximum height of a gate/fence within the required front-yard setback is three feet. The proposed ornamental iron gate/fence (which already exists on the project site) is seven feet at the highest point of the gate, and the two adjacent fence sections are six feet in height. The subject site is a flag lot with a driveway approximately 105 feet in

length measured from the adjacent public street. The gate/fence is located approximately 53 feet from the street.

Action: Notice of the Zoning Administrator's intention to approve this minor exception for the gate and fence height was issued on January 10th. As of January 23rd, no requests to conduct a public hearing for this minor exception had been received. A notice of approval of the minor exception was issued on January 24th.

Appeal Period: The appeal period will end on Monday, February 4, 2013 at 5:00 p.m.

Ellinwood Park Homeowners Association (HOA) – Tree Removal Permit (Rock Creek Way), PLN 13-0018 – Request to modify an Architectural Review Commission approved landscape plan to remove 12 trees causing property damage and/or maintenance issues. The trees to be removed are of various species, none of which are Oak species. Site Location: Northwest corner of Ellinwood Drive and Ellinwood Way.

Action: Approved and conditioned with a tree replacement plan at a 1:1 ratio (12 replacement trees total).

Appeal Period: The appeal period will end on Friday, February 1, 2013 at 1:00 p.m.

- **Architectural Review Commission (ARC)**

No meeting scheduled.

- **Code Compliance**

Inquiries received and follow-up items being addressed this week include the following:

Follow-ups on Prior Inquiries

- Trash adjacent to the freeway off-ramp at Gregory Lane: East Bay Municipal Utilities District (EBMUD) and Caltrans have been contacted as the trash is within property under their control. EBMUD has responded indicating their maintenance crew will be on-site shortly. Caltrans Maintenance supervisor came to City Hall to discuss clean up. Area along off-ramp cleaned up by Caltrans last weekend; however, the “triangle” area still requires clean up by Caltrans. Reminder email sent to Caltrans Maintenance Supervisor. EBMUD has not yet been out to the area within their control. Planning staff will contact the managers of the adjacent shopping centers to request that they take steps to better secure their trash/storage areas to try to prevent items from being removed.

- Dried up palm fronds creating an unsightly condition in a front yard on Burnham Court: Site visit scheduled this week. Completed site visit no violations. Closed.
- Request for re-check on the progress of clean-up of a residential property previously declared a public nuisance on Stevenson Drive: Pending re-check.
- Bushes exceeding the allowable height at the corner of an intersection at Contra Costa Boulevard near Taylor Boulevard: Planning staff contacted the property manager to request that the bushes be trimmed or replaced to address the sight distance concern. Planning staff made a second contact requesting status on trimming the shrubs.
- Construction of three fences in violation of height and/or setback requirements on Lorenzo Drive: Planning staff has sent letters to the property owners with fence issues explaining options for resolving the situation. Planning staff had follow up contacts with two property owners to discuss their options.
- Follow up with a property owner's representative regarding correction of unpermitted construction on Skander Drive: Responded to an email from the complaining party and discussed next steps with the Chief Building Official and City Attorney. Sent status update to City Manager and requested status update from property owner's representative. Sent follow up email to property owner's representative requesting immediate response prior to City initiating legal action.
- Request to contact the School District regarding concerns about the electronic reader board sign at Pleasant Hill Elementary School: Planning staff contacted the principal and discussed measures that could be taken to address the concerns. Planning staff viewed the site in the evening and has been working with the principal to adjust the operations of the sign so that it turns off earlier in the evening and does not appear as bright.
- Inquiry from the Police Department (PD) regarding the status of a vacant condominium on Woodsworth Drive: Checked with the Building Division regarding the status of a prior red-tag that had been issued for the site and responded back to the PD regarding their inquiry. Site visit made; door observed to be unlocked; contacted PD; Planning staff followed up with the HOA; and PD temporarily secured the location.
- Excessive number of chickens reported at a residence on Oakvue Drive: Letter sent by Planning staff requesting that the owner contact the City to schedule a compliance inspection. Owner and Planning staff reached agreement regarding resolution of the issue. The chickens will be removed shortly.
- Inquiry regarding applicability of smoking ordinance to a situation at the Woodcreek Apartments: Provided copy of smoking ordinance and sent inquiry to the City Attorney regarding an ordinance interpretation question. Complainant called stating matter has been resolved. Closed.
- Inquiry about the status of an existing violation regarding the roof of a residence on Charlton Court: Follow up inspection scheduled next week.
- Second anonymous complaint regarding the condition of a residential property on Pleasant View Road and potential use of a trailer as a dwelling (site visit is

scheduled this week): Visited site and noted multiple violations. Police Department also checked the site. Notice of violation sent this week.

- Received a multi-page list of addresses from a resident with concerns about the condition of the sidewalks at those addresses: Referred to Engineering/Maintenance Divisions for follow-up. Maintenance Division has scheduled follow-up inspections.
- Contact made with a residential property owner on Hill Lane regarding status of a nuisance clean-up that is currently in progress: Scheduled for re-check next week.
- Complaint regarding a fence falling and dirt sliding down the hill near the corner of Scottsdale and Chilpancingo: Scheduled for site visit this week. Site visit completed. Planning staff contacted the HOA to request correction of the violation. HOA has responded indicating the area will be cleaned up and a damaged trash enclosure repaired shortly.
- Complaint regarding vehicles/trash/carts in a front yard of a residence on Clarie: Planning staff visited the site. Notice of violation sent. Pending response from property owner.

New Inquiries

- Complaint regarding auto repair business at Agnes: Site visit made this week. No indication of violation. Will re-check next week.
- Complaint regarding sight distance issue (bushes) at Millburn and Lucille: Site visit made this week. Violation confirmed. Notice of violation being prepared.
- Inquiry received regarding regulations for use/storage of recreational vehicles: Response provided by Planning staff.
- Inquiry regarding contractor signs placed on new fences at Ellinwood and Contra Costa Boulevard and at Pleasant Hill Road near Barnett: Engineering Division determined that the signs were not posted by City contractors. Planning staff will re-check and contact the adjacent property owners.
- Responded to inquiry regarding storage of recreational vehicles.