

**Excerpt from the Lompoc Planning Commission Meeting  
of January 09, 2013**

**PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS:**

**1. CUP 12-10 – Conditional Use Permit**

A request by Pastor Doug Conley of New Life Christian Center, the applicant, for Planning Commission consideration of an amendment to Conditional Use Permit (CUP 80-26) for the operation of a homeless shelter in the existing church multipurpose room. The facility would house up to sixteen (16) adults from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 a.m. daily. The project is located at 816 North C Street in the *Medium Density Residential (R-2)* Zoning District (Assessor Parcel Number: 87-040-65). This action is exempt pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Principal Planner Keith Neubert summarized the written staff report and advised the Commission one letter had been received regarding the project.

**OPEN PUBLIC HEARING AT 6:35 P.M.**

Pastor Doug Conley of New Life Christian Center provided a brief history of the shelter; how he had been approached by representatives of Good Samaritan, Santa Barbara County, and the City when Lompoc Community Development Corporation unexpectedly closed the Marks House and Bridge House; explained he was unaware of the need for permits from the City; noted there was no government funding supporting the effort; and discussed how his congregation took on what they saw as an unmet need in the community and continue operating with strict intake procedures and guidelines for behavior of their clients.

Marlin Panther, 821 North C Street – spoke representing neighboring property owners (approximately 12 people) he provided the Planning Commission with a handout summarizing reports of increased crime in the neighborhood; stated with more notice could have had more neighbors present; discussed effect on property values; described meeting with Pastor Doug to discuss the issue; and, respectfully requested denial of permit.

Victor Bobo, 601 East Pine Avenue – noted clients are attempting to help themselves.

Mary Galanos, 816 North C Street – has been homeless since 2012 and working to get back on her feet; City of Promise gives her hope and assistance.

Joseph Avila, 816 North C Street – represents a dozen clients in the audience who are being assisted by City of Promise; he is awaiting Section 8 to get back on his feet.

Denise Wilson, 816 North C Street – noted surrounding neighborhood is low-income and crime concerns are not from clients of the shelter; stated Bridge house too hard to access with physical disabilities.

Rebecca Goodchild, 513 East Pine Avenue – described difficulties getting her three (3) children to the bus stop and expressed concern with possible sex offenders at the shelter; stated cannot allow children to play outside due to clients and use of profanity.

Rhonda Andersen, 906 West Lemon Avenue – questioned how it can be determined homeless are causing problems; stated shelter offers warmth and support to those in need.

Richard DeVaux, 809 North C Street – noted Pastor Doug has well researched and organized operation; stated there was a break-in at his home but not from clients of the shelter; and noted he had signed the petition but requested the Commission grant the permit.

Amber Lopez 416 North A Street -- stated she used to live next door to the shelter and takes her small children there to volunteer, they are not frightened; and indicated the need in the community for the service.

Marilyn Stankewich, 100 Aster Lane -- stated as a church member felt the need to give back; indicated the shelter has rules; and invited the neighbors to join in serving.

Unknown resident -- lived with her grandmother next door to the church; stated the church protects the neighborhood; indicated shelter was started due to need; and noted there was no intention to cause a problem.

Clara Pierce, 1220 North Second Street – attends New Life and was taught to be part of community; stated there are many needy people in the community.

Pastor Darren Hunt, New Hope Christian Church – has referred members of his congregation to Pastor Doug when they are in need of temporary assistance and encourages the Planning Commission grant the permit.

Ann Ruhge, Lompoc resident – noted she understands the difficult decision the Planning Commission has to make; agreed the neighbors should have been involved earlier; indicated the community is in need of the service; and noted New Life Christian is a small community doing what they believe.

Johnathon Martin -- as a resident of the shelter, believes Pastor Doug should be commended for taking on the challenge.

Jane Beard, 3405 Via Arnez – noted if conditions are met, the permit should be allowed; stated people are allowed in residential neighborhoods, why not a shelter which is for people; noted Pastor Doug has attempted to obtain aid from other churches and not received help.

Eric Santoyo, 413 East Cherry Avenue -- as a member of New Life Christian Center he treats clients as family; noted rules are strict; noted there was no intention to impact the surrounding community.

Kym Bobo, 601 East Pine Avenue – stated as a volunteer at the shelter she is familiar with the neighborhood and criminal activity was there prior to the shelter being established; described her part in the intake procedure for each client; and indicated the shelter wants to work with the neighbors to assure their safety.

Kent Boudreaux, 808 North C Street – indicated people need a place to live; stated crime is up generally due to economy; and stated many of the clients have served their country and fallen on hard times.

Marc Miller, 1133 Marigold Way – stated he is a bishop for his church; expressed the thought there is a need for the service although some homeless have deep rooted problem with drugs and alcohol there is a need for compassion and to find a long term solution.

Laura Watson, 600 East Lemon Avenue – not in her immediate neighborhood but share personal experience with homeless and stated opposition.

Andy Stankewich, 1008 Aster Lane – shared his personal experience and noted anyone could be homeless.

Naoko Burns, 813 North C Street – stated she operates a day care in neighborhood and Pastor Doug has assisted some of the single mothers who leave their children with her and he watches the neighborhood so it is safe; requested approval of the permit.

Jeremy Conley, 226 South K Street – summarized the shelter operation; noted crime exists but not as a result of the shelter; invited neighbors come meet the clients; and requested approval of the permit.

CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING AT 7:55 P.M.

Commissioner Fink directed the Planning Commission to the Findings of Fact in the Resolution.

Commissioner Rodenhi expressed his appreciation to the audience for their heartfelt comments; noted the responsibility of the Planning Commission is to find if the proposed use is not detrimental to the permitted uses; noted there should be more review of the police reports – if the shelter were not present, would the crime go down?; noted Pastor Doug and the congregation are putting forth an incredible effort to serve the community; asked if a different group might not run the shelter as carefully; noted the neighbors have a right to enjoy their homes with a feeling of safety; suggested there should be more time to establish lines of communication between the neighbors and the church; and suggested a three (3) month continuance.

Commissioner Clark expressed his agreement; noted his heartfelt appreciation for Pastor Doug's efforts; stated neighbors should have been included in process earlier; and agreed to support a continuance to allow the church and the neighbors to meet and resolve issues.

Commissioner Cioni – stated it appeared the process has been rushed; questioned if the

spike in crime was during the time the homeless were in the shelter; and supported the continuance to allow time for all involved to communicate.

Commissioner Fink – stated sometimes it is appropriate to delay a decision; noted each side had heard new information at the meeting; asked staff if the shelter was operating under a Temporary Use Permit and suggested it be extended to cover the time period of the continuance.

**MOTION:** It was moved by Commissioner Rodenhi and seconded by Commissioner Clark that the public hearing be continued for 90 days to allow the church and the neighbors to meet and discuss the issues. Staff was also directed to extend the Temporary Use Permit, allowing operation of the shelter for 90 days.

**VOTE:** The motion passed on a 4-0-1 roll call vote, with Commissioner Leach not participating.

Commissioner Leach returned to the dais.