

**PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES  
GLENDALE CIVIC CENTER  
5750 W. GLENN DRIVE  
GLENDALE, ARIZONA 85301  
JANUARY 7, 2021  
6:00 P.M.**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Hirsch called the meeting to order at approximately 6:03 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

**Commissioners Present:** Commissioners Crow, Harper, Nowakowski, Nyberg, Wilfong, and Vice Chairperson Lenox, and Chairperson Hirsch were present.

**City Staff Present:** George Gehlert, Senior Planning Project Manager, Jim Gruber, Chief Deputy City Attorney, Jamsheed Mehta, Development Services Director, and Diana Figueroa, Recording Secretary.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS**

Chairperson Hirsch called for citizen comments. There were none.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

Chairperson Hirsch called for a motion regarding the minutes from the public hearing of December 3, 2020.

**Commissioner Harper made a motion to APPROVE the December 3, 2020 Regular Meeting MINUTES as written. Commissioner Nyberg SECONDED the MOTION, which was APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**WITHDRAWALS AND CONTINUANCES**

Chairperson Hirsch called for Withdrawals and Continuances. There were none.

**PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS**

Chairperson Hirsch called for the public hearing items.

**PALMAIRE APARTMENTS / PHASE II – GPA20-09 / ZON20-15:** A request by Adam Baugh, on behalf of Withey Morris PLC, representing Palmaire Investments, LLC, for approval of a Minor General Plan Amendment from GC (General Commercial) to HDR-30 (High Density Residential (30 units/acre); and a zone change from C-2 (General Commercial) to R-5 (Multiple Residence) to enable the construction of a 42-unit apartment complex on 1.77 acres. The site located at the Southeast corner of 45<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Palmaire Avenue (7087 North 45<sup>th</sup> Avenue); and is in the Cactus District. Staff Contact: George Gehlert, Senior Planning Project Manager, [ggehlert@glendaleaz.com](mailto:ggehlert@glendaleaz.com) (623) 930-2597.

Mr. George Gehlert, Senior Planning Project Manager, made staff's presentation.

Chairperson Hirsch called for the applicant's presentation.

Mr. Adam Baugh, Withey Morris, applicant, made a brief presentation.

Chairperson Hirsch called for questions from the Commission. Questions from Commissioners Crow, Nyberg, and Nowakowski were answered by the applicant.

Chairperson Hirsch opened the public hearing and called for speakers in the audience. With no one wishing to speak, he closed the public hearing.

Chairperson Hirsch called for a motion.

**Vice Chairperson Lenox made a motion to RECOMMEND APPROVAL of General Plan Amendment GPA20-09. Commissioner Harper seconded the motion, which was APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Jim Gruber, Chief Deputy City Attorney, stated this recommendation will go forward to the City Council for final action.

**Commissioner Harper made a motion to RECOMMEND APPROVAL of Rezoning Application ZON20-15, subject to the one stipulation listed in the staff report. Commissioner Crow seconded the motion, which was APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Jim Gruber, Chief Deputy City Attorney, stated this recommendation will go forward to the City Council for final action.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Chairperson Hirsch called for Other Business. There was none.

#### **PLANNING STAFF REPORT**

Chairperson Hirsch called for the Planning Staff Report. There was none.

#### **COMMISSION COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS**

Chairperson Hirsch called for Commission Comments and Suggestions.

Vice Chairperson Lenox stated this was his last evening as Vice Chairperson and as a member of the Planning Commission. He said the Commission has gone through a lot of Planning Directors and Interim Directors and Lisa Collins was one of the best ones the city has had. He said he doesn't know what happened or why she left, but she would have been a good one for the spot.

He said it seems like no matter what the Planning Commission, whether it's a unanimous vote or what the constituents say, the City Council does what they want to do.

Chairperson Hirsch thanked Vice Chairperson Lenox for seven years on the Planning Commission as well as the many years he served on other boards and the served the community.

Commissioner Nyberg said he will miss them both and wished them well.

Commissioner Crow echoed the same comments. He said he appreciates the input and discussions they have had.

Chairperson Hirsch said he was not being forced out of the chairmanship or the Commission, but he is a big believer in term limits. He believes this applies in every level of government including volunteer service. He has had a great run with the Planning Commission and is grateful to Mayor Weiers for appointing him. He waited 30 years to serve on the Planning Commission. He said he couldn't have had asked for a better group of people with whom to serve. It has been a wonderful experience. There comes a time when you step down and let others step up. For this reason, he said, he is departing. He said the City has been in a bit of a convulsion as far as the Planning Department. There were extensive plans to rewrite the Zoning Ordinance. During his term as chairman, Mr. Mehta will be the sixth acting director, temporary director, director, or administrator that he has served with. Some directors have been better than others, but all have treated him with great dignity and respect. Something is fundamentally wrong. This kind of trauma within a department makes him wonder what is amiss. He hopes some stability will come. No confident, capable, professional person is going to stick around and not be treated right. He is not sure what has gone on, but obviously, something is not quite right. He hopes whatever it is can be settled.

Chairperson Hirsch added that he felt the Commission needs training. He has tried to implement a training program himself. There was some limited success. The Commission had preliminary plat education as well as traffic study education. He hopes the new commissioners will be mentored as Commissioners are not experts and appreciate the education.

He said he is opposed to electronic billboards. He hopes the future Commissions and Councils will restrict and limit these electronic billboards.

He said he was once told by a commissioner, who ended up on the City Council, that the Commission was nothing more than a "rubber stamp" for City Council. Chairperson Hirsch said he believes that this particular official misunderstood the role of a Commissioner. By no sense of the imagination does he believe the Commission is just a rubber stamp for the City Council. Chairperson Hirsch said, coincidentally, this individual was recalled in his first term in the Council.

Chairperson Hirsch said the Commission has had disagreements with Council, with staff, and with each other, but it has been done in good faith, with charity, and with a little good humor.

The Commission examines the facts and votes their conscience. He said he is very proud of their work. He thanked everyone for the opportunity. He will miss everyone.

The remaining Commissioners wished the departing Commissioners well.

Commissioner Crow will become the new Chairperson with Commissioner Nyberg as the Vice Chairperson.

**NEXT MEETING**

The next regular meeting of the Planning Commission is scheduled for Thursday, February 4, 2021, at 6:00 p.m., at the Glendale Civic Center, 5750 West Glenn Drive, Glendale, Arizona, 85301.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Chairperson Hirsch asked for a motion to adjourn.

Commissioner Harper made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Nyberg seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:39pm.

Submitted by:

Diana Figueroa  
Recording Secretary