



PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

April 4, 2011

7:00 p.m.

City Council Chambers
701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, CA 94025

CALL TO ORDER – 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL – Bressler (Chair), Eiref, Ferrick (Vice Chair), Kadvany, O'Malley (Absent), Riggs, Yu

INTRODUCTION OF STAFF – Deanna Chow, Senior Planner; Thomas Rogers, Associate Planner

A. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Update on Pending Planning Items

A. Planning Commissioner Application

Planner Chow said the Planning Commissioner application period ended on Friday April 1, 2011. She said it was expected that the City Council would select an appointee at the April 5, 2011 meeting. She noted there were 15 applicants including Chair Bressler.

B. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There was none.

C. CONSENT

Chair Bressler noted there were suggested modifications that had been sent by email. Planner Chow said that both Commissioners Kadvany and Riggs had suggested changes to the same paragraph. Commissioner Kadvany suggested using Commissioner Riggs' suggested changes with a change to indicated "Commissioner Kadvany."

1. Approval of minutes from the February 28, 2011 Planning Commission meeting.

Commission Action: M/S Unanimous consensus to approve the minutes of the February 28, 2011 with the recommended changes as sent by email and agreed upon at the meeting.

Motion carried 6-0 with Commissioner O'Malley not in attendance.

- Page 3, 4th full paragraph, 2nd to last line: Replace "Kadvany" with "Commissioner Kadvany"
- Page 3, 4th full paragraph, 2nd to last line: Replace "EIR as" with "EIR, given that"

- Page 4, 1st paragraph, 2nd line: Replace “were” with “were likely” and insert “, given the project density” at the end of the first sentence.
- Page 4, 3rd paragraph, 8th line: Replace “preparer” with “prepare”
- Page 5, 1st paragraph, 1st line: Replace “quasi-judicatory” with “quasi-adjudicatory”

D. PRESENTATION

1. Presentation on the 2010 Downtown Parking Study by Commissioner Kadvany

Commissioner Kadvany said this was a subcommittee report on the 2010 Downtown Parking Study. He said there was valuable information in the report and suggested Commissioners read it. He showed a slide of parking plazas and on street parking spaces in the downtown area. He said there was a total of 1,857 parking spaces downtown. He said some businesses have private parking and those spaces were not included in the study. He said the study looked at the peak use of the parking plazas during the week for one day at different times and similarly on the weekend. He noted that the plazas were different sizes. He said the parking garage study explained why certain locations were chosen as preferred locations for parking garages. He said the study looked extensively at one week day and one weekend day, permit parking and re-parking.

Commissioner Kadvany showed a table of all the parking plazas and their uses during the entire day. He said 80 to 85 percent usage was the threshold for efficient parking. He said the City's parking was well suited to the number of people coming to the City by car but there were hot spots of usage. He said Plaza 2 was highly utilized but it also was a small lot and that Plaza 7 was very busy. He said Plaza 4 was next to Draeger's differs as it does not allow for permit parking as in the other plazas. He said the parking survey sent to downtown business owners brought back good information on what was wanted for those businesses and their customers.

Commissioner Kadvany said another matrix of the parking plazas showed usage by cars with permits. He said the premise was that the permits could be managed. He said 50 percent of the parking in Plaza 2 was vehicles with permits. In contrast, he said Plaza 7 had about 20 percent permitted parking. He said some people were parking for long periods of times and the question was whether those cars were parking in the best area. He said the consultants had tracked license plates to estimate re-parking. He said the study found that Plaza 6 was dominated by permit holders but that it was not a highly used plaza otherwise.

Commissioner Kadvany said the weekend plaza parking was generally much less busy but there were hotspots such as Plaza 7. He said there was good relevant information as to how parking could be managed downtown. He said the study was conducted in November 2009 and was published in August 2010. He said the Council looked at the report soon after that and provided direction to staff to look at Santa Cruz Avenue to allow some shorter time parking; allow longer time on the core streets; improve signage; consider options for parking longer at some plazas; and consider changing permit allotments for some plazas. He said the Specific Plan has a number of ideas about parking downtown.

Chair Bressler asked if the discussion was limited to what was being presented. Planner Rogers said the Commission could ask clarifying questions and discuss general concepts. He said the presentation was to help set the stage for later discussions for the Specific Plan.

Commissioner Riggs said Plaza 5 was notably less used and asked if it was recently redone and has perpendicular spaces with narrower widths. Planner Rogers said that was correct.

Commissioner Riggs said he will not park in that lot as there was too much risk of damage to car doors.

Commissioner Eiref asked if the study looked at on-street statistics for parking. Planner Rogers said the study has quite a bit of information related to on street parking.

Commissioner Ferrick asked if the study was done during the relaxed permit period during the holidays. Planner Rogers said it was done under standard permit regulations.

Chair Bressler asked if the parking report provided a basis for how much could be added to the parking load or whether more information was needed. Commissioner Kadvany said that the study was a snapshot as it looked at just two days. He said they needed to consider how accurate the two-day data was but there was a lot of information provided.

Commissioner Ferrick said there was a potential garage project about three years ago in one or two of the plazas. Planner Rogers said there was some investigation in 2003 about a potential garage behind Flegel's.

Commissioner Eiref asked if the 1999 study and the 2010 study could be compared to look at trends. Commissioner Kadvany said it was his impression that there was consistency in the studies but this more current study looked at much more and contained more information than the earlier study. Commissioner Eiref asked if the Council's ideas had been put into force. Planner Rogers said staff was looking at longer parking and pay options, and possibly limiting Santa Cruz Avenue to one hour and some spots for 15 minutes. Commissioner Ferrick asked if there was a record of how many parking tickets were issued. Staff will follow up to get that information.

Commissioner Riggs asked whether the proposed Specific Plan was targeting Plazas 1 and 3 as potential sites for structures. Planner Rogers said an earlier study had indicated those were the most efficient spaces for structures because of their sizes.

Commissioner Eiref asked if the parking permits were primarily held by business owners and employees. Planner Rogers said that was correct. Commissioner Eiref asked if those permit holders could park elsewhere and shuttled. Planner Rogers said that could come into the discussion for the Specific Plan unless it went beyond the boundary of the Plan.

E. REGULAR BUSINESS

1. **2011-12 Capital Improvement Program/General Plan Consistency**: Consideration of consistency of the 2011-2012 projects of the Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan with the General Plan.

Mr. Matt Ocamou, Engineering Division, said the Commission was being requested to consider the general plan consistency of the 2011-2012 projects of the Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan. He said staff had prepared a breakdown outlining what goals of the City's General Plan the projects meet.

Commissioner Ferrick asked how flexible the project docket would be if there was a major change that came along such as an influx of money gifted or for instance if the City wanted to do something about Flood Park. Mr. Ocamou said with the Arrillaga project there had been no projects displaced although there were some changes to prioritization and funding allocation.

Planner Chow said similar to the Arrillaga gym project that a consideration of consistency to the General Plan for a project change under the Plan would come back to the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Eiref said the Planning Commission had highlighted four or five projects to be prioritized and recommended to that to the City Council but he did not see those projects anywhere on the Five-Year Plan. Planner Chow said the Commission had identified projects to be forwarded to the Council which had been done by a memo to the Council. She said those were reviewed and on the books but were not part of this year's plan. Commissioner Riggs said he did not see the projects at all in the Five-Year Plan.

Chair Bressler said it was indicated that a general plan update would start in 2013 and asked what that would include, noting the estimated expense. Planner Chow said there was no specific work plan yet but noted that a comprehensive general plan update with an EIR, staff time and the hiring of a consultant, would require substantial funding. She said the General Plan was last updated in 1994 and there were elements older than that. Chair Bressler asked when the Downtown El Camino Real Plan was expected to be done. Planner Chow said it was anticipated to occur this year. Chair Bressler asked about the solar panel project at the Onetta Harris Community Center as that was a significant expense. Mr. Ocamou said the scope of work was to install all new solar/electrical and water heater upgrades for the swimming pool. Chair Bressler said there were financing options related to buying the power and not owning the solar equipment that he recommended the City consider. Mr. Ocamou said they were looking for General Plan compliance but the implementation details would provide an opportunity to do a solar analysis. He said with the Arrillaga gym the analyses indicated there was not enough savings and so they decided to purchase the solar equipment. Commissioner Kadvany asked if the Community Center was responsible for its own budget. Mr. Ocamou said he was not sure of the operating budget for the Community Center and pool as it was under Parks and Recreation, but the funds for the pool heater and electrical would come from the redevelopment agency. Commissioner Riggs clarified that there were two types of systems one of which had to do with heating of the pool and the other photovoltaic to provide electricity. He said that those should be presented as two different projects in the future.

Chair Bressler asked about the items the Planning Commission had discussed and recommended. Mr. Chip Taylor, Engineering Services Manager, said the City Council had considered the Five-Year CIP and that report had included all of the Planning Commission's recommendations. He said the Council gave staff direction on the projects, which was the list before the Commission. He said the Commission could have their representative go to the City Council and make comments to the Council on the planning projects identified by the Commission. He said the prioritization of the next year's projects would come back in a year to the Commission. Chair Bressler said he would like the Planning Commission to get more involved in developing the Five-Year CIP Plan. Planner Chow said the priority project list was developed each year and taken to the various Commissions who reviewed them and provided input and recommendations to the Council, which the Council reviewed and then set priorities.

Commissioner Ferrick asked about the Emergency Water Supply Project and if the cost of that could be shared with the Fire District as it was very expensive. Mr. Taylor said it was identified by the Council as important and necessary. He said they had discussed with the Fire District but they have no funds allocated for this work. Commissioner Ferrick said the project was very expensive. She said she was also surprised at the expected expense of resurfacing Plaza 7 as it was much greater cost than the cost to resurface streets. Mr. Ocamou said they would need to do more than resurface as it would have to be a reconstruction project with storm drain and

storm pollution measures. He said they would also need input from the downtown merchants about the preferred design. Commissioner Ferrick asked if it was determined through the adoption of the Specific Plan that the community wanted a parking garage at this location, could a project adjustment be made so that work was not unnecessarily done to resurface the Plaza. Mr. Taylor said at this time they were looking only at general plan conformance. He said regarding emergency water that the City is responsible for providing water. Commissioner Ferrick asked if other areas have emergency water sites. Mr. Taylor said they do and noted the City was looking at potential sites for the provision of emergency water including possibly the use of wells.

Commissioner Ferrick said for the record that she would recommend under page C.5, parks and recreation, nonfunded projects, to move the Flood Park Project up into the priority list.

Commissioner Yu said regarding the Willow Road Dog Park that \$300,000 was slated for re-turfing which she did not think was the priority and asked how she would provide comments on what was needed there other than re-turfing. Mr. Taylor said she should contact Mr. Ruben Nino.

Commissioner Eiref said the Planning Commission's desired planning projects were not listed anywhere. Mr. Taylor said he was looking up the report to the City Council as he knew those projects had been included with the packet presented to the Council. Commissioner Eiref said those projects were not funded now but should be considered for funding later. Commissioner Riggs said at the least there should have been some feedback from staff on the Council's response to the Commission's recommendations. He asked when the Council would consider the Five-Year CIP for 2011-2012. Mr. Taylor said that it would be part of the budget process which would probably occur in a couple of weeks. He said that a comprehensive zoning updating project was listed in the March 15 report to the City Council as an unfunded project.

Chair Bressler suggested that the Commission make a presentation on the projects they had discussed and potentially to address Flood Park. Commissioner Riggs said he recalled the Commission had selected him at one point to make such a presentation to the Council. He said he was not comfortable making a recommendation about Flood Park until there was more information but noted it was a very valuable resource.

Mr. Taylor said there were two issues regarding Flood Park and one was just the cost of operating and maintaining it. He said to enhance the Park with sports fields would require considerable additional fiscal investment, noting that the upgrades to Kelly Park had cost between three and four million dollars. He said the packet that went to the City Council included the Commission's permit streamlining with benchmarking, residential zoning review, modifications to the Below Market Rate Housing Guidelines, and coordination among neighboring jurisdictions. He said the project listed was a comprehensive zoning ordinance update.

Commissioner Kadvany asked if there was anything in the General Plan relevant to cost efficiency and budget. Planner Chow said she did not know specifically but there was a goal for the efficient use of resources.

Commission Action: M/S Bressler/Ferrick to adopt a finding that the Planning Commission has reviewed the 5-Year CIP and found that the projects for FY 2011/2012 are consistent with the City's General Plan.

Motion carried 6-0 with Commission O'Malley not in attendance.

Chair Bressler asked about making a motion to have Commissioner Riggs attend the May 24, 2011 Council meeting to address the planning projects that had been dropped from the list. Commissioner Kadvany said the Commission had voted previously to have Commissioner Riggs go before the Council.

It was the Commission's consensus to have Commissioner Riggs speak to the Council about the planning projects that had not been added to the Five-Year CIP.

F. COMMISSION BUSINESS

There was none.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Staff Liaison: Deanna Chow, Senior Planner

Recording Secretary: Brenda Bennett

Approved by Planning Commission on May 2, 2011