



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: June W. Catalano, City Manager

DATE: November 18, 2010

SUBJECT: **WEEKLY UPDATES**

PUBLIC WORKS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Building Division

- Nixon Insurance (396 Civic Drive) – A permit has been issued to install a canopy-mounted photovoltaic system to be located over a portion of the parking stalls.
- Deutscher Office Park (395 Civic Drive) – An interior demolition permit has been issued for the future tenant (Devry-Carrington College).
- New Residence (560 Creekside Road) – Plans were approved by Central Contra Costa Sanitary District, as well as the Building, Engineering and Planning Divisions, to rebuild a new residence, and a permit has been issued. The previous residence was demolished due to a fallen tree. The existing detached garage and sheds are still in good order and remain on the property.
- Taco Bell Remodel (1700 Contra Costa Boulevard) – Final approval was issued by the Fire Protection District, Contra Costa Environmental Health, and the Building, Planning and Engineering Divisions, and the restaurant is now open for business.
- New Single-Family Residence (12 Paddock Court) – Plans have been submitted for review and approval of a new single-family residence to be located on one of the vacant lots in the existing Saddleridge Subdivision (originally built in 1984).

Engineering Division

- Colony Park Neighbors Association Meeting with Kinder Morgan – On Tuesday, November 16th, the Colony Park Neighbors Association (a City of Concord

development) conducted a homeowner's general meeting and invited a representative of Kinder Morgan as a guest speaker to answer questions regarding their fuel pipeline that is near the development. The pipeline is capable of carrying gas, diesel or jet fuel from the origination point in Concord and south to the San Jose area. City of Pleasant Hill staff attended the meeting.

Major concerns expressed by the residents were pipeline inspection, maintenance and emergency response plans. Kinder Morgan representatives reported the pipeline is monitored 24 hours a day with a SCADA Monitoring System (Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition), which is capable of identifying any problems along the pipeline. Kinder Morgan is capable of immediately shutting down the flow (within seconds) if needed. The pipeline is thoroughly inspected every five years for cracks, weld/joint deterioration and/or leaks, and maintenance/repairs are performed based on the inspections. The previous inspection determined that the existing pipeline is in good condition and will continue to operate at its current capacity.

The two biggest pipeline problems were identified as corrosion and third-party construction activities near the pipeline. Kinder Morgan's policy is to require a Kinder Morgan inspector to be on site whenever a contractor is digging within ten feet of the pipeline, and no one is authorized to dig without first verifying the location of underground facilities through USA North. Residents were encouraged to visit the website at www.Kindermorgan.com to obtain more information about safety policies and who to contact if they have any questions or concerns regarding the pipeline.

- Buskirk Avenue Widening Improvements Phase II – On November 17th, the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) Board approved a resolution appropriating \$2,900,000 for the right-of-way acquisition and right-of-way services for the project. This will allow staff to begin services to acquire necessary right-of-way for the roadway widening project. Design work is underway, and 90% design plans are anticipated to be completed by the summer of 2011, which will provide the necessary details (plats and legal) to acquire some of the remainder parcels.

Maintenance Division

- Storm Drains – In preparation of this winter's storm season, Maintenance staff have inspected over 1,500 catch basins located on City streets. Debris and leaves have been removed from a number of these catch basins so that water can flow easily into the storm drainage system.
- Tree Removal – A resident near Pleasant Hill Road was recently notified that their privately-owned tree was completely dead and needed to be removed. If the tree were to fall, it could cause damage to both private and public property. Discussions were held with the resident and City Arborist Bob Costa about the need to remove the dead

tree before the winter storm season. The property owner contracted with a private tree company and completed the removal.

- **CERT Volunteers** – The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) will be participating in a sand bag demonstration event at the City Maintenance Yard on three evenings in late November. These annual events allows over 20 CERT volunteers and City Maintenance staff to team up and make over 3,000 sand bags. The bags are assembled with the aid of a mechanized machine along with volunteer labor who then store the bags on pallets at the Maintenance Yard. In the event of an extremely heavy winter storm, the sand bags will be delivered to locations in the City for residents’ use to protect property from flooding.

Planning Division

- **Planning Commission**

Presentation Regarding Brown Act Overview and Update – The City Attorney provided a presentation on the Ralph M. Brown Act (Government Code Section 54950 et. seq.) and conducted a discussion with the Planning Commission regarding the applicability of the Act to Planning Commission operations.

Action: No action was taken by the Planning Commission.

Christ the King Church – Outdoor Amphitheater Development Plan and Use Permit Request (199 Brandon Road) – A public hearing was conducted to consider approval of a Development Plan and Use Permit for a new outdoor amphitheater with seating for up to 208 people and a new trellis feature with associated landscaping. The project site is located in the *R-10 Single Family, 10,000 square foot lots* zoning district.

Action: Approved with conditions. In response to testimony from several members of the public, the Planning Commission added conditions addressing: 1) construction of a solid wooden fence between the adjacent private property and the amphitheater site; 2) replacement of a portion of an existing chain-link fence (between the amphitheater and the property to the west) with a solid wood fence; 3) prohibition of sound amplification equipment at the amphitheater; and 4) installation of limited lighting for safety purposes only. The Planning Commission also added a condition reiterating that the project shall not result in any additional run-off being directed toward neighboring properties; added modified conditions relating to use and hours of operation; and requested that the Architectural Review Commission address design changes to minimize the use of the amphitheater by skateboarders.

Appeal Period: The appeal period will end on Monday, November 22nd at 5:00 p.m.

Study Session on Sign Ordinance Amendments, City-Wide – Study session on proposed amendments to the existing sign ordinance, specifically Chapters 18.60, 18.105 and 18.140 of the Pleasant Hill Municipal Code. The proposed amendments are intended to make minor corrections and clarifications, integrate references to the City’s Design Guidelines and streamline review procedures to improve administration of the ordinance.

Action: No action taken. Discussion was continued to December 14, 2010.

Appeal Period: Not applicable.

- **Zoning Administrator**

No meeting scheduled this week.

- **Architectural Review Commission (ARC)**

Clearwire Antenna (401 Taylor Boulevard) – The applicant is requesting approval for the installation of a wireless communication facility consisting of three antennas, one microwave dish antenna, three radio heads, one GPS unit and associated equipment on the roof of an existing building. The installation of the proposed antennas would be at a height of 36 feet above grade (the existing building height is 24 feet, 7inches above grade).

Action: This application was withdrawn by the applicant. No action taken.

Appeal Period: Not applicable.

Taco Bell Color Change and New Wall Signs (500 Contra Costa Boulevard) – The applicant is requesting design review approval of an exterior color change to an existing 2,240-square-foot restaurant facility. The existing drive-through facility and existing parking facility would remain unchanged. In addition, the applicant is proposing to replace two existing wall signs with one on the east and one on the north building elevations. No changes are proposed for the existing freestanding signage on the project site consisting of one monument sign, one menu board sign and two directional signs.

Action: Approved with conditions. No persons from the general public spoke on the item.

Appeal Period: The appeal period will end on Thursday, December 2nd at 6:00 pm.

Ross Dress for Less Façade Improvements (556 Contra Costa Boulevard) – The applicant is requesting approval for façade and other related exterior building improvements to an existing approximate 30,000-square-foot retail tenant space.

Improvements include new building colors, new exterior lighting, a new 35-foot-tall tower element, new doors and window, new roof-top equipment and modification of existing loading doors at the rear of the tenant space.

Action: The item was continued to December 16, 2010, with direction to modify the plans to address staff and ARC comments. No persons from the general public spoke on the item.

Appeal Period: Not applicable.

- **Code Compliance**

Selected highlights of weekly activity:

Political Signs – Election candidates and committees have been removing their political signs promptly. Staff will continue to monitor compliance.

Belle Avenue – An abandoned residence has been cleaned up by Bank of America and will soon be boarded up for security.

Elliott Drive – A residence in foreclosure with various violations is being addressed cooperatively with the bank that controls the property. Staff is currently working to address a complaint from a neighbor regarding front-yard setback pavement exceeding ordinance allowances for hardscape. Previously, issues relating to unapproved interior modifications to the building were addressed.

Cleveland Road – Staff assisted the Police Department in resolving a concern about a dead/dying tree.

Playa Del Rey Street – Broken windows at a vacant residence have been boarded up and the trash containers at the site have been cleaned and emptied.

Business License Fee Collection – Staff successfully assisted the Finance Department in collecting back taxes and business license fees owed to the City.

Number of Tasks Completed This Week – 33 (includes phone calls, emails, courtesy notices, investigations, site visits, area patrols, internal requests for service, attendance at training sessions and other miscellaneous activities). The Code Enforcement Officer was on vacation for a portion of this week.

- **Miscellaneous**

Tree Removals – One Italian Stone Pine tree was approved to be removed at 260 Valley Drive and replaced with two trees by December 16th.

County Office of Education (CCCOE) Photovoltaic Panel Project (77 Santa Barbara Road) – The CCCOE has begun work to prepare the site for installation of a series of photovoltaic panels mounted on carport structures within the parking lot adjacent to Oak Park Boulevard. The CCOE is the lead agency for the project. No permits from the City are being required. The City has requested that CCOE provide a tree removal and replacement plan to City staff for advisory review to ensure that the City’s tree replacement requirements will be satisfied.

REDEVELOPMENT

- Affordable Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program – On Thursday, November 18th, the Affordable Housing Rehabilitation Loan Committee approved the program’s first loan for a solar energy system. This solar system will be installed by a local solar energy company and will produce nearly 2,000 watts of power when operating at full capacity. This amount of energy will offset a good portion of the homeowner’s electrical demand from PG&E. At the same meeting, the Committee approved another loan to assist a homeowner with efficiency upgrades and other work to make the home safe, decent and habitable. Since the beginning of the year, the program has assisted six Pleasant Hill homeowners with loans totaling \$171,000 and three homeowners with grants totaling \$10,000.
- Small Business Assistance – Staff met this week with business service representatives from the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) to refer them to a Pleasant Hill business operator who was in need of business resources and assistance. SBDC staff did a site visit the following day and are now actively engaged with the business owner to provide one-on-one business consulting assistance.
- Grand Opening – Staff attended the Grand Opening ribbon cutting event for The Original Pancake House (2059 Contra Costa Boulevard) on Thursday, November 18th. The event was well attended by both City and Chamber representatives.
- Annual Light Up The Night – Coordination and planning for the 3rd Annual Light Up The Night is continuing. This event will be held in Downtown Pleasant Hill on Tuesday, November 30th from 5:30 to 7:30 pm and will include the lighting of a 25-foot decorated tree in the small Plaza on Crescent Drive. Festivities also will include music and caroling throughout the Downtown, free horse-drawn carriage rides, free cookies and hot chocolate, and a visit from Santa and his elves. Staff and the Chamber of Commerce Chief Executive Officer have been visiting Downtown merchants to encourage their involvement in the event by providing individual store prize drawings, giveaways or promotional/discount offers for shoppers.