

**CITY OF HAWTHORNE
SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES
THURSDAY, APRIL 22, 2021**

- 1**
CALL TO ORDER Mayor Vargas called the Special City Council meeting to order at 3:02 PM AM via Zoom in City Hall Offices, 4455 W. 126th, Hawthorne, California
- ROLL CALL** Diana Cucalon, Deputy City Clerk
- PRESENT** Council Member Alex Monteiro, Council Member L. David Patterson, Council Member Angie Reyes English, Mayor Pro Tem Olivia Valentine, and Mayor Alex Vargas; Interim City Manager Vontray Norris and Interim City Attorney Vincent Ewing
- ABSENT** Dr. Paul Jimenez, City Clerk and Gregory Fallon, City Treasurer
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PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE The Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag was led by City Manager Vontray Norris.
- 3**
ORAL COMMUNICATION Lynette Williams, wished everyone happy earth day. She believes that the quarterly reports are a good way to know what is taking place on the matter. She noted that Mr. Gabae had been indicted hence, as a result the property did not go anywhere in 2016. She would like to see the property move forward to obtain the best outcome for the residents. She commended the City Council for working on the mall project.
- 4**
HW MALL STUDY SESSION The City Council held a discussion on the Development of the Hawthorne Mall site, located at 12162 Hawthorne Boulevard with the City's consultant, Christopher Beck of Newmark Knight & Frank.
- Mr. Christopher Beck requested from the City Council to provide their ideas and thoughts on what type of development they would like to see done on the mall site.
- Council Member Monteiro brought about the flex users possible mixed use media and production, industrial, and others. He requested to hear about the changes of the idea of thon his meeting with the owners and the Greg Tsujiuchi, Director of Planning was asked to address some of the concerns raised by need for Specific Plan. .He apprised the City Council

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CONT'D HW MALL
STUDY SESSION

that the current code is very flexible. He noted that the Specific plan is fairly well planned. He is pleased with the fact that the current plan allows for many uses. In particular the office space and flex space is already allowed. He added that it allowed for hotel and other uses. He would like the opportunity to address the land use component with the Charles Company team and have Asst. City Attorney Crosthwaite of the City of Hawthorne Land use attorney be part of the team. The plan specifically allows creative space. He noted that a zone text amendment, specifically can allow an opportunity for creative office space. However, the way it is set up now is fairly broad.

Mr. Beck of Newmark Knight & Frank, believes that although the Specific Plan is fairly broad. However, the plan may need to be more specific for the business. For example, end users in content creation would like to know without guessing and will need to know from an end user standpoint that it is a viable option.

Council Member Patterson inquired what the next steps would be and to allow the public to provide feedback and have input to see what is more amicable to the community.

He recommended that the Specific Plan not be amended, but that we look at the niche users to have access to the space for suggested use. He suggested putting all users' ideas on the table and see what that looks like.

Studio space for filming is an option. The wider and broader the City is in terms of content for end users, it will allow for increased viability and more users looking at the opportunity.

Director Tsujiuchi stated that amending the code is fairly simple as it would require a text amendment. It could be done once guidance is provided to amend the Specific plan for text amendments to portions of it.

Mr. Beck would like to see that the City begin providing the plan for increasing the niche users and to provide a more structured approach to the utilization of the space for the mall.

Mayor Pro Tem Valentine inquired if the code currently allows for any type of office space, including research and development for commercial usage? After hearing the response from Greg Tsujiuchi Planning Director, she suggested that the code is very flexible and would like to see her preferences in utilizing the zone text amendment process to make changes to the code to accommodate their industry. She invited the Charles Company to bring about the changes they would like to see for a more feasible approach.

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CONT'D HW MALL
STUDY SESSION

Greg Tsujiuchi noted that office space is very broad. He did not see that tech office, creative media and production were not able to utilize the space for office. Multimedia and studios is another allowable use. Zone text amendment for research and development for commercial were allowable.

Mayor Vargas would support making amendments as zone text amendments versus revamping the entire Specific Plan. He would like confirmation if in fact the Charles Company is in negotiations for purchase by a studio. He noted that the Council needs to look out for the community. Increasing tax revenue is important as it would be supportive of the community.

Council Member Monteiro inquired if they could be specific for condominiums versus apartments with Director of Planning. He also inquired if it was possible to be specific about housing and would like to see food court, retail, or other viable usage. He added that he would like to see if the City is able to stipulate the site specific plan so that it can become a reality on their proposal to support usage of the mall.

Melissa Crosthwaite thanked the City Council for including the planning department for the inclusion. She noted that there are tools Cities can take address certain issues in the city such as blight or other areas of need. It is more complicated than to simply want to address it but first steps is to have conversations about what is being proposed.

Council Member Reyes English requested a legal confidential on the legal ramification if as a City it has any say over private property owners on making them developers or not. Also all the potential the site should have. She would like to know amendments to code is up to council discretion she welcomes everything however would like the Charles Company to provide correct and real information. She noted that the Specific Plan had been amended several years ago to accommodate the Charles Company. She would like to see more transparency from the developer.

The council requested another meeting for April 26th and the Charles Company will present on May 17th at 3:00 pm.

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ADJOURNMENT .

Mayor Vargas adjourned the meeting at 4:14 PM

PASSED and **APPROVED** this 27th day of July 2021.

ATTEST:

Alex Vargas, Mayor

Dr. Paul Jimenez, City Clerk