

City of Alamosa
Planning Commission
March 25, 2015
6:00 p.m.
Minutes of the Meeting

The regular meeting of the Planning Commission was called to order on the above date at 6:00 p.m. by Chairperson Shirley White. Present were the following members: Farris Bervig, Debbie Clark, Barbara Kruse, Mark Manzanares, Don Martinez and Robert McWhirter. A quorum was declared. Staff present: Pat Steenburg and Julie Scott.

Agenda Approval: M/S/C. Manzanares, McWhirter. Motion was made to approve the agenda as presented. (Unanimous)

Approval of the Minutes: M/S/C. Clark, Kruse. Motion made to approve the minutes of the December 10, 2014 meeting as presented. (Unanimous)

Regular Business - Conduct Public Hearings- Zoning Issues –No applications

Planning Issues

The request of La Puente Inc. for a Permitted Use by Special Review to allow a recycling operation (Use Group I-3) in a Commercial Business zone. The property affected is Lots 17 -21, Block 72, City of Alamosa, Alamosa County also known as 601 9th St.

The public hearing opened at 6:02 p.m.

White: Is there anyone here to speak? Please step to the podium and state your name and address.

Cheslock: Lance Cheslock, 7767 CR 11 S., I am employed at La Puente.

Moore: Matt Moore, 1041/2 San Juan Ave., Alamosa and I am also employed at La Puente. We put together a power point presentation but it wasn't possible to get it to the screen and if I may hand these out to the Board.

Moore approached the Commission and presented the materials. A copy was supplied to staff to make part of the permanent record. Exhibits A & B

Cheslock: Many of you may remember Blue Peaks buying cans at their 4th St. and State location and in 2011 there was some federal regulations in the way they managed their clients and how working with the developmentally disabled they could no longer operate. They approached La Puente and some other people too and wondered if we could take over the enterprise. They had a loud noisy machine and it seemed so cumbersome; it would spit cans into a semi-trailer. It would be more that we could deal with it. We tried to learn a bit more; we stuck with it and were encouraged by a veterans group in Monte Vista and other community members and Blue Peaks

When we acquired a commercial lot down from the shelter we thought it would be an ideal site for a purchasing center for aluminum cans. We called it a recycling center and by using that term it went south, we will get more into that later.

Moore: One thing I would like to add the purpose of the project and one thing is to clean up the lot and make aesthetically pleasing and provide job training for homeless veterans. Another purpose is as a fund raising opportunity for groups such as the Boy Scouts and local schools and a possibility that they would receive an increased rate.

Cheslock: A lot of people, seniors, people on fixed incomes that collect cans along alleys and highways would benefit. This isn't a profit making venture. If you look at what Blue Peaks used to do and what the City collects now at the recycling center there is about 100,000 lbs. of aluminum that gets thrown away and Dionesio in Pueblo pays about .65 a pound right now. Most of the money would go to the people bringing it in. This would be money that does not go away. The price is an incentive for people to bring them here; who are mostly marginal people; we write them a check for the cans and it is ancillary income that people leave with.

Moore: If you follow along on the slides, it outlines the location which you are all familiar with and the building potential including additional parking if needed and a handicapped space also. This is based on historical data from Blue Peaks. We included a privacy fence on the west side and will work with the neighbors on this at our cost and build to their specifications.

Cheslock: This drawing is a mock up and there could be modifications. About a year ago we talked with Harry Reynolds, the Building official and he commented the City is discouraging steel buildings which we did look at due to the price. When I heard that; there is no reason we couldn't build a wood structure in the interest of the city and community. We would build a wood building to blend in the environment and maintain a clean appearance. We have a group of volunteers to help design and churches are helping along with the Rotary Clubs that are doing fundraising for this project. We are going to be held accountable to make this look good. Matt and I are not architects or designers so we just put out there if anyone wants to help us. The wood design will allow more local input. The lot itself is pretty big and fine tune the placement of the building and parking lot and one of the reasons when this property fell into our laps, on the side is to offer extra space for off street parking to relieve congestion associated with the other businesses and La Puente in this area. We see that as a resource we can offer as this moves forward.

Moore: Another point is there will be a security system installed for the La Puente Coordination center and motion lights on the lot.

Cheslock: It is our commitment to keep it extremely clean, no noise, it is a building for purchasing aluminum and jumping ahead a bit, I am so excited about this device, it is a state of the art machine, about 2ft. wide and 6 ft. long; it's so quiet it is used in malls; the most noise is putting in the cans, you put them in and in 60 seconds you have a cube that you would stack on pallets until you are ready to ship. I did have an offer from Bill Clark truck lines and said they could put a semi in there and it is a nice gesture we don't necessarily see it that way, we want to

work with the zoning code and what is allowed. And working with Shirley and Tim at Blue Peaks since they did this for over 10 years, with what can we expect and Shirley said it was between 5 and 15 people a day. A good day 20, and we are hoping to pick up where they left off.

White: Can you stay with just the explanations instead of the stories. We don't have that much time and we have a lot of people that would like to speak.

Moore: I would like to speak quickly about the process they would park and there will be a counter and engage with the employee who would weigh the aluminum cans with the certified scale that was donated by Blue Peaks and they would walk out the door with the check, there will be no cash on hand.

Cheslock: If I could wave the magic wand and start this process from scratch. We like the term people identify with that term I think there are concerns using the term recycling center. It's a little store; it is an aluminum purchasing center, not an industrial use so much. We will not accept other recyclables no other metal, only aluminum cans. We love what you do at the recycling center, I use it and only one out of every five citizens uses that by the way which is a little disappointing, that is not what we intend at this site. It is inside the building, 100% inside. It's a small operation not a big commercial operation like South River Road and anyone that would like to walk the lot and we would love to chat with you, get your ideas or suggestions.

Moore: I would like to mention our local partners in this endeavor, the USDA Rural Development Program, all the valley Rotary Clubs, Blue Peaks Developmental Services, Habitat for Humanity, Tim Gallegos Construction, Alamosa Building Supply, Colorado Overhead Door, Malberg Electric, the SLV Small Business Development Center and many area churches.

Cheslock: Do we sit now or do you want to ask us questions?

White: No, we will let everyone else present. Thank you. Is there anyone else that would like to speak for this? State your name and address.

Ackers: Gena Ackers, 6630 Blanca Vista Lane, representing the Rotary Clubs, I am an Alamosa Rotarian. Last year for the first time we had the privilege of all four Rotary clubs coming together and we submitted a Rotary grant to the district for \$6,500 so collectively we will be fund raising which will be matched dollar for dollar, \$13,000 for the project. This is the first time, I have lived here six years, and it's brought all four Rotary clubs together that is an exciting component. There are vocational opportunities for veterans and supplemental income for citizens and doing something for the environment. Suzanne Devore, a fellow Rotarian, is active in various recycling projects and part of the planning committee. The payout is exciting for all the different groups that come to Rotary and present their projects. That can be a dollar and some change for someone or a Boy Scout group and the building of community support. It's exciting to have all four Rotary clubs on board. Thank you.

Entz: Debra Entz, 4853 County Road-2, Monte Vista I am a former employee of Blue Peaks and personally know consumers that canvased the community for aluminum cans for extra money. That money would be spent in the community of course. When the program went away it hurt the consumer and the City as local revenue. It would be very beneficial to have a site to drop off aluminum cans in the city. I see it as a win- win situation. It would stop them from going to the dump and clean up the community, generate revenue. Thank you.

Moon: Jim Moon, 104 Joe Chavez Dr., pastor of the 7th Day Adventist Church, in support of the project. We also have Sunshine Christian School, with a current enrollment of 27 students more than half from the community, not the church and this would be a great opportunity for fund raising. This would be a great way for the kids to earn money.

Miltenberger: Aaron Miltenberger, 8125 S. River Rd., President of La Puente Enterprises, I think what our mission is to provide a sustainable San Luis Valley and when we were looking at different ways to diversify the programs this was a home run. To clean up the community and generate an income stream for people that do not have one. I am in full support of the project and hope you see the investment back to the City.

Sanchez: Ken Sanchez, J.D. Sanchez Construction Co., 6750 S. Hwy 17, fourth generation contractor in the Valley and it was brought to my attention that there is perhaps a misconception on industrial and commercial uses as has been stated already. Basically speaking on behalf of the aluminum can venture; it seems to me more commercial than industrial. It seems to fall in place with the commercial enterprises in the area. Thank you.

Choman: Chet Choman, realtor for over 40 years. One of the things we are lacking is industrial areas in Alamosa. If you look at the area and you could argue that businesses have an industrial element there is an auto repair shop in the area and even the City recycling area was in this area for a number of years. A tire shop, moving company, you have a mixed area. The two areas coincide- commercial and in industrial you typically think of manufacturing. This would not be anything like that, collection of aluminum cans. The gas station down the street would generate more semis, traffic. Across the street there is a cardboard baler outside, grocery store; everything commercial, industrial is a mixed bag. It would lend you to the conclusion it would be more commercial.

White: Could you state your address for the record please?

Choman: 819 Cottonwood Dr.

White: Is there anyone else that would like to speak for this? Against? State your name and address for the record, please.

Trujillo: Della Trujillo, 611 9th St. I live right next door where this is. I own my own home I have lived there since 1972, I'm a widow and my husband passed away in 1991, we raised our children here and had a wonderful life here in Alamosa. I am here to ask you to not allow La Puente to put a recycling center here or allow any commercial or non- residential use. It will

create more traffic and noise. This is a residential neighborhood, keep it like a neighborhood. Respectfully, I would ask you, would you like this next to your home? La Puente has a wonderful mission to help those in need. Let them put this in an area zoned for it. It has been my personal experience of having unsolicited requests at my door for help or money. I'm 86 years old; I'm tired of the disturbances and appeal to you not to let this happen. That's all I have to say, thank you.

White: Thank you. Is there anyone else?

White, S.: Scott White, 1770 Ross Ave. and own the property at 618 8th St. I received no notice of this. I heard it through the grapevine. It's not nice trying to slide something by.

Steenburg: We did not try to slide anything by you. The applicant supplies the list of adjacent property owners that we notify. We don't double check that list.

White, S.: Maybe you should. The city has a recycling center and its 8 blocks away. Maybe we need education; not another recycling center. We had it down the street when the City had it, it was a trash heap. They tossed things over the fence it blew down the street. The city cleaned it up, we cleaned it up; it will have limited hours and people will dump cans when they are not open because they can. It happens at Rainbow's End in the alley, there are piles of junk, and it's a trash heap. I'm worried about the odor. Stale beer and stale soda has an odor, there will be flies, wasps bees. When the seniors had their recycling center in the old Schlitz building at 6th and Denver and big machines and it stunk. The wind blows in Alamosa we don't want that smell, we already have the mushroom farm. The foot traffic, they will be using the alley. We have little children in the immediate area, not just the ten block area. I'm afraid if you put up a recycling center or whatever you want to call it, can collection center, what will happen to my property values? No one wants to live next door to a recycling center. When I go to sell my property with a recycling center behind it; or Mrs. Trujillo's property values? And it's work hard to keep the neighborhood nice. I heard a lot of people spoke for this, but no one lives near this or own property near it. It's all fine and dandy if you don't live close to it. Let's not pooh-pooh on these people in this neighborhood.

White: Thank you. Is there anyone else that would like to speak against this? We will close the public hearing and have questions. Lance, would you please step up to the mic and please keep your answers short. Appreciate it.

Cheslock: I will try.

The public hearing closed at 6:36 p.m.

Clark: The building you have in this picture is it the same as this?

Cheslock: There have been modifications this week to the drawing. There is an area for storage of pallets, counter top and reception area and a bathroom and moving the overhead door to the side and the entrance for the customers the façade will fit the area.

Clark: The parking out front is sufficient?

White: There are requirements for the use.

Steenburg: The parking has not been addressed.

Cheslock: The amount of parking on the lot would be about 20 cars.

Manzanares: Can you answer the questions brought forth; the smell? I do concur the front of Atencio's is a mess.

Cheslock: The compactor they have is too big to fit in their building. I do have an email that the compactor is quiet, there is a floor drain with a type of cement berm and the floor is cement and we would chase it down with water and compaction is so complete it is a solid 20 lbs. block. I can give you Michael Pearson's number who sells these units. I agree with Mr. White and if it becomes a place with blowing trash and dropping off trash site, I would move out of town with my tail between my legs. I have a commitment to the donors to keep it clean. We own the lots and had slums previously that they bulldozed. I would like Mr. Scott to come to our planning meetings and help us design, give us ideas that he felt would work. Property values changing, I don't know anything about that, we want to be in good communications with the neighbors and talk to them I spoke to Donna Hunter and she lives across from the shelter she is excited for this to come into the area.

White: How will you keep people from dropping off at night?

Cheslock: We could put a receptacle with a flap similar to what Habitat has perhaps. And we do work with law enforcement when necessary.

Manzanares: I would like to see more information on this magical machine and the drain, the sound. It says recycling, they think dumping. I have spoken with Rainbow's End, they do have issues.

White: We have to make our decision tonight. We don't have the privilege of seeing what the community says.

Manzanares: I am intrigued with the possibility of -an aluminum can center, is there perhaps an industrial place?

Cheslock: We been looking for a place for about a year; this lot was a dream come true with its proximity to the shelter and commercial zoning.

White: I know people use the recycling center and that is off the beaten path. It is a possibility?

Kruse: Have you had a conversation on working with the city and locating at that location?

Cheslock: We have not had a conversation on combining efforts. We have veterans at the shelter on extended stay and we want to get them out of the shelter and this would be more suitable to integrate the crossover. This site really works with the proximity to the shelter. I'd be open to talking to the City. This is a little building that buys cans back; we don't want to become too unwieldy.

Clark: Is the privacy fence up and in good condition?

Cheslock: There isn't a privacy fence. The fence that is there was from the previous owner. Before we put up a privacy fence we would like some direction from the property owners on what they would want, we have volunteers ready to help with the project. I think the previous owners took some liberties with the property line. I'm aware of that; Mrs. Trujillo has brought that to my attention. The lot is big enough we don't have a problem with that, it's all about good communication & cooperation.

Clark: And what are all the vehicles parked there?

Cheslock: Those are the vehicles are part of La Puente's operation that we are pulling off the street, some are donated and some is parking that we use. The street sweeper made a clean sweep except for one vehicle in front of the shelter; we're working to make that lot available for more parking. There is still some pipes sticking up and we need to smooth that over, clean it up and and we also have had some problems with vandalism. The privacy fence might help with that. Security lights will help.

White: We need to stop this; it's been 50 minutes and we need a motion.

Bervig: I have some questions.

White: A short one.

Bervig: Two parts to it, will there be revenue generated through La Puente through this program?

Cheslock: Yes. In Pueblo right now, we can get 65 cent a pound that will be split with the people bringing it in. I don't see it as a fundraiser for La Puente, break even for the shelter, it is wealth that is not going in the trash can and is remunerated into the community and will help support the veterans that are at the shelter. It will depend on the current price, 35-40 cents back to the customer and Boy Scouts, other fundraisers will have a better return.

White: Okay, one more.

Bervig: We have spent this much time, let me finish. LaPuente has been in our community for a long time, the homeless shelter, Rainbow's End, food bank and being on Council for 24 years, they never came to Council with a project that I felt at the time or Council felt that wasn't a good idea. I would give them a little slack. There are potential problems, but knowing Lance and the

staff, they will fix it. This is a real good project for the community and hopefully we can work through these issues.

Cheslock: Thank you Farris.

Manzanares: I feel it would be for the good of the Community also and make a motion for a continuance. Part of this is for you to work with the City on the possibility of combining efforts, working with the residents in the area to work together regarding their concerns. And also a demonstration of the machine whether it's on You tube, and for you to be a little more prepared for questions.

M/S/C. Manzanares, Kruse. Motion made to continue the public hearing in order to gather more information and discuss with staff the option of locating the operation at the city recycling center and work with the neighbors on the issues brought forth and offer a demonstration of the machinery. (Unanimous)

Cheslock thanked the Commission and also invited them to the shelter for dinner or lunch.

The public hearing will continue on April 22, 2015 at 6:00 p.m., Council Chambers.

Other Business:

Election of Officers

Chairman: Nominations: White, Manzanares. By paper ballot- Manzanares 3, White 2. Manzanares accepted the nomination.

Kruse was excused at 7:00 p.m., first alternate Martinez voted on the following issue as first alternate.

Vice Chair: Nominations: White, McWhirter. By paper ballot- McWhirter 3, White 2. McWhirter accepted the nomination.

Next item:

Discussion of food truck ordinance.

Steenburg stated that an ordinance is being created to handle the issue and impose regulations. There has been interest in this issue, locally as well as front range vendors. How will they impact existing brick and mortar restaurants, hours of operation, allowed time of operation months to 12 months. Steenburg condensed the issues and requested input from the Commission

Definition: a food truck is a licensed, motorized vehicle or mobile food unit which is temporarily stored on a privately owned lot where food items are sold.

- The property where they operate must have a primary use: parking lot, retail, office etc.

- No sales or operation in a public right of way unless the street is officially closed.
- Food trucks would be allowed in all Commercial and Industrial zones and within the Central Business zone.
- No limit on how many trucks per property.
- Outdoor seating would not be allowed at the site.
- Distance from existing brick and mortar restaurants must be at least 200 ft.
- Hours of operation 6:00 am to 2:30 am. When not in operation, they could be parked for a limited time or apply for an extended use.
- Amplified audio speakers would not be allowed.
- No free standing signage, it should be on the truck itself.
- There should be a 500 ft. buffer from residential neighborhoods.
- Application fees, permit fees, sales tax license must be acquired as well as the health inspection as required by Alamosa County.

Staff will schedule a meeting with several area business owners from a list provided by the Chamber of Commerce to hear their concerns on the subject.

Martinez was excused at 7:20 p.m.

White informed the Commission that she and McWhirter will have the first steering committee meeting on the Comprehensive Plan review on April 2nd.

Correspondence: Distributed.

After no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Scott
Recording Secretary