

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF
THE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY AND
ENERGY CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Torrance Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission convened in a regular session at 7:02 p.m. on Thursday, March 3, 2005, in the West Annex Meeting Room at Torrance City Hall.

2. ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Chim, Minter, Persaud, Reilly, Watson and Vice Chair McCabe.

Absent: None.

Also Present: Sr. Environmental Quality Officer Jones and Environmental Division Administrator Cessna.

3. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Vice Chair McCabe.

4. POSTING OF THE AGENDA

MOTION: Commissioner Chim, seconded by Commissioner Minter, moved to accept and file the report of the secretary on the posting of the agenda for this meeting; voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Commissioner Minter moved for the approval of the February 3, 2005 Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission minutes as submitted. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Persaud and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Vice Chair McCabe explained the policies and procedures of the Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission, including the right to appeal decisions to the City Council.

6. SIGN HEARINGS

6A. SNP05-00001: SAM'S CLUB – 2601 SKYPARK DRIVE

Request: A) One internally illuminated cabinet wall sign, 14' 2" high x 18'11 3/8". Located on the south building elevation.
268.10 sq. ft.

- B) Three internally illuminated cabinet wall signs, 11'4" high x 15'2". Located on the south, west and north building elevations. Sign on south elevation will be non-illuminated.
516.0 sq. ft.
- C) One non-illuminated channel letter wall sign, 1'6" x 24' 11". Located on west building elevation.
37.4 sq. ft.
- D) One 7'6" x 7'6" non-illuminated wall placard. Located on the south building elevation.
56.3 sq. ft.

TOTAL REQUEST: 877.8 SQ. FT.

Recommendation

Staff recommends the following:

- 1) Approval of the cabinet logo wall signs without the arrow and slogan.
- 2) Approval of only one cabinet logo per elevation (south, north and west).
- 3) Approval of the non-illuminated wall placard and channel letter wall sign.

With the aid of slides, Sr. Quality Environmental Officer Jones reviewed the request and discussed staff's recommendation. She explained that staff had concerns about the logo sign's orange arrow and slogan "It's a Big Deal," because it adds to the bulk of the sign and verbiage on signs is generally limited to the name of the business. She advised that staff was recommending the elimination of the second wall sign on the south elevation so the overall square footage would be more in line with the 742 square feet that would be allowed for a single tenant with the same street frontage.

Steve Frank, Harrison French Architecture, project manager, reported that the arrow and slogan are part of Sam's Club's registered trademark logo and submitted documentation to confirm this. He explained that the Sam's Club prototype calls for a second sign on the front of the building (south elevation), but offered to downsize it in order to reduce the overall square footage. He stated that he was just informed that his client wants the signs on the west, south and north elevations to be externally illuminated because this type of lighting is more cost-effective and environmentally friendly.

Environmental Services Administrator Cessna advised that staff would like to review the external lighting if the Commission decides to approve it. She clarified that as Sam's Club is part of a shopping center that has a sign program, it is not subject to the 742 square foot limit and that figure was provided for reference only.

In response to Commissioner Chim's inquiry, Mr. Frank indicated that there are no plans to change the monument signs to match the new wall signs at this time.

Commissioner Watson questioned whether the logo sign has ever been modified, and Mr. Franks reported that signs other than the trademarked logo have been installed only in cities with very rigid standards.

MOTION: Vice Chair McCabe, seconded by Commissioner Minter, moved to close the public hearing; voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

Referring to the placard sign (Sign D) with the copy, "Pharmacy," "Optical," "1-Hr. Photo," and "Tires," Commissioner Minter related his understanding that the City discourages signage that advertises services.

Sr. Environmental Officer Jones advised that while signs listing brand names are discouraged, staff believes signs showing what services are available in a particular store are helpful and similar signs have been allowed at supermarkets, such as Vons at the Crossroads shopping center.

Commissioner Minter asked about the energy saving aspect of externally illuminated signs. Sr. Environmental Services Administrator Cessna stated that she did not know how much energy would be saved but external lighting is much easier to maintain.

Environmental Services Administrator Cessna advised that staff would like the size of the sign over the entrance to be reduced to provide more negative space if the arrow is to remain.

The public hearing was briefly reopened, and Mr. Frank stated that the large sign is necessary for visibility because the distance between the building and the street is equal to a football field.

In response to questions from the Commission, Sr. Environmental Quality Officer Jones provided clarification regarding signage at the nearby Costco.

Commissioner Watson indicated that she favored having only one sign on the front of the building, a brief discussion ensued, and it was the consensus of the Commission to limit the applicant to one sign per elevation.

Environmental Services Administrator Cessna indicated that she was not as concerned about the size of the sign over the entrance with the elimination of the second sign on this elevation.

MOTION: Commissioner Minter moved for the approval of SNP05-00001 as submitted, with the following modifications:

- 1) The cabinet wall sign over the entrance (Item A) shall be reduced in size to provide more negative space to the satisfaction of staff.
- 2) The cabinet wall signs (Item B) shall be externally illuminated and the sign on south elevation shall be eliminated.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Persaud and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

7. ENERGY MATTERS

7A. SOUTH BAY ENERGY SAVINGS CENTER

Marilyn Lyon, Program Manager for South Bay Energy Savings Center, 3858 Carson Street, reported that the center is funded by a grant from the Public Utilities Commission (PUC); that its goal is to teach the South Bay community about energy efficiency; and that it partners with Southern California Edison, the Gas Company, and the South Bay Council of Governments, of which the City of Torrance is a member. She reviewed the resources offered by the center, including a hotline that provides information about rebates and a website with extensive information about energy conservation. She noted that the center hires experts to conduct classes to inform the public about energy efficiency and distributed samples of materials that are given to attendees of the classes. She offered to conduct a class specifically for Torrance residents and proposed the date of April 13.

Commissioners were receptive to the idea of offering a class for Torrance residents, but felt a month was not enough time to promote the event.

Referring to the energy efficient light bulb included in the materials distributed to the Commission, Commissioner Watson noted that some cities buy the light bulbs in bulk and allow residents to purchase them at cost. She suggested that it might be helpful to provide information about energy efficient signage as a resource for businesses in the community.

Commissioner Reilly asked if the center would be interested in making a presentation to a homeowners association. Ms. Lyon stated that she thought that would be a perfect venue and noted that while classes are typically two hours long, they can be tailored for a specific audience.

Commissioner Chim noted that the City is in the process of updating its General Plan and Councilmember Lieu has proposed that a "green building" model be incorporated into the plan.

Ms. Lyon reported that the grant from the PUC includes funding for an assessment of energy conservation efforts in various cities throughout the South Bay with a view toward developing a policy, which will include green buildings. She noted that there is a lot of information about green buildings on the CD distributed to the Commission, which will soon be available on the center's website.

Vice Chair McCabe stated that he found the website to be informative and questioned whether the information could be shared. Ms. Lyon explained that the website is paid for by public funds and anybody may make use of the information.

Vice Chair McCabe asked that staff work with Ms. Lyon to schedule a class for Torrance residents far enough in advance so that it can be publicized and the Commission can help promote it.

Vice Chair McCabe thanked Ms. Lyon for her presentation.

8. OIL MATTERS

Environmental Services Administrator Cessna noted that resolutions allowing the continued operation of non-conforming oil sites in Torrance have been submitted for the Commission's approval, which incorporate the changes discussed at the last meeting.

8A. OIL05-00014: S & C OIL CO., INC. – 2425 W. 228TH STREET

MOTION: Commissioner Chim, seconded by Commissioner Watson, moved for the adoption of Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission Resolution 05-14; the motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

8B. OIL05-00009: POWER RUN OIL LLC – 4903 WHITE COURT

MOTION: Commissioner Chim, seconded by Commissioner Reilly, moved for the adoption of Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission Resolution 05-09; the motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

8C. OIL05-00010: POWER RUN OIL LLC – 4900 DEL AMO BOULEVARD

Sr. Environmental Quality Officer Jones reported that staff followed up on a complaint from a resident at the last meeting about odors emanating from the oil site at 4900 Del Amo Boulevard and learned that an AQMD inspector visited the site in August 2004 and found the site to be in compliance. She noted that a copy of the report was included in the agenda material. She explained that she also contacted a Hazardous Materials Specialist on the Torrance Fire Department, who recommended that a granular type of sodium bicarbonate be placed on the ground and swept up periodically to control odor, in addition to the sand that is currently being used, and this was included as a condition of approval in the resolution for this site. She reported that the operator of the site has indicated that he would be happy to try this.

Referring to the AQMD report, Vice Chair McCabe questioned how the AQMD inspector measured the odor level when he visited the site. Sr. Environmental Quality Officer Jones stated that she did not speak with the inspector but was under the impression that some type of instrument was used.

MOTION: Commissioner Watson, seconded by Commissioner Reilly, moved for the adoption of Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission Resolution 05-10; the motion passed by a 5-1 roll call vote, with Commissioner Persaud dissenting.

8D. OIL05-00011: POWER RUN OIL LLC – 20331 ANZA AVENUE

MOTION: Commissioner Reilly, seconded by Commissioner Persaud, moved for the adoption of Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission Resolution 05-11; the motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

8E. OIL05-00012: POWER RUN OIL LLC – 20345 ANZA AVENUE

MOTION: Commissioner Reilly, seconded by Commissioner Watson, moved for the adoption of Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission Resolution 05-12; the motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

8F. OIL05-00013: POWER RUN OIL LLC – 20310 MADRONA AVENUE

MOTION: Commissioner Watson, seconded by Commissioner Reilly, moved for the adoption of Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission Resolution 05-13; the motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

9. INFORMATION MATTERS

Commissioner Minter reported that he has changed his place of employment and the e-mail on file is no longer active.

Commissioner Chim noted that she will be out of the country on the date of the April Commission meeting and requested an excused absence.

Commissioner Watson also requested an excused absence due to a prior commitment to chair a presentation at the Torrance library.

Commissioner Watson noted that the Torrance Historical Society will be celebrating women in history on Sunday, March 6, and distributed fliers about the event.

Environmental Services Administrator Cessna called attention to a flier for a green building expo.

10. NEW BUSINESS

10A. ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON AND VICE CHAIRPERSON

MOTION: Commissioner Chim, seconded by Commissioner Persaud, nominated Commissioner Minter for Vice Chairperson; roll call vote reflected unanimous approval.

MOTION: Commissioner Chim, seconded by Commissioner Persaud, nominated Commissioner McCabe for Chairperson; roll call vote reflected unanimous approval.

10B. GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

Environmental Services Administrator Cessna reported that the Commission will be involved in the updating of the Conservation Element of the General Plan and that Commissioners will be discussing how to proceed at the next meeting.

Vice Chair McCabe suggested that a flow chart would be helpful.

11. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

11B. Commissioner Minter congratulated Commissioner McCabe on being elected chairperson.

11C. Environmental Services Administrator Cessna encouraged commissioners to attend the commissioner training session on Tuesday, March 15, at 6:30 p.m.

11D. Commissioner Watson noted that the Metropolitan Water District has a weekend tour scheduled in April, which has proven to be very informative in the past, and related her understanding that there are openings if commissioners would like to attend.

11E. Commissioner Chim congratulated the newly elected chairperson and vice chairperson.

11F. Commissioner Watson suggested that commissioners consider a lunchtime visit to a “green building” on Main Street in Santa Monica. Vice Chair McCabe noted that commissioners might also be interested in a green building in Pasadena.

11G. Vice Chair McCabe suggested that a link be included on the City’s website to South Bay Energy Savings Center’s website.

11H. Vice Chair McCabe stated that he thought it would be helpful if Waste Management Coordinator Allison Sherman provided periodic updates to the commission regarding the City’s recycling/conservation efforts.

11I. Vice Chair McCabe noted his intention to write a letter to the City Council on behalf of the commission, thanking the Council for its support and laying out the general framework of what the commission plans to do.

12. ADJOURNMENT

At 8:40 p.m., the meeting was adjourned to Thursday, April 7, 2005, at 7:00 p.m.

Approved as Written May 5, 2005 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
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