

**CITY OF LAKEWOOD  
PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION  
MEETING OF MAY 2, 2024  
MINUTES**

**CALL TO ORDER**

A regular meeting of the Lakewood Planning and Environment Commission (“Commission” or “PEC”) was called to order by the Community Development Director, Abel Avalos, at 7:05 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, 5000 Clark Avenue, Lakewood.

**INSTALLATION OF COMMISSIONERS**

Oaths were administered to all, and the Commissioners were installed into their new PEC terms.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Commissioner Baca led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL:**        *Present:*     Commissioner Baca  
   Commissioner Stuckey  
   Commissioner Cole  
   Commissioner Garcia-Salas  
*Excused:*        Commissioner Rowland

**ALSO PRESENT:** Abel Avalos, Director of Community Development  
J. Patrick McGuckian, Assistant Director of Community Development  
Paul Kuykendall, Senior Planner  
Frankie Griffiths, Assistant Planner  
Michelle Santiago, Planning Technician  
Charles Carter, Neighborhood Preservation Manager  
Jacque Cochran, Community Conservation Representative  
Ivy Tsai, City Attorney  
Jamaar Boyd-Weatherby, City Prosecutor  
Cindy Kojaku, Administrative Secretary

**REORGANIZATION**

City Attorney Ivy Tsai conducted the process to appoint a new chairperson.

By unanimous ballot, Vicki Stuckey was elected Chairperson.

Chairperson Stuckey opened the floor to nominations for Vice Chairperson.

By unanimous ballot, Terry Cole was appointed Vice Chairperson.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

There being no objections, Chairperson Stuckey ordered the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of April 15, 2024, approved as submitted.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS**

Abel made the following announcements:

- Final update on Community Development construction. Construction is completed, and the City Hall doors on the east and west sides of the lobby will be reopened. Construction will begin for the Recreation & Community Services, City Clerk and Human Resources Departments.
- Summary on SB9, one of the State Housing laws specifically allowing for lot splits and additional units on one parcel.

## **BUILDING REHABILITATION BOARD – PUBLIC HEARING**

- 1. 6745 Turnergrove Drive – Community Conservation Staff requests a determination that this property be declared a public nuisance as it is currently maintained in a substandard condition with unmaintained landscaping and accumulation of debris.**

Neighborhood Preservation Manager, Charles Carter, (NPM Carter) introduced the code enforcement case.

Community Conservation Representative, Jacque Cochran, (CCR Cochran) delivered the oral report summarizing the written staff report and slide presentation, as contained in the file for this Code Enforcement case.

**Chairperson Stuckey asked if there are any questions of staff.**

Commissioner Baca asked if the citations were paid or are they accumulating? NPM Carter responded that the fees are just accumulating.

Commissioner Baca asked if the resident appeared when she was issued the Order to Appear by the Sheriff's Department? NPM Carter stated they appeared, and the resident can address that.

Commissioner Cole commented that it is interesting how the pictures depict the cleanliness of the swimming pool with all the vegetation and the trash in the backyard.

**Chairperson Stuckey opened the public hearing.**

The property owner, Eleanor Thompson (Ms. Thompson), spoke about the condition of her property. She has been receiving tickets, and she stated the trim on her house was

painted about a year ago. She hired a gardening service to cut back and maintain the vegetation in the front yard and a couple of sprinkler heads are broken.

NPR Carter reiterated that Ms. Thompson has hired a gardener, the gardener is maintaining the front yard, and Ms. Thompson is stating the front yard is dry because a couple of sprinkler heads need fixing. NPM Carter stated Ms. Thompson would like the Commission to consider not cutting back the vegetation by the pool as she strongly believes it keeps that area cool, and her concern is if the vegetation gets cut back, it will heat up that area, and water from the pool will evaporate more quickly.

Ms. Thompson explained there is a block wall behind the vegetation around the pool, and the ivy acts as insulation on the cement and on the cement wall. She stated that the ivy is overgrown and hopefully the gardening service will be able to cut it back.

NPM Carter stated they discussed the trash containers, and that he has suggested screening to alleviate the violation. Ms. Thompson is willing to look into that, and she described where some of the trash containers can be stored.

Commissioner Cole asked what will be done with the debris and is there a plan to address that? He pointed out the photo is dated August 15, 2023, and he questioned whether all of the debris in the photo is gone.

From the audience, the homeowner's son confirmed that the trash cans are gone. (The homeowner's son had not introduced himself at this point.)

CCR Cochran stated she can set up a reinspection.

Chairperson Stuckey asked CCR Cochran when the last inspection was completed, and CCR Cochran responded that the homeowner was not home last week when she went to post the Notice.

Chairperson Stuckey asked if the Commission gives the homeowner thirty (30) days, would Representative Cochran do a reinspection, and Representative Cochran confirmed she would.

The homeowner's son spoke and stated he is the Reverend Doctor Wizard Disney (Mr. Disney) who lives at 6745 Turnergrove.

Mr. Disney stated the front yard juniper has been cut back and explained that it covered the grass which is why the grass is brown. Mr. Disney gave history and background information about the blue flora, Morning Glory, growing on their wall. He explained about what steps he has taken to rectify the overgrown vegetation and the trash and debris.

Chairperson Stuckey mentioned one of the pictures and asked if the vegetation at the back of the house will be cleared? Mr. Disney answered "yes," and that he began working on it on May 1. Chairperson Stuckey asked if the patio area will be cleared, and Mr. Disney stated he pulled out the Morning Glory but not the ivy yet.

Commissioner Baca stated the City has been addressing this issue for seven years, and after all the Citations and the appearance of the Sheriff's Department, questioned why action is being taken now.

Ms. Thompson stated it is about time. She stated she has done the trimming herself, but it has now become overwhelming.

Commissioner Cole stated the City has offered a volunteer clean up service to come and assist and asked why the offer has been declined, and Ms. Thompson stated she was too proud.

Commissioner Cole asked if she is offered the volunteer clean up service, would she accept the offer, and Ms. Thompson stated yes. She stated she did not accept the offer because she wanted it done her way. Commissioner Cole recommended acceptance of the offer.

CCR Cochran stated that this year's Volunteer Day was in April and has already passed.

Commissioner Garcia-Salas pointed out this has been going on for seven years and asked Ms. Thompson how long she has had the gardener, and Ms. Thompson stated two months.

Commissioner Garcia-Salas asked Ms. Thompson if she has had a gardener before the last two months? Ms. Thompson stated she has never had a gardener but has now resolved that she has the money for a gardener.

Mr. Disney stated this has been going on for seven years, but prior to that, he used to be outside every day, and then the City condemned the tree which is the time all this started. He stated the City cut down their tree, and the City would not put up another tree due to the drought. Mr. Disney stated if they had replaced the tree, none of this would be a problem.

Ms. Thompson stated she is the homeowner, and she makes the decisions, and the tree is an issue that is many years old, and it will not affect her decisions.

CCR Cochran stated, once the property is in compliance, the homeowner can request to be put on a list for a parkway tree.

Deputy City Prosecutor, Jamaar Boyd-Weatherby, (Attorney Jamaar) spoke. He wants to emphasize if the property owner needs more time to bring property in compliance for a secondary inspection, it does not change what code enforcement needs in order to monitor the property. The Planning and Environment Commission is being requested to declare the property a nuisance with thirty (30) days to bring the property in compliance. If the property is already in compliance, then the Planning and Environment Commission can declare it in compliance, and the Community Conservation Representative would do an inspection, and they would confirm it. If the property is not in compliance, then by

trying to delay or not make that declaration, it may tie the City's hands on further enforcement actions necessary to bring the property into compliance, summary abatement, or a receivership. The pictures have very clearly indicated the property does meet qualifications of a nuisance and the request remains the same despite the recent activity in the front yard.

City Attorney Tsai addressed the Commissioners sitting as the Building Rehabilitation Board, the Resolution does allow for the Community Development Director in coordination with the Public Works Director to extend the thirty (30) days if efforts are being made to clean up the property.

**There being no one else wishing to be heard on the matter, Commissioner Stuckey closed the Building Rehabilitation Board public hearing.**

City Attorney Tsai stated for the record the action tonight does not allow the City to take the property.

Commissioner Baca applauds the property owners being proactive now after seven years. The Building Rehabilitation Board is not a HOA (Homeowners Association) but there is a certain level of standard of living in the City.

Commissioner Baca then stated he would like to make a motion that the Planning and Environment Commission sitting as the Building Rehabilitation Board find the property located at 6745 Turnergrove Drive to be a public nuisance and adopt the attached Resolution which would direct Eleanor Thompson, the owner, to abate the aforementioned violations listed in the Notice to Abate Nuisance within thirty days of the Resolution being adopted.

Commissioner Baca further stated if the homeowner has made improvements, the Commission is willing to work with them.

Chairperson Stuckey seconded the motion.

**Chairperson Stuckey asked if there are any questions.**

Vice Chairperson Cole stated that Commissioner Baca made the motion, but it gives the residents 30 days to come into compliance. He then asked if the Commission wants to give her an additional 30 days and give her a total of 60 days, would the motion have to state 60 days?

Director Avalos responded that 30 days gives staff the ability to enforce in 30 days. If during that time, the homeowner has made progress and shown a good faith effort with progress, then the CD Director and the PW Director have an ability to extend additional time, dependent on how well they achieve certain milestones we expect to see. Staff's purpose of this hearing is not to take property—not to go to a receivership.

City Attorney Tsai pointed out the language providing for that flexibility is contained in Section 7 of Page 2 of the Resolution and is built into staff's recommendation.

Attorney Jamaar wanted to reiterate what Director Avalos said, that the flexibility is something the City would have discretion, assuming there has been good faith attempts to bring the property into compliance.

**Chairperson Stuckey said there is a motion and a second and called for a roll call vote.**

**Commissioner Baca moved and Commissioner Stuckey seconded approval of staff recommendation to approve Resolution No. 7-2024, A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LAKEWOOD, SITTING AS THE BUILDING REHABILITATION BOARD, FINDING THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 6705 TURNERGROVE DRIVE TO BE A PUBLIC NUISANCE; ORDERING ABATEMENT OF THE NUISANCE WITHIN THIRTY (30) DAYS BY THE OWNER OR SUCCESSOR IN INTEREST; AND IF NOT TIMELY ABATED, AUTHORIZING THE CITY TO ABATE THE NUISANCE CONDITIONS.**

**AYES: COMMISSIONERS: Garcia-Salas, Baca, Cole & Stuckey**  
**NOES: COMMISSIONERS: n/a**  
**ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS: Rowland**  
**ABSTAIN: COMMISSIONERS: n/a**

**Chairperson Stuckey announced that the Motion has passed.**

The Planning and Environment Commission reconvened and began the Public Hearings.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

- 1. CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. 1022, 3950 HARDWICK STREET, #206, REQUEST APPROVAL FOR THE OPERATION OF A MASSAGE ESTABLISHMENT (Deneb Romero).**

Planning Technician, Michelle Santiago, (Planning Technician Santiago) presented the staff report and exhibits which recommended approval of Conditional Use Permit No. 1022, for the operation of a massage establishment. These documents are on file with the Community Development Department, along with the proposed Conditions of Approval, which are incorporated by reference in the proposed Resolution of Approval. Notice of Hearing was given pursuant to the Municipal Code and state law. Staff recommends that the Commission hold a public hearing and, following the hearing, move to adopt the attached proposed Resolution approving Conditional Use Permit No. 1022 subject to the findings and conditions contained therein or otherwise by reference and to approve the proposed categorical exemption. This project is categorically exempt under the CEQA Guidelines as amended. Planning Technician Santiago asked if there are any questions from staff.

**Chairperson Stuckey asked if there are any questions of staff.**

Commissioner Baca asked if there is a moratorium on the amount of massage parlors the City can have?

Planning Technician Santiago stated at the moment, we do not.

**Chairperson Stuckey asked of the Applicant, “Have you read, and do you agree with all the proposed conditions of approval?”**

The Applicant, Deneb Romero, stated yes.

Applicant stated her business is massage therapy which is therapeutic massage assisting people who have injuries or who have had surgeries, and she is also a certified Physical Therapy Aid.

Commissioner Baca asked if the other massage therapists have certification, and Applicant stated she is working by herself—her business is only one person.

**Chairperson Stuckey opened the public hearing.**

There being no one else wishing to be heard on the matter, Chairperson Stuckey closed the public hearing and asked the Commission if there was any discussion or a motion.

**Vice-Chairperson Cole moved, and Chairperson Stuckey seconded approval of staff recommendation to approve Conditional Use Permit No. 1022, 3950 Hardwick Street, #206, and its related categorical exemption.**

**AYES: COMMISSIONERS: Garcia-Salas, Baca, Cole & Stuckey**  
**NOES: COMMISSIONERS: n/a**  
**ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS: Rowland**  
**ABSTAIN: COMMISSIONERS: n/a**

**Chairperson Stuckey announced that the Motion has passed.**

**2. CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. 1023, 4142 PARAMOUNT BOULEVARD, REQUEST APPROVAL FOR A TOBACCO AND NICOTINE PRODUCT SALES FACILITY (Emil Takla).**

Senior Planner, Paul Kuykendall, (Senior Planner Kuykendall) presented the staff report and exhibits which recommended approval of Conditional Use Permit No. 1023, for a tobacco and nicotine product sales facility. These documents are on file with the Community Development Department. The Development Review Board (DRB) recommended that this project be approved by the Planning and Environment Commission (PEC), along with the proposed Conditions of Approval which are incorporated by reference in the proposed Resolution of Approval. These are on file

with the Community Development Department. Notice of Hearing was given pursuant to the Municipal Code and state law. Staff recommends that the Commission hold a public hearing and, following the hearing, move to adopt the attached proposed Resolution approving Conditional Use Permit No. 1023 subject to the findings and conditions contained therein or otherwise by reference and to approve the proposed categorical exemption. This project is categorically exempt under the CEQA Guidelines as amended. Senior Planner Kuykendall asked if there are any questions of staff.

**Chairperson Stuckey asked if there are any questions of staff.**

Commissioner Cole asked if the City has a moratorium on the number of tobacco and nicotine shops in the City?

Senior Planner Kuykendall stated there is no such moratorium on these type of uses and explained about conditional use permits processed and grandfathered in for these type of uses before this Ordinance was adopted a few years ago.

Vice-Chairperson Cole stated a comment was made about marijuana and asked if this is strictly tobacco and nicotine products?

Senior Planner Kuykendall stated that is correct and that he has made it clear with the applicant, and the applicant and property owner agree.

Commissioner Baca asked if this includes vaping, and Paul stated vaping is legal and one of the products that will be offered.

**Chairperson Stuckey opened the public hearing.**

**Chairperson Stuckey asked of the Applicant, "Have you read, and do you agree with all the proposed conditions of approval?"**

The Applicant, Emil Takla, stated yes.

Applicant spoke about his business and stated he has met all of the conditions required of him.

Commissioner Garcia-Salas asked why the City of Lakewood should embrace this type of business?

Applicant stated Lakewood is a good place to start a business and that he likes the City of Lakewood.

**Chairperson Stuckey asked if anyone else would like to speak on this item and reminded the public to limit comments to three (3) minutes.**



Resident Karen Ray stated she has been a resident over 50 years and spoke about Lakewood's values, programs and concern for the individuals in the community. She stated Lakewood's priority has been about the residents' health and safety, and there is nothing healthy about tobacco.

Resident Cheryl Hurt stated she lives across from the area where there is already a liquor store and a 7-11 that sells tobacco. She spoke against needing any more tobacco and vaping places in Lakewood and suggested other uses.

City Attorney Tsai recommended the applicant be provided the opportunity to address any comments in order to afford him due process.

Applicant Emil Takla stated he has kids and family, and tobacco is an individual choice. He does not feel the problem is the tobacco store and that a liquor store is different than a smoke shop.

There being no one else wishing to be heard on the matter, Chairperson Stuckey closed the public hearing and asked the Commission if there was any discussion or a motion.

Commissioner Baca asked if the residents read the sheriff's report and stated it is public knowledge, the sheriff's department is continually active in this enforcement, and it put his mind at ease.

City Attorney Tsai reminded the Commissioners that their decision tonight as the Planning and Environment Commission must be based on the findings applicable for approving such a permit which is contained on Page 2 of the Agenda under code requirements to review the use to see if it is appropriate.

**Commissioner Cole moved, and Commissioner Garcia-Salas seconded approval of staff recommendation to approve Conditional Use Permit No. 1023, 4142 Paramount Boulevard, and its related categorical exemptions.**

**AYES: COMMISSIONERS: Baca, Cole & Stuckey**  
**NOES: COMMISSIONERS: Garcia-Salas**  
**ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS: Rowland**  
**ABSTAIN: COMMISSIONERS: n/a**

Chairperson Stuckey announced that the Motion has passed.

**3. CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. 1024, 12612-12614 DEL AMO BOULEVARD, REQUEST APPROVAL FOR SALE OF BEER AND WINE FOR ON-SITE CONSUMPTION IN CONJUNCTION WITH A BONA-FIDE EATING ESTABLISHMENT, GUACAMOLE GRILL (Eder Salvador).**

Assistant Planner, Frankie Griffiths, (Assistant Planner Griffiths) presented the staff report and exhibits which recommended approval of Conditional Use Permit No. 1024,

for sale of beer and wine for on-site consumption in conjunction with a bona-fide eating establishment, Guacamole Grill. These documents are on file with the Community Development Department. Notice of Hearing was given pursuant to the Municipal Code and state law. Staff recommends that the Commission hold a public hearing and, following the hearing, move to adopt the attached proposed Resolution approving Conditional Use Permit No. 1021 subject to the findings and conditions contained therein or otherwise by reference and to approve the proposed categorical exemption. This project is categorically exempt under the CEQA Guidelines as amended. Assistant Planner Griffiths asked if there are any questions of staff.

**Chairperson Stuckey asked if there are any questions of staff.**

Commissioner Cole stated in the report, the Alcoholic Beverage Control determined there are currently 3 on-site licenses within the Consensus Tract where the restaurant is located and there was a determination there is no condition of undue consumption within the tract, do we know how many licenses have to be within a specific tract for it to be an undue concentration?

Assistant Planner Frankie stated for on-sale licenses, that it varies by Census Tract.

Commissioner Cole verified it should not exceed more than three on sale, and Assistant Planner Griffiths stated for on-site, on sale, that is correct.

Commissioner Cole stated currently there are three on sale licenses within the Tract where the restaurant is located. He asked if the approval put us at four?

Assistant Planner Griffiths stated there is a maximum of six allowed, so they would still be in compliance.

Director Avalos stated in this case, it is not an issue because it is not overly concentrated and explained in a situation where it is overly concentrated, restaurants are considered a little differently. If the beer and wine alcohol consumption is secondary to the use, then we issue Letters of Necessity, if we deem it appropriate.

Chairperson Stuckey commented that a prime example is on Candlewood where most of the restaurants have beer and wine licenses, but food is primary.

**Chairperson Stuckey opened the public hearing.**

Renee Guzman, representing the applicant, Eder Salvador stated the applicant is fully aware and accepts all of the conditions of approval. He then addressed the concerns regarding over concentration. He stated this is a family restaurant, no fixed bars, no patio and no amplified music. The alcohol sales are an incidental accessory use to the primary purpose of selling food.

**Chairperson Stuckey asked of the Applicant, "Have you read, and do you agree with all the proposed conditions of approval?"**

Renee Guzman stated, "yes."

Chairperson Stuckey asked if anyone else would like to speak on this item and reminded the public to limit comments to three (3) minutes. There were none.

There being no one else wishing to be heard on the matter, Chairperson Stuckey closed the public hearing and asked the Commission if there was any discussion or a motion.

**Commissioner Baca moved, and Commissioner Stuckey seconded approval of staff recommendation to approve Conditional Use Permit No. 1024, 12612-12614 Del Amo Boulevard, and its related categorical exemptions.**

**AYES: COMMISSIONERS: Garcia-Salas, Baca, Cole & Stuckey**  
**NOES: COMMISSIONERS: n/a**  
**ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS: Rowland**  
**ABSTAIN: COMMISSIONERS: n/a**

Chairperson Stuckey announced that the Motion has passed.

**REPORTS:**

None.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Reverend Doctor Wizard Disney has been taking care of the property at 6745 Turnergrove Drive. It was immaculate until 7 years ago when the City took their tree. He requested a sapling.

Director Avalos offered to pass the request along to the Department of Public Works.

Renee Guzman spoke and wanted to go on record to say the City is one of the best cities he has worked with in a long time and thanked the Planning Department for their efficiency.

**STAFF COMMUNICATIONS:**

Director Avalos introduced Michelle Santiago, and this is her first presentation for the Planning and Environment Commission.

Assistant Director McGuckian clarified there are no moratoriums currently on land uses in Lakewood, including carwashes, massage and tobacco retail facilities. However, there has been an increase in locational and operational standards applied to all such uses. New carwashes were removed from the C-3 Zone, and they are now allowed only in the C-4 Zone with certain development standards.

Neighborhood Preservation Manager, Charles Carter, updated the Commission on the squatters brought to a previous Commission meeting. The property was sold "as is," and the new owners have submitted plans to rehabilitate the property.

**ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be on June 6, 2024.



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Secretary