

Planning Commission Recommends The Shops at Santa Anita

More than 600 residents come out to support Caruso Affiliated project

The Arcadia Planning Commission unanimously voted to recommend to the City Council the approval of The Shops at Santa Anita, the outdoor, upscale shopping and dining center proposed by Caruso Affiliated and the owners of Santa Anita Park. The Shops at Santa Anita would be constructed on the parking lot south of the grandstand.

The Planning Commission heard public testimony from Arcadia residents at a meeting on Monday evening. More than 800 Arcadia residents attended the meeting with the overwhelming majority favoring The Shops at Santa Anita, as demonstrated by a show of hands and the public comments. The Planning Commission continued consideration of the proposal to

Wednesday evening when it took its vote to recommend approval of The Shops at Santa Anita.

In addition to public comment, on Monday representatives from the Arcadia city departments made presentations regarding their assessment of the Caruso Affiliated proposal. Arcadia Police Chief Bob Sanderson said his department reviewed the project and concluded that its master security plan is "comprehensive, and addresses all concerns to mitigate the need for police responses to the site."

City Engineer Phil Way addressed the "extensive traffic study" included in the proposals' Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and the mitigations that

the City of Arcadia would require of Caruso Affiliated — including additional through lanes, right- and left-hand turn lanes, and traffic signal upgrades — as part of the agreement to build the project.

Statements made by Arcadia city staff also directly contradicted claims by Westfield's front group Arcadia First! that The Shops at Santa Anita plan would open the door to expanded gambling and the addition of housing.

"It is important to note that there are no new types of wagering proposed as part of this [proposed] Simulcast Center, it just consolidates the existing uses that are within the racetrack now," said

Arcadia Community Development Administrator Jason Kruckeberg.

Kruckeberg also added, "No new residential uses will be permitted through this specific plan document... no new residential is proposed as part of this project."

The proposal for The Shops at Santa Anita will be considered by the Arcadia City Council on April 11. If the Arcadia City Council approves the project, Caruso Affiliated will proceed with the development of The Shops at Santa Anita and construction would begin as soon as construction permits are issued, with the project scheduled to open in 2009.