

# City of Corona

400 S. Vicentia Ave.  
Corona, CA 92882



## Minutes - Draft

Monday, May 20, 2019

6:00 PM

Council Chambers

## Planning and Housing Commission

### STUDY SESSION

*Karen Alexander, Chair*  
*Timothy Jones, Vice Chair*  
*Mitchell Norton, Commissioner*  
*Viren Shah, Commissioner*  
*Craig Siqueland, Commissioner*

## ROLLCALL

**Present** 5 - Commissioner Viren Shah, Commissioner Mitchell Norton, Vice Chair Tim Jones, Chair Karen Alexander, and Commissioner Craig Siqueland

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Alexander called the meeting to order.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Commissioner Norton led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

None.

**4. AGENDA ITEM**

[19-0506](#) Overview of the city's development process.

**Attachments:** [P & H Commission Study Session Presentation](#)

At the request of Chair Alexander, Joanne Coletta, Community Development Director, presented an overview of the City's Development Process. At the conclusion of her presentation, Ms. Coletta offered to answer any questions of the Commission.

Commissioner Norton asked for clarification on how staff determines if a project is discretionary or ministerial.

Ms. Coletta responded that the City's municipal code describes which applications are discretionary and subject to review by the Planning Commission and City Council; applications not discretionary are reviewed and approved by staff.

Commission Shah asked if there can be clarification on the difference between the General Plan and General Plan Amendment.

Ms. Coletta explained the General Plan is city's blue print for future development but also covers more than just land use. The General Plan Land Use Element designates the land uses for properties in the city. However, it is the Zoning Ordinance that prescribes the development standards on how the site will be developed based on the land use. The General Plan is the base and the zoning is the overlay and both plans need to be consistent. At times, the General Plan can be amended to

accommodate a zone change.

Commissioner Norton asked for clarification of the specific plan process and if it is staff or the developer that recommends a specific plan for a project.

Ms. Coletta responded by explaining either party can recommend a specific plan, but it is mostly used for projects that have a community vision or something unique that may not be covered in the municipal code. The city has 32 specific plans and they are identified by the name of the neighborhood, for example, Mountain Gate, Chase Ranch, and Arantine Hills.

Commissioner Siqueland asked about the general timeline process for the development process and does staff feel there are areas that can be improved to expedite the process.

Ms. Coletta explained the development process is collaborative between staff and the developer. Staff is responsible for responding to applications within a 20 to 30 day time frame. If a developer is required to prepare technical studies it may take them a few months before they can submit those studies to the city. Some applications are easier than others and may only take five months but others can take up to 12 months. Also, the California Environmental Quality Act plays a role in the timing of the project.

Vice Chair Jones asked about the process of providing recommendations to the applicant if something needs to be changed within the project.

Ms. Coletta responded that staff will make recommendations on changes to a project if the design does not comply with the municipal code or if staff is familiar with situations based on past experiences, staff will comment on those concerns as well. The licensed designer for the project normally understands staff's comments and makes the changes accordingly.

Chair Alexander commented that the Police Department probably also looks at crime prevention for projects such appropriate lighting and security measures.

Ms. Coletta concurred with the Chair's comment.

Commissioner Shah asked if the conditions of approval are used by staff as check list for the project.

Ms. Coletta responded yes and said staff is responsible for checking the conditions of approval during the plan check review of the project. Staff has general conditions of approval for all projects and custom conditions of approval created for projects.

Commissioner Siqueland asked Ms. Coletta how are unique projects handled if the municipal code does not address a particular situation.

Ms. Coletta responded that development is not always black and white and there is some grey area. In that situation the licensed professional designing the project needs to demonstrate how the scenario will work based on submitted information.

Chair Alexander asked for clarification on the distance of the 500 feet radius of the public hearing notices and if there is an option for email notifications.

Ms. Coletta responded the distance is specified by city ordinance. She explained no email notifications are sent out but the city uses three forms of advertisement with one being the posting of a public hearing sign on the project site.

Vice Chair Jones asked how does staff respond to the public regarding public hearings and who handles the responses by email, letters, phone calls or in person .

Ms. Coletta responded that the planners name is made available on the public notice and they will respond to inquires from the public. Most are by email with the second type of contact made by telephone. All public correspondence is submitted with the staff report.

Commissioner Shah commented on the different departments that review the project and asked for clarification on the consistency of the review process.

Ms. Coletta explained staff will rotate on projects to distribute the work load, but the supervision of the staff is consistent. Ms. Coletta also mentioned staff has pre-development meetings with other city departments before the DPR meeting with the developer so that staff is aware of other comments by other departments because a correction or concern made by one department can affect a requirement of another department.

Commissioner Siqueland asked if there is an expedited process.

Ms. Coletta responded all projects are treated the same and in the same time frame. The city has a fairly responsive turn around time for plan checks and is very much competitive with other cities.

Chair Alexander asked how often are the project updates updated on the website.

Ms. Coletta responded they are updated frequently.

Commissioner Shah asked if there is an updated redevelopment process for the downtown area. He mentioned the success other cities and asked if Corona has considered using other ideas to encourage more redevelopment.

Ms. Coletta responded the city has limited incentives for redevelopment projects because of the dissolution of the Redevelopment Agency.

Chair Alexander asked if anyone from the public wanted to speak on this matter.

TOM RICHINS, RESIDENT, thanked Ms. Coletta for the presentation and expressed his appreciation for the quick turn around time for plan check.

JOE MORGAN, RESIDENT, expressed his appreciation for city staff. He expressed his dislike of the public noticing process and asked that the public be more educated on why they receive the public notices.

## **5. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS - Report by Public Works Traffic Division**

[19-0511](#) Level of service on McKinley near McKinley Shopping Centers.

**Attachments:** [McKinley Avenue Presentation](#)

At the request of Chair Alexander, Dennis Ralls, Public Works Program Manager, presented a traffic report on McKinley Avenue near the McKinley Shopping Centers. At the conclusion of his presentation, Mr. Ralls offered to answer any questions of the Commission.

Chair Alexander thanked Mr. Ralls for his presentation and for addressing the traffic concerns for the businesses in that shopping center.

Commissioner Shah asked for clarification on the levels of service

between a stop controlled intersection versus a signal controlled intersection and the difference with the through-put when an intersection has a signal.

Mr. Ralls responded by providing an example of a new traffic signal recently installed at the intersection of Green River Road and Tanglewood Drive. It used to be a controlled stop and because of the level of service on Green River the city received many complaints because only a single car could clear the intersection at one time. With the new traffic signal more than a single car can clear the intersection on a green light. Therefore, the wait time at the intersection is less during peak times than it would be with the controlled stop.

Commissioner Shah asked for clarification if the counts into the Costco shopping center are from the Griffin intersection only. Mr. Ralls said the counts are combined from the traffic signals at Shopping Center Drive and Griffin Avenue.

Commissioner Shah mentioned the dual left turn lanes at Griffin Way into the Costco shopping center and the number of cars using the left turn lanes at this intersection and asked if cars were to continue north to the Shopping Center Drive signal would it improve the situation.

Mr. Ralls stated it would help but at the same time cars are coming off the McKinley northbound freeway ramp which is in the same area as the dual left turn lanes and therefore many cars are merging in this area because of this design so staff staggered the signals at these intersections to accommodate northbound traffic on McKinley in addition to the traffic coming off the freeway. The signal north of Griffin Way is staggered about 15 seconds after the green light at Griffin Way to encourage cars to continue to move north and hit the second signal.

Commissioner Shah asked about the possibility of signage to encourage people to use the second signal. Mr. Ralls said signage could be evaluated.

A discussion ensued among Commissioner Shah, Mr. Ralls and Mr. Koper regarding the dip in the shopping center driveway at Griffin Way. Mr. Ralls said based on the video it looks like cars do approach the driveway with caution because of the dip. Mr. Koper indicated the preference today would be to have a street intersection design into the shopping center on these large volume streets as opposed to the commercial driveway approach design that exists to improve the flow of cars into the shopping

center. Mr. Koper also indicated that changing the commercial driveway approach to a street intersection design would be costly because of the storm drain design and infrastructure constructed at this intersection. A change to the driveway design would warrant a change to the storm drain design.

Chair Alexander expressed her concern about the cars turning left into the center and blocking traffic when the light turns red. Mr. Ralls acknowledged the challenge this causes to the other drivers because of the on-site movements occurring in the shopping center and that the southbound traffic on McKinley in this area can get delayed.

Commissioner Siqueland mentioned the possibility of future projects in the shopping and how can the developer [management company] be challenged now to address these issues so future tenants of the center are not being held responsible for improvements. Chair Alexander stated that she was mostly interested in understanding the relationship on McKinley Street and the east and west flow into the centers and what tools the city has to address some of the concerns raised by the tenants and Mr. Ralls has demonstrated how staff has been addressing the traffic volume on this street with the signal timing. Commissioner Norton indicated he remembered the comment being mostly about the internal circulation within the center and not necessarily with the street access and if there is opportunity to open dialog with Kimco to improve internal circulation.

Chair Alexander spoke about the research she conducted on her own using collision reports she obtained from the Police Department at both shopping centers [east and west sides] on McKinley. She provided slides showing this information in relation to the number volume of cars using the intersections provided by Mr. Ralls.

Chair Alexander asked if anyone from the public would like to speak on this matter.

JOE MORGAN, RESIDENT, expressed his concerns regarding the traffic issues going into the shopping centers.

TOM RICHINS, RESIDENT, thanked Mr. Ralls for his presentation and expressed his appreciation to the Commissioners for their concern regarding the traffic issues.

## **6. PLANNING AND HOUSING COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS AND COMMENTS**

None.

## **7. ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Alexander adjourned the meeting at 7:53 p.m. to the Planning and Housing Commission meeting of Monday, June 10, 2019, commencing at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers.