



OJAI VALLEY MUNICIPAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

FINAL MEETING MINUTES

18 Valley Road, Oak View
Monday, September 18, 2023 - 7:00PM

Chair: Chris Cohen, **Vice Chair:** Joseph Westbury

Council Members: Barbara Kennedy, Grace Malloy, Terry Wright

Public Comments FOR IN PERSON MEETINGS may be provided using the following TWO options:

Option 1: E-MAIL PUBLIC COMMENT- If you wish to make a comment on a specific agenda item, please submit your comment to the Executive Officer at ovmac@ventura.org for that item via email by 3:30 p.m. the day of the meeting to ensure your letter is received and entered into the record. PLEASE INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IN YOUR EMAIL: (A) MEETING DATE, (B) AGENDA ITEM NUMBER, (C) SUBJECT OR TITLE OF THE ITEM, (D) YOUR FULL NAME. DURING PUBLIC COMMENT ON THE AGENDA ITEM SPECIFIED IN YOUR EMAIL, YOUR COMMENT WILL BE SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD. Please limit your written correspondence to 300 words or less.

Option 2 – IN PERSON PUBLIC COMMENT - If you wish to make a comment in-person, you must be present at the meeting location and provide your comment prior to the close of the public comment period for the item you wish to speak on. Each meeting will have sign-in sheets to participate in Public Comment at the meeting location for in-person comments.

1. Call to Order of the Meeting -

Meeting called to order at 7:01PM

2. Flag Salute

3. Roll Call –

*Chair Cohen, Member Wright, Member Kennedy and Member Malloy present.
Vice Chair Westbury absent*

4. Adoption of the Agenda -

Moved by Chair Cohen, seconded by Member Wright, approved 4/0

5. Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda

Public Comment No. 1 – Ron Solorzano - Regional librarian for Oak View, Meiners Oaks, and Ojai Valley Libraries. In September, we are hosting the One County One Book Month through the VC Library with various presentations throughout the County. Our book is “Solito” which is a memoir about the migration of a 9 year old child from El Salvador to the United States. You can find out more about this on our website www.vencolibrary.org. There is a Reading Society Book Zoo at the Oak View Library, and there will be a discussion about the book at the Ojai Library on 9/20 at 6:00PM. There will also be a faculty panel on 9/21 at Cal Lutheran University. Lastly, the big finale on 9/30, Saturday, will be an all day celebration event at Cal State University – Channel Islands - the author will be there at 2:00pm. You can also find out more about this on our website.

6. Approval of the Meeting Minutes of July 17, 2023 – DRAFT MINUTES ATTACHED

Meetings could not be approved due to lack of quorum with two abstentions. Will be on October 2023 agenda for approval.

7. City of Ojai Planning Commission Update

No Planning Commissioner was present for the update.

Formal Items:

8. Review of a Director's Permit for Permit Adjustment – PL23-0048 – 11560 N. Ventura Ave.

Request for exterior façade alterations, removal of a 318 square foot sunroom to be replaced by a 550 square foot outdoor patio, the addition of a new 102 square foot walk-in cooler, replanting landscaping, repaving and restriping the parking area, new signage throughout including refacing the existing monument sign, and an interior remodel. The building footprint will be reduced by 201 square feet, however with the outdoor patio, the overall gross square footage will increase by 248 square feet to a combined gross floor and outdoor dining area of 2,760 square feet. The project also includes the creation of two motorcycle parking spaces. With the addition of the motorcycle parking spaces, the proposed expansion to the gross floor area can be accommodated by providing one parking space for every 2.4 fixed seats. The 0.64 acre property is located in the Commercial Planned Development Zone, with an Area Plan designation of Commercial, and a land use designation of Commercial Planned Development.

Staff Contact:

John Novi, Senior Planner

john.novi@ventura.org

805-654-2462

Staff gave a brief power point presentation (attached to meeting minutes). This project will have a slight expansion of square footage by adding a cooler, and will demolish the existing sunroom to make an outdoor patio for the forthcoming Hamburger Habit Restaurant in the former Wendy's location along SR-33. Project consists of basic façade upgrades with new paint, fenestration, and landscaping upgrades. Parking and existing drive thru queue remains unchanged.

Member Kennedy - It is taller?

Staff – Slightly taller than the existing Wendy's building, but the height will be 25 feet with is the maximum height allowed in this zone. It's a single story building.

Member Malloy - Is the greyish/beige color accurate? Its not too dark?

Staff – No, its lighter than the power point portrays, it is not a darker grey.

Member Wright - I'm happy something will be done with this site!

Member Malloy - How about landscaping, will it be drought tolerant, native?

Staff – Yes, landscaping is required to be consistent with our MWELo standards which requires drought tolerant species.

Chair Cohen – How about lighting?

Staff – All lighting will be downward facing and will be consistent with the Dark Sky Overlay.

Chair Cohen then opened the discussion to Public Comment:

Public Comment No. 1 - Marilyn Miller – This is great! It’s been an eyesore for a long time. Removing the sunroom is also a great idea.

Public Comment No. 2 – Bert Rapp – I agree with Member Wright. About time to have this. The outdoor patio is an awesome idea for the Summer.

Public Comment No. 3 – Harry Waterson – In support of the program.

End of Public Comment

Council Deliberations:

Chair Cohen – Are there any issues with the drive-through queue and the adjacent business Ventura Hay Co.?

Planning Staff – There will be plenty of access available to Ventura Hay Co. outside of the drive-through queue. There will also be changes to the existing monument sign along SR-33. The size won’t change, but the two tenants, Hamburger Habit and the Ventura Hay Co. will share the same monument sign.

Chair Cohen made the motion to recommend approval of the project as presented with the request that there use as many native plants as possible in their landscaping plan. Member Wright seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously 4-0.

9. Review of a Conditional Use Permit - PL23-0074 - 11502 N. Ventura Ave.

Request for a Conditional Use Permit to allow an existing Car Wash and Oil Change establishment to operate from 8:30 – 5:00PM with an estimated 35 customers per day. The permit area includes an existing car wash tunnel, retail and office building with second story office (to be converted to a dwelling unit), lube and oil change bays, storage and equipment room, and water tank enclosures. All structures and equipment already exist. No physical or operational changes are proposed. Prior Conditional Use Permit expired, and the applicant is seeking a new Conditional Use Permit to continue the use of the car wash and related facilities for a 10 year period. The 0.5 acre property is located in the Commercial Planned Development Zone, with an Area Plan designation of Commercial, and a land use designation of Commercial Planned Development.

Staff Contact:

AJ Bernhardt, Assistant Planner
aj.bernhardt@ventura.org 805-654-3136

Staff presented a brief power point presentation regarding the proposed Conditional Use Permit (CUP) project which will be subject to Planning Commission review and approval. The CUP request is a continuation for a car wash, with retail/office space, and a dwelling unit for the manager. Operations are limited to 8:30AM- 5:00PM with approximately 35 customers per day. No physical or operational changes are proposed as part of this project. Prior violation case has been abated due to some non-compliance items.

Member Kennedy - With the addition of a dwelling, does that make this a Mixed Use Project?

Planning Staff - A Dwelling Unit for on-site management is allowed in the Commercial Planned Development Zone, so it is still considered a Commercial Project.

Member Malloy – How would you check to make sure the dwelling unit would be up to code in a commercial project?

Planning Staff – During plan check, the unit would be verified by Building and Safety to meet all habitable code requirements. This will also be checked every three years as part of Condition Compliance to ensure that the unit is indeed being used by the business manager.

Member Kennedy - It looks like this has been operating with an expired permit for a number of years. How did this happen?

Planning Staff - Prior ownership did not accurately translate the requirements of the Conditional Use Permit terms to the new owner. This gap, along with COVID and pause with on-site inspections, contribute to the timeframe between expiration and the current proposed permit.

Member Malloy - What were the compliance issues noted in the Violation?

Planning Staff - There was unpermitted signage, the dwelling unit, a shade structure, and trash being kept in the wrong location.

Member Kennedy - Is a shade structure proposed with this project?

Planning Staff – No, they will have temporary canopies if needed for any detail work, but nothing permanent.

Member Malloy - Were there any complaints over the timeframe of the active CUP?

Planning Staff – No.

Member Malloy – Will this have to be in compliance with the Dark Sky Ordinance?

Planning Staff- Yes, the parking lot is allowed to have lighting but it must be down shielded.

Chair Cohen then opened the discussion to Public Comment:

Public Comment No. 1- Gina Pisciotta – Commented that prior owner had bad business practices and shared her own experience.

Applicant/owner was in the audience and stated that she is changing the former operational system around and this new system will prevent the gaps in service that Ms. Pisciotta experienced under former management. The new owner is accountable and has been operating for the past two years and has received positive feedback about her operational changes.

End of public comment.

Council Deliberations:

Member Malloy - What about the chemicals in the car wash and the runoff? How is that handled?

Planning Staff - Environmental Health Division (EHD) requires state, local, and other compliance requirements for such operations and these are checked annually. Watershed Protection Division requires certain stormwater treatment requirements for these operations.

Member Kennedy - Is the water recycled?

Applicant/Owner – There is a six stage clarifier system required prior to releasing the water into the stormwater system.

Chair Cohen – What would we need to about shade for the workers?

Planning Staff – We would be more than willing to work with the applicant if a permanent shade structure is desired at a future time.

Member Kennedy made the motion to recommend approval of the project as presented. Member Wright seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously 4-0.

10. Announcements and Updates

Executive Officer Clensay provided the following updates:

Flyers on back counter – Camp Chaffee/Foster Park Community fundraising events

Watershed walk – October 14th

Ojai Valley Trail update

- 1. **Regular Maintenance** - The current weed abatement project has restarted this week with staff and work release crews beginning at Foster Park and working their way up the trail. It will take the approximately two weeks to complete the abatement project unless there is another pressing need that takes them off the trail. We are not planning to do any fence replacement until the engineering design is complete so we know which areas may stay and go for the project. We will remove any damaged area as we are doing abatement. We do not currently have a service calendar for the trail as we are at the limitation of the size and demographic of crew that are sent to us from work release.*
- 2. **Interim paving for section damaged by storm (Prospect grade)** – Parks and CEO Staff surveyed trail in August- Did not see any failures in the area where Ojai Sanitation did their repairs. They placed a significant amount of riprap rocks along the bank to stabilize the trail.*
- 3. **Full re-pavement project** – CEO office working on agreement with engineering design firm to repave the entire length of the trail.*

11. Councilmember Comments

Member Kennedy provided the following information for events at the Oak View Parks and Resource Center: There will be a Bike Rodeo on Saturday, October 14th from 10:00 AM- 2:00 PM. There will also be a Trunk-Or-Treat Event on Saturday, October 28th from 5:00 PM – 7:30 PM. Member Kennedy also thanked District 1 Supervisor Office to assistance with the recent cemetery grading event that garnered media attention.

Member Malloy noted that there have been a lot of rumblings in the community with children and e-bikes, and safety concerns about fatalities. They are everywhere, and we need to start talking about it and how we can wrap our arms around future enforcement. Supervisor LaVere noted that he has heard of some recent accidents landing people in the Emergency Room. We will look into perhaps receiving an informational presentation about this from law enforcement in the first quarter of 2024.

12.Adjournment: Next Meeting will be held on Monday, October 16th at 7:00PM IN PERSON at the Oak View Community Center

Meeting adjourned at 7:57PM