

**MINUTES OF THE  
ALUC MEETING  
November 20, 2024**

The Airport Land Use Commission convened a Meeting on Wednesday, November 20, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. in the Board Room at 940 Main St., El Centro, California.

Staff present: Assistant Director, Michael Abraham; Planner II, Gerardo Quero; Planner II, Luis Valenzuela; Clerk, Kamika Mitchell; Clerk, Olivia Lopez.

**Chairman Mike Goodsell:** Called the meeting into order.

- I. **Roll Call:** Commissioners present: Goodsell, Chavez, Arguelles, Zamora
- II. **Pledge of Allegiance**
- III. **Approval of Minutes** – August 21, 2024, Minutes

**Commissioner Chavez:** I motion to approve the minutes for the August 21, 2024, meeting.

**Commissioner Arguelles:** I will second.

**Chairman Goodsell:** We have a motion and a second, Roll Call vote.

Roll Call: Goodsell (yes), Chavez (yes), Arguelles (yes), Zamora (yes),

**IV. Public Hearings**

**Chairman Goodsell:** Introduces Public Hearings.

1. Public hearing to consider the proposed City of Calexico Apartment/ Condominium Building project for consistency with the Imperial County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan. The City of Calexico is in receipt of a uniform application for a zone change from R-1 (Residential Single Family) to RC (Residential Condominium) and a general plan amendment from LDR (low Density Residential) to MDR (Medium Density Residential) to facilitate the development of a 7,656 sq. ft residential condominium style apartment building within the City of Calexico limits. The project's purpose is to provide residential housing and will comply with the City of Calexico's development standards of its respective zone should the zone change, and general plan amendment to be approved. The proposed project site is located at 947 Heber Avenue, Calexico, CA 92231 on properties identified as Assessor's Parcel Number 058-271-006-000; and further described as The parcel is legally described as: S 87.5 FT LOT 5 RESUB GRISWOLD-EDMUNDS TR CITY OF CALEXICO East of the San Bernardino Base and Meridian (S.B.B.M.), Latitude 32° 67' 76.692" N – Longitude 115° 49' 3.9827" W. (ALUC 10-24) [Luis Valenzuela, Planner II (442) 265-1736, extension 1749 or by email at [luisvalenzuela@co.imperial.ca.us](mailto:luisvalenzuela@co.imperial.ca.us)

**Luis Valenzuela, Planner II:** Read the project into the record.

**Chairman Goodsell:** So, you bring it to us and your saying it's not consistent with the plan? Is it based on because it's in the flight path or height?

**Commissioner Arguelles:** Is it a zoning issue?

**Luis Valenzuela, Planner II:** Yes, because it's on the staff report. So, in the table compatibility criteria Zone C, it states that in the amount of units is supposed to be (6) units per acre and it's (6) units and the lot size is less than 1 acre. That's the only reason.

**Chairman Goodsell:** So, we can't make them happy here, they'll have to go back to Planning to see if they can get it zoned some other way?

**Chairman Goodsell:** So basically, we can't approve it. It's not consistent, right? When it reaches us then we can't say "Yes, according to our plan", right?

**Chairman Goodsell:** I will open it to public discussion anyone want to speak in favor of this project?

**Natalia Jimenez, Co-Owner:** Introduced herself.

**Natalia Jimenez, Co-Owner:** Thank you guys for meeting with us this afternoon. So, as we mentioned this project is an apartment building, 2 floors. It's condominium style. We believe that this project is consistent and should be approved by the Commission because there are several other parcels of land with mixed zone use within that sphere of the airport's influence. There are several residential areas, commercial, industrial with buildings that have more floors than what we are proposing and higher density than what we are proposing, so we believe that it fits within compatibility, and it also fits all of the City of Calexico's zoning ordinances according to our residential apartment condominium ordinances. So, we are in compliance with all those as proposed. We have attached in that packet here some examples of different properties within that airport zone that are above the density and height. So, there's those new apartments on Rockwood that are 3 floors and have higher unit counts than ours. There's a school with high towers, electrical towers and satellites, that are also above the height of our proposed project and several other apartment buildings that are above density and height. And we believe that this is not a safety risk to the airport.

**Chairman Goodsell:** I'll let others speak. Is there anything from our panel that would like to ask?

**Commissioner Arguelles:** I have no questions.

**Commissioner Zamora:** I have a quick question. How close is this school? Is it a ICOE facility? How close is the proposal to this school?

**Natalia Jimenez, Co-Owner:** The Rockwood Elementary School, it is adjacent, in the back.

**Chairman Goodsell:** Ok well, here's what you're going to hear from me. Your arguments are sound in the sense you looked around and said everybody else is doing it, why can't we, but we aren't the people to tell you, you can. Those arguments need to be made with the people who can change the zoning for you because if those others are in allowed usage in the zone that they've been zoned, you need a different zone to do what you want to do where you're at.

**Natalia Jimenez, Co-Owner:** Yes.

**Chairman Goodsell:** We can't do it. All we can say is its inconsistent with the plan and follow that plan. Its kind of where things stop with us. Bully for you, you need to make your arguments for the change in zone elsewhere cause we're not the Planning Department.

**Natalia Jimenez, Co-Owner:** We do have that. We're working with the City of Calexico on this rezoning.

**Chairman Goodsell:** It sounds like you got some good arguments but they're the ones to put those to cause we're not going to step out of our lane and say "Alright, City of Calexico you're going to zone this that way." cause we're not in charge of that. Hope you can appreciate that. It's kind of where we're at.

**Natalia Jimenez, Co-Owner:** And how do other projects get approved through this, that are outside?

**Chairman Goodsell:** When they run up against this, they go back to those planning departments in the places where they need a zone change and sometimes, they get it.

**Michael Abraham, Assistant Director:** Introduced himself.

**Michael Abraham, Assistant Director:** Let me just go over the process really quick. So, this Commission is here to make a determination whether or not this project is compatible or not with the plan. It's not here to approve or deny your project. It's here to make a determination on whether your project is compatible with the Plan. Now once this Commission makes that decision, you take that decision to the City of Calexico City Council. If they want to, they can override that determination but at that point they assume the liability of that project at that time, but this Commission can't approve or deny the project, its only here to make a determination of compatibility and based on your project and the Plan it's not compatible with the Plan.

**Chairman Goodsell:** You following that? It's all a question of airport safety and everything. We look at it from that filter and the city might look at it with a different filter.

**Michael Abraham, Assistant Director:** Now what I don't know, if those other developments in the area, how long have those buildings been there or did the city do an override? They may have done an override. That happens a lot in the City of Imperial and in El Centro when they don't agree with the determination of the Plan.

**Chairman Goodsell:** But then they hang themselves out there for liability but they may be willing to take it on. But the solution has to be found there.

**Commissioner Arguelles:** Right now, they are building a (50) apartment complex like half a mile North of the Airport.

**Chairman Goodsell:** All is not lost if we don't approve it. We just can't consider it compatible as Michael said, unless there is a motion to say so, it's just going to die there.

**Chairman Goodsell:** Thanked Planner Luis Valenzuela & Natalia Jimenez for their presentations.

**Chairman Goodsell:** Do we have any non-action items? Could we be adjourned? Oh no, we're not going to approve it. Do you want to motion not to approve it, is that what you said? We'll take a motion to deem it incompatible, do you want to try that Jerry?

**Michael Abraham, Assistant Director:** Right, so the proper process should, you should make a determination that its incompatible with the Plan.

**Commissioner Chavez:** I'll motion. I'll motion that we find the project incompatible with the 1996 Airport Land Use.

**Chairman Goodsell:** I'll second her motion. Roll call vote.

Roll Call: Goodsell (yes), Chavez (yes), Arguelles (yes), Zamora (yes)

**Michael Abraham, Assistant Director:** And we will provide you a letter of determination.

**Lupe Jimenez, Co-Owner:** Introduced herself.

**Lupe Jimenez, Co-Owner:** So, I don't understand then, why did we have to come here?

**Chairman Goodsell:** That's a good question, you're asking why you have to come here? Because if you're building close to an airport you have to come here.

**Chairman Goodsell:** So, you're wondering how it got here ahead of the issues over there.

**Lupe Jimenez, Co-Owner:** Yeah, we could have just gotten a letter and not gone through this.

**Michael Abraham, Assistant Director:** If I may, because this is the process. You need this letter for the City Council to take action to override that determination. Without that, they won't have nothing to do. It would be inappropriate for them to approve the project without, at least dealing with the issue of having a project that exceeds the density that is allowed by the Plan so they would have to override that and in doing so they

assume the liability. So that's why it is appropriate to come to the Commission first before you go to the Planning Commission or the City Council at the City of Calexico.

**Lupe Jimenez, Co-Owner:** It is just because it's sounds like you'll always say it's not compatible.

**Chairman Goodsell:** No, no, if it's the right zoning use for the place, there are somethings that are allowed in the Plan. This is not.

**Michael Abraham, Assistant Director:** Most of the projects that come before this Commission are compatible.

**Chairman Goodsell:** It's rare that we have one like tonight.

**Lupe Jimenez, Co-Owner:** Oh, ok. So, if we would have built six you would have said yes, its compatible?

**Commissioner Chavez:** In my time here, this is the second one I hear of that's not compatible so the majority of them are.

**Lupe Jimenez, Co-Owner:** So you go by the County's standards, developmental standards, not by the local right?

**Michael Abraham, Assistant Director:** No, we go by the Airport Land Use Plan.

**Chairman Goodsell:** We have a written plan. If you wait awhile our Plan will change. We're going to update it.

**Lupe Jimenez, Co-Owner:** When is that? Cause I noticed you said 1996.

**Chairman Goodsell:** Right now, it's in the works so we're kind of excited about a new Plan. It's been a long time coming but it doesn't save the day for you.

**Gerardo Jimenez, Co-Owner:** Introduced himself.

**Gerardo Jimenez, Co-Owner:** My question is, if this Plan that you are using is for the County and most of the time the County uses certain different Ordinance because they use septic and water tanks. The City of Calexico doesn't use that. In the City of Calexico, the Ordinance of Calexico entitles up to 20 to 30 units on that piece of land. Its way different than what the County established here. We're not building in the County even though we're building in the County but we're building in the City and we are meeting their standards. So, it's kind of inconsistent when the two different entities have different standards. They don't match. It needs to be evaluated. I mean, the airport should be more in the safety of the planes, heights and not in the density of the people or the amount of people in there because if there's are already hotels, (3) story buildings, multiple units and apartments that is very inconsistent with what the County is using as a standard. And that's just an opinion because it really needs to be updated and addressed in the future.

**Chairman Goodsell:** And that's why we're updating it, and we've actually had workshops where we have invited the public to make comments like that. That would improve it. You're welcome to attend the next one.

**Gerardo Jimenez, Co-Owner:** Yeah, to me it's very outdated. Let's say big cities like San Diego International Airport and you see in Little Italy, (5) story buildings next to the International Airport and a smaller lot like this, (300) units. You're talking about (2) units. Difference on (8) units compared like (300) units, (200) units. To me it's really outdate and needs to be addressed.

**Chairman Goodsell:** That's why we are updating it.

**Gerardo Jimenez, Co-Owner:** Alright, thank you.

**Gerardo Jimenez, Co-Owner:** Yeah, to me it's very outdated. Let's say big cities like San Diego International Airport and you see in Little Italy, (5) story buildings next to the International Airport and a smaller lot like this, (300) units. You're talking about (2) units. Difference on (8) units compared like (300) units, (200) units. To me it's really outdated and needs to be addressed.

**Chairman Goodsell:** That's why we are updating it.

**Gerardo Jimenez, Co-Owner:** Alright, thank you.

**Michael Abraham, Assistant Director:** Now I just wanted to say that the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan is not for the County, it's not for the Cities, it's for the Airport noise zone. It governs the noise zone. This Commission is separate from the County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors. This Commission stands on its own, so it doesn't govern just the Cities, it doesn't govern just the County, it governs over Airport noise zone whether that's in the City or County.

**Chairman Goodsell:** Yeah, it's true. It was quite an education here tonight. We're actually pleased in a way that it can get flushed out like this because it's usually yes, yes, and not that much discussion but it's really, in the front of our minds man we're going to get a new plan.

**Commissioner Chavez:** We're excited, yes.

**Chairman Goodsell:** We're excited about it. You probably would be too if it came before this project but we're sorry it just had to be this way.

**Commissioner Chavez:** Exactly. I just want to add, I mean it sounds like there is a lot of development in that area already, so you'll get the letter from here, take it back to Calexico and if there's a lot of development there already the possibilities are pretty high, they're going to override it. So, don't let our decision tonight discourage you because it is apples and oranges, ok?

**Chairman Goodsell:** Well said, well said. Thank you all.

**MEETING ADJOURNED.**

  
Jim Minnick, Secretary  
Airport Land Use Commission