



PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
Regular Meeting
August 18, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.
City Council Chambers
701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, CA 94025

CALL TO ORDER – 7:02 p.m.

ROLL CALL – Bressler, Combs, Eiref (Chair), Ferrick, Kadvany (absent), Onken (Vice Chair), Strehl

INTRODUCTION OF STAFF – Deanna Chow, Senior Planner; Arnold Mammarella, Contract Planner; Stephen O’Connell, Contract Planner; Thomas Rogers, Senior Planner

A. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

A1. Update on Pending Planning Items

- a. General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) – City Council – August 19, 2014

Senior Planner Rogers said the City Council at their August 19 meeting would consider appointments to the General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) including Commissioner Strehl who was nominated by the Planning Commission as their representative. He said there were also applications for three at-large member positions on GPAC that the Council would consider for appointments.

- b. Commonwealth Corporate Center – City Council – August 19, 2014

Senior Planner Rogers said the City Council at their August 19 meeting would also consider the Planning Commission’s recommendation on the proposed Commonwealth Corporate Center in the M2 district. He said if the Council acted favorably on that project there would be a second reading of the ordinance establishing the rezoning at the Council’s next meeting.

- c. New Planning Staff

Senior Planner Rogers introduced newly hired planners Ms. Michele Morris and Mr. Tom Smith. He noted that Ms. Corinna Sandmeier has also been hired as a regular staff planner.

B. PUBLIC COMMENTS #1 (Limited to 30 minutes)

There were none.

C. CONSENT

- C1.** Approval of minutes from the July 21, 2014 Planning Commission meeting ([Attachment](#))

Commissioner Onken said Commissioner Kadvany, who was absent, had suggested clarifying language related to questions Commissioner Kadvany had asked the applicant about the level of energy efficiencies that would be included in the Commonwealth project. Chair Eiref confirmed with staff that the Commission could approve the minutes with the proviso of adding

Commissioner Kadvany's statement into the appropriate part of the Commonwealth project discussion regarding energy efficiencies.

Commission Action: M/S Strehl/Eiref to approve the minutes with the following modification:

- Page 15, between 2nd and 3rd paragraphs: Add "Commissioner Kadvany relayed that one compared what the possible performance improvement is over the California standard plus 15 percent for development projects of this type."

Motion carried 5-0 with Commissioner Bressler abstaining and Commissioner Kadvany absent:

D. PUBLIC HEARING

D1. Use Permit/Chris Spaulding/957 Rose Avenue: Request for a use permit to demolish an existing single-story, single family residence and detached garage, and construct a new two-story, single-family residence on a substandard lot with regard to lot width and lot area in the R-1-U (Single-Family Urban) zoning district. As part of the proposal, the following two heritage trees are proposed for removal: 17-inch raywood ash located in the front-left yard, and a 23-inch saucer magnolia in the left-rear yard. ([Attachment](#))

Staff Comment: Planner O'Connell said staff had no additions to the written report.

Public Comment: Mr. Kpish Goyal, property owner, said he and his wife owned the property and were pleased to bring the project to the Commission for consideration.

Mr. Chris Spaulding, applicant and project architect, said in designing this home their goal was to minimize the bulk of the second story from the one story house on the left and keeping the majority of the windows facing the rear and front with secondary windows on the sides.

Commissioner Onken asked why certain trees were being proposed for removal and not others. Mr. Spaulding said one of the first choices was to put the driveway on the left side to maximize the space between the neighboring one-story home and the project home. He said the tree in that area was in the way of the proposed driveway. He said the magnolia tree in the back could be saved but it did not fit with the intent the property owners have for their rear yard.

Chair Eiref closed the public hearing.

Commission Comment: Commissioner Bressler said he thought the design was thoughtful and he liked its appearance, noting parking was located to the rear. He moved to approve as recommended in the staff report.

Commissioner Ferrick said she had a concern regarding the two-foot sill height for bedroom #3 on both the right and left side elevations. She asked what those windows viewed as typically the Commission liked three-foot window sills on side elevations.

Mr. Spaulding said the window for bedroom #3 on the left was nearly to the front of the neighboring property and an oak tree was situated in the area between the two homes. He said if it was an issue his applicant was willing to bring the sill heights to three-feet. He said on the right side there was a window for bedroom #2 that was also close to the front of the adjacent

residence. He said the garage roofline also helped to block the view from the window back toward the adjacent house. He said there was a stairwell window with a high sill, a closet with a high window, and the master bedroom has two-foot sills which he said they could raise to three feet if desired. Commissioner Ferrick said she was comfortable with the window sill heights with the architect's explanation of how they interacted with other elements.

Commissioner Onken said the plan could be flipped without impacting the neighbors, which could save the raywood ash tree. He said there seemed to be a bias in protecting the scraggly oak tree on the neighbor's property. He said however it was a perfectly fine project.

Chair Eiref seconded the motion noting the project has a nice, simple feel and he thought it was great they were keeping a parking space in the rear.

Commission Action: M/S Bressler/Eiref to approve the item as recommended in the staff report.

1. Make a finding that the project is categorically exempt under Class 3 (Section 15303, "New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures") of the current CEQA Guidelines.
2. Make findings, as per Section 16.82.030 of the Zoning Ordinance pertaining to the granting of use permits, that the proposed use will not be detrimental to the health, safety, morals, comfort and general welfare of the persons residing or working in the neighborhood of such proposed use, and will not be detrimental to property and improvements in the neighborhood or the general welfare of the City.
3. Approve the use permit subject to the following **standard** conditions:
 - a. Development of the project shall be substantially in conformance with the plans prepared by Chris Spaulding Architect, consisting of seven plan sheets, dated received August 12, 2014, and approved by the Planning Commission on August 18, 2014, except as modified by the conditions contained herein, subject to review and approval by the Planning Division.
 - b. Prior to building permit issuance, the applicants shall comply with all Sanitary District, Menlo Park Fire Protection District, and utility companies' regulations that are directly applicable to the project.
 - c. Prior to building permit issuance; the applicants shall comply with all requirements of the Building Division, Engineering Division, and Transportation Division that are directly applicable to the project.
 - d. Prior to building permit issuance, the applicant shall submit a plan for any new utility installations or upgrades for review and approval by the Planning, Engineering and Building Divisions. All utility equipment that is installed outside of a building and that cannot be placed underground shall be properly screened by landscaping. The plan shall show exact locations of all meters, back flow prevention devices, transformers, junction boxes, relay boxes, and other equipment boxes.
 - e. Simultaneous with the submittal of a complete building permit application, the applicant shall submit plans indicating that the applicant shall remove and replace any damaged and significantly worn sections of frontage improvements. The plans shall be submitted for review and approval of the Engineering Division.

- f. Simultaneous with the submittal of a complete building permit application, the applicant shall submit a Grading and Drainage Plan for review and approval of the Engineering Division. The Grading and Drainage Plan shall be approved prior to the issuance of grading, demolition or building permits.
- g. Heritage trees in the vicinity of the construction project shall be protected pursuant to the Heritage Tree Ordinance.

Motion carried 6-0 with Commissioner Kadvany absent.

D2. Public Utility Easements and Emergency Vehicle Access Easement

Abandonment/Greenheart Land Co./721-881 Hamilton Avenue: Consideration of an abandonment of multiple public utility easements (PUE) and an emergency access easement (EAE) to determine whether the proposed abandonments are consistent with the City's General Plan. The request is associated with the development of a new 195-unit multi-family residential complex at the site. ([Attachment](#))

Staff Comment: Senior Planner Chow said this request was part of a multi-step process with the first step having been the resolution of intent to abandon the public utility easements (PUEs) and the emergency access easement (EAE). She said the Commission was now being asked to consider whether the intended removals were compliant with the General Plan. She said the Commission's recommendation would be forwarded to the City Council for the September 23 Council meeting for final action. She said the removal of the easements was to allow for the redevelopment of a multi-family project.

Public Comment: Mr. Steve Pierce, Greenheart Land Co., said originally there were 21 parcels on 6.5 acres. He said there had been three streets that stubbed through the property. He said in about 2000 the City elected to abandon those streets and those became the properties of the adjacent property owners but the PUEs and EAE were retained. He said their purchase of these 21 parcels and the subsequent rezoning from M1 to high density housing made the PUEs and the EAE unnecessary. He said their development would be served by utilities located in Hamilton Avenue. He said West Bay Sanitary District has requested an easement off the half of Windermere Avenue owned by this project with the other half of Windermere owned by Mt. Olive Church. He said they would provide the Church an easement as well. He said the PG&E easement that was not related to the requested PUEs' abandonment held an old gas pipeline that was being required to be abandoned as a condition of the Facebook occupancy permit. He said the PUEs they were discussing have no utilities.

Chair Eiref said he thought there was a comment that Facebook would need an easement through the subject property. Mr. Pierce said that Facebook utilities would be located off the two streets it faced and not through this property. Chair Eiref read the reference in the staff report to the existing 30-foot PG&E easement along Sevier Avenue to serve Facebook West Campus. Mr. Pierce said that easement was recently rewritten to provide a 30-foot PG&E easement along Sevier Avenue that would be maintained until it was abandoned.

Chair Eiref closed the public hearing.

Commission Action: M/S Onken/Strehl to approve the item as recommended in the staff report.

1. Make a finding that the proposed abandonment is categorically exempt under Class 5 (Section 15305, "Minor Alterations in Land Use Limitations") of the current California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines.
2. Adopt Resolution No. 2014-02 determining that abandonment of the public utility easements and emergency access easement on 721-851 Hamilton Avenue is consistent with the General Plan (Attachment C).

Motion carried 6-0 with Commissioner Kadvany absent.

Commissioner Ferrick commented that she did not have expertise in this area and her vote was based on her study of the staff's recommendation and their consultation with the utilities involved.

E. REGULAR BUSINESS

- E1. Architectural Control/612 College, LLC/612 College Avenue:** Request for architectural control to demolish a single-family residence and detached garage/warehouse building, and construct a total of four new residential units within two three-story structures in the SP-ECR/D (El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan) zoning district. As part of the development, the following four heritage trees are proposed for removal: two cedar trees in poor condition along College Avenue, one multi-trunk elm in poor condition along the Alto Lane frontage, and one coast live oak in good condition at the middle of the parcel. ([Attachment](#))

Staff Comment: Senior Planner Rogers said a colors and materials board was at the dais for the Commission's review. He said correspondence from Jasper and Connie Chan, property owners of 620 College Street, the left side adjacent property to the subject property, had been received that day. He said the letter noted concerns about density and the number of units, the community feel, the aesthetics, and privacy impacts to their property. He said he was able to email briefly with the Chans before the meeting and mentioned to them that the Specific Plan required a greater setback on their property side than the previous R-3 zoning had with an increase from 10 feet to 20 feet as well as a greater limit on façade heights than with the previous zoning. He said he was not sure if the neighbors were looking at the applicants' most current plan and so he noted to the Chans that the applicants have proposed a number of trees in the backyard to provide mutual screening. He noted that this was the first completely new project under the Specific Plan. He said Attachment D showed comparisons to the Specific Plan guidelines and standards and how the project meets those; and Attachment F which is the mitigation and monitoring program with fairly extensive requirements for projects in the Specific Plan area.

Public Comment: Mr. George Eshoo, 612 College, LLC, introduced the project architect, Mr. Mark Donahue.

Mr. Donahue said the project site was located near transit, retail services and the City government center. He said the Specific Plan floor area ratio (FAR) was 1.1 and their proposal was at .92 and the Plan allowable height was 38-feet maximum and theirs was at 31.3 feet.

He showed photographs of the area and surrounding buildings. He said that encroachments into the setbacks were allowed for building modulations to break down the massing and their maximum projection was five feet. He said that open space was part of the formulation of the project, which was for the community itself and to act as a buffer for neighbors. He said they would plant Japanese maple and crepe myrtle to soften the façade along Alto Lane. He showed their proposed materials palette. He made comparisons of similar height buildings in the area. He said the minor modulations break the roof line and they have created a series of vignettes in the building wall.

Commissioner Onken asked about the height of the development at the corner of El Camino Real and College Avenue noting it was gabled roof. Planner Rogers said he believed the previous zoning had a 35-foot height limit but he thought the development as a state density bonus was allowed a greater height.

Commissioner Ferrick asked about the choice of roofline. Mr. Donahue said it acted as a buffer between a very busy zone on El Camino Real and the neighborhood. He said rather than using the typical gable roof they wanted to incorporate something from the arts and crafts tradition that was not just mimicry. He said in addition to the neighborhood feel there was also a transition from the commercial area that was needed. He said in the arts and crafts tradition there were many roofs like this that were exotic and called attention to themselves.

Commissioner Combs asked about the number of living units. Mr. Donahue said they determined that the most balanced approach to the site was to have two buildings with two units each.

Ms. Adina Levin, Menlo Park, Transportation Commission, noted she was speaking as an individual. She said the proposal was a perfectly reasonable and appropriate project for the Specific Plan area in which it was located. She said there was a ballot initiative coming forward that raised questions about smaller projects, parking requirements, and location of balconies and open space. She asked if this project could be built if the initiative established new rules other than the Specific Plan.

Requested to respond by the Chair, Senior Planner Rogers said this project would comply with the pending measure and no changes would be required.

Chair Eiref closed the public hearing.

Commission Comment: Commissioner Strehl asked if this was rental or for sale housing. Mr. Eshoo said it would be rental property.

Commissioner Onken said there were decent sized balconies on the back of the buildings. He noted his support for balconies being counted as open space as it was encouraging more generous balconies on very tight sites like this one. He said there were challenges with this site as the balconies were facing into the neighborhood from which they were receiving messages of concern. He said the project was well designed, exactly what the downtown Specific Plan asked for, and he thought it was readily approvable.

Commissioner Bressler said project had too literal interpretation of the modulation required in the Specific Plan and needed some architectural improvements. He said some of the surfaces looked cheap and those could be improved.

Chair Eiref said this was the right place for housing. He said Commissioner Kadvany asked him to question the tiny windows as they were looking onto an alleyway. He said that might not be the best view but it was a semi-urban environment. He said he did not see anything about LEED requirements or vehicle charging stations. He asked why 12-foot wide sidewalks would not be required of the project.

Senior Planner Rogers said the public right-of-way was under the Public Works Department's discretion, and it was their decision to not require the 12-foot sidewalk. He said the thought process behind their decision, as he understood it, was that because this was the last project in this area of the Specific Plan and was buffered by an alley and the yogurt store property (which was not considered likely soon to turnover and thus be required to upgrade its sidewalk), that to require a 12 foot sidewalk would create two totally different size sidewalks between the single-family residential district and this project. He said the Plan requires LEED silver certification or alternate compliance as well as electric car charging for certain developments.

Chair Eiref asked if they only had to meet LEED silver standards or get certification. Planner Rogers said as it stood the applicant would need to get the project fully LEED silver certified. He said the Plan does allow the City to set up an outside auditor program for developers who do not want to go through the full certification process so the City would have assurances that the project met the level of LEED standards being required. He said that program was not set up now but he thought it would be a good program to get in place. Chair Eiref asked about the new state energy standards that were put into place in July and whether they superseded LEED Silver standards. Planner Rogers said he understood that California standards were such that many properties were getting pretty close to LEED requirements because of them.

Commissioner Combs said he understood the concern of the neighbors as this project would be tall. He said he did not get the sense of a Craftsman style which was how the streetscape felt to him. He said this was a break from that but he did not think the modernization of that style actually worked.

Commissioner Ferrick said the plan design seemed optimally placed and she liked the smaller unit sizes. She said she did not get a Craftsman style feel from the design. She said to her it was a modern style with an unusual roof. She suggested that having longer windows for the stairwells might make the design more attractive.

Chair Eiref asked if there could be larger windows with some level of opaqueness. He said he did not think this project would impact the sunlight for the neighbors who expressed concern with the project.

Mr. Donahue said they could make adjustments to the windows and make them more spacious. He said he did not think it was necessary to frost them as the stairs were transiting right next to them.

Commissioner Bressler said he thought this was a too literal interpretation of the modulation required by the Plan and that it lacked imagination.

Commissioner Onken said the rendering showed a brick color and bright orange for the material. Mr. Donahue said the color in the rendering was far too dramatic. He said the system they were intending to use was of high quality. He said regarding modulation that was easy to adjust as well. He said they could go from straight running bond to something that had more variation. He said the red was a wood veneer and there would be a wood grain feel. He said there were myriad examples of this being used quite successfully.

Commissioner Bressler said he would like to see the same quality with this project as they were getting with the Haven Avenue project. He said the modulations were large and square, would stick out, and it just needed to be made better.

Commissioner Onken said the applicant was open to fenestration changes and possible materials changes. He asked if people wanted to approve the project or move to continue.

Commissioner Combs said he was concerned with saying that the applicant had taken the Specific Plan too literally as that seemed unfair.

Commissioner Bressler said this was the first new project under the Plan and he thought the project should provide the City with good architecture. He said high quality materials should be used.

Commissioner Strehl said this was not a style she liked and the applicant could make improvements particularly around the windows. She said however given the location of the development, which was not directly on El Camino Real, and in fact set back considerably, it would not be so predominate.

Commissioner Ferrick said that page G0007 showed a building with a flat roof that was slanted but not v-shaped with longer windows on the Alto Lane side, which she liked much better. She asked if the applicant would also be willing to make roof line changes.

Commissioner Onken moved to continue the item noting the FAR, site massing and plan scale were acceptable but for the project to come back with changes to the fenestration, materials and detailing. Chair Eiref seconded the motion.

Mr. Donahue said the two buildings were different because staff had given them direction that they had to distinguish between the two buildings. He said they were almost identical previously and the variations in color, roofline and materials were in response to direction from Planning staff. He asked if the Commission wanted the buildings to be consistent with each other or different.

Commissioner Strehl asked Senior Planner Rogers about the architect's comment. Senior Planner Rogers said that staff had given that direction as that was how the Plan was written. He said the standard was found under building breaks in the Plan. He said it states that building breaks shall be accompanied with major changes in fenestration pattern, material and color to have a distinct treatment for each volume. The project has a required building break at the middle and each has to meet the requirement found on page D2 of the standards and compliance worksheet. He said on either side of the break, buildings must have distinct fenestration pattern, material and color.

Commissioner Ferrick said the color change was notable and she thought would achieve that Plan goal. She said the fenestration was also different noting the bay windows were different and the windows on main part of home were different. She said with their request for longer fenestration and less unique roofline that they still would be different enough but not so different.

Commissioner Bressler said he thought the applicant should be required to do more than what was being asked and he did not think budget should be the reason why they would not do a better project.

Commissioner Onken said that his motion was to continue the item noting that the FAR, massing, site plan, height and scale were generally acceptable but there were concerns with the architecture including the fenestration, materials and detailing. Chair Eiref confirmed his seconding of the motion.

Commission Action: M/S Onken/Eiref to continue the item with the following direction:

- The proposed FAR (Floor Area Ratio), massing, site plan, height, and scale are generally acceptable, but the Planning Commission requests revisions to the project, focusing on fenestration, materials, and detailing.

Motion carried 4-2 with Commissioners Combs and Strehl opposing and Commissioner Kadvany absent.

F. STUDY SESSION ITEMS

- F1. R-4-S Compliance Review/Greystar GP II, LLC/3645-3665 Haven Avenue:** Study session to review a 146-unit, multi-family residential development on a 4.89-acre site relative to the development regulations and design standards of the R-4-S (High Density Residential, Special) zoning district. The Planning Commission's review is advisory only and will be taken into consideration as part of the Community Development Director's determination of whether the proposal is in compliance with the R-4-S development regulations and design standards. ([Attachment](#))

Staff Comment: Planner Mammarella said staff had no additional comments but the applicant had a presentation.

Public Comment: Mr. Randy Ackerman, Greystar GP II, Senior Development Director for the project, said Greystar was a national, privately held development investment and property management company focused specifically on multi-family communities. He said the 145-unit, market rate, multi-family community in the burgeoning Haven neighborhood was completely compliant with the R-4-S guidelines. He said there would be six separate yet fully integrated buildings that would respect neighbors, engage Haven Avenue and provide a central common area. He said the average unit size was 183 square feet although there were some larger two-bedroom and several three-bedroom family-oriented units. He said they expected to start construction in late 2014 or early 2015 with expected leasing in 2016. He said rents would be established after the project passed through construction. He said the site would be raised to meet the grade established by FEMA due to the flood plane.

Ms. Jessica Music, KTG Group, the project architects, said the project would be five residential buildings and one leasing building with an amenity center. She said the street frontage was relatively small for the size of the project and they were able to situate parking and garages away from pedestrian circulation. She said there were 72 garage parking opportunities, 74 parking space opportunities, and 104 open surface parking spaces. She said they worked with staff to build an attractive entryway. She showed images of the proposed project buildings and the landscape materials and palette.

Mr. Ackerman said the staff report indicated that the units in the buildings were accessed from interior hallways but each unit has individual entries from a common area. He said the staff report indicated that most of the units have balconies and there were only four units that would not have balconies. He said the comment was also made that the balconies seemed too small or too shallow. He said they thought the balconies were very well sized and would serve the residents and units very appropriately. He said the too small comment came from the way they were dealing with the common open space as in some instances the balconies were slightly less in depth than required, but in some cases only six-inches, to meet the private open space requirements as open space was covered elsewhere in the common area open space. He said rather than the metal trim proposed for the recessed windows they would use a different material.

Chair Eiref said some of the windows were described as metal and others as vinyl. Mr. Ackerman said they were all vinyl windows. Ms. Music said the amenity building would have more of a storefront window and those windows would be metal. She said all the residential windows would be a tan vinyl window.

Commissioner Combs asked the applicant to review the site and point out where access was restricted. Mr. Ackerman showed where the gates would be located on the project. He said they were proposing a gate where the street was shared with the St. Anton project.

Commissioner Ferrick asked about flooding and drainage. Mr. Ackerman said most of the buildings would be raised to an elevation of 12.0 and one at 11.7 which was above the FEMA flood elevation. He said they would have a series of catch basins, containment structures and piping that would bring water flows to the front of the project and a treatment area, then to the City's storm water system which then goes to the channel in the back. Commissioner Ferrick asked if there would be any permeable pavers in the surface parking. Mr. Ackerman said there would not be as and that they were accomplishing the permeability through the landscaping and storm water treatment areas.

Commissioner Onken said the neighboring property has a covenant against residential, day care and educational use because of some hazard. He asked about mitigation measures on their site. Mr. Ackerman said the adjacent St. Anton project was a 394-unit residential multi-family project. He said zoning adopted by the Council for this area included a number of mitigation measures and there had been a deed restriction on this property in one area against residential development. He said that deed restriction had been lifted by the County because they and the property owner had done cleanup. He said he did not know about the adjacent property.

Commissioner Onken asked about truck and traffic to the project, removal of on-street parking for a bicycle lane, and overnight parking. He said with the St. Anton project there was much

discussion about how to get people on and off the site in an area poorly served by transit. He asked about TDM, added bus routes and bicycle lanes. Senior Planner Chow said as part of this zoning district an environmental assessment looked at potential traffic impacts by the increased density of this project, the St. Anton project and a parcel at 3641 Haven Avenue. She said the St. Anton project was the first project in this zone to come forward and they were initiating the traffic mitigation with an additional right-turn lane at the intersection of Haven Avenue and Marsh Road. She said there would be improved sidewalks and a bicycle lane along Haven Avenue, a portion of which would be funded through these developments and with a grant awarded to the City of Menlo Park to carry out the extension of a bicycle lane through Haven Avenue to Redwood City. She said there were also improvements because of the Facebook project including a crosswalk at the Bedwell Park. She said if the Commonwealth project was approved there could be some potential sidewalk and crosswalk improvements at the Bayfront Expressway and Haven Avenue approach. She said Greystar would contribute to the improvements but the St. Anton project was initiating those improvements. She said there was an intent to remove on-street parking along Haven Avenue to accommodate a bicycle lane. She said currently overnight parking was allowed in this part of Menlo Park and that was something that could be reviewed as part of the residential use in this area.

Commissioner Onken asked about the determination to have six three-bedroom units and whether it was a way to use end locations. Mr. Ackerman said this did fit within some of the locations. He said they introduced them as there might be some use but they did not want to go too high on that unit size based on the market.

Commissioner Combs asked about affordable housing for this project. Senior Planner Chow said St. Anton chose to use the state density bonus law and there were some affordable units in that project. She said this project was in conformance with the zoning district and was not opting to use either the affordable housing overlay or the state density bonus law so there was no requirement for affordable housing.

Ms. Adina Levin said she was on the Transportation Commission but was representing herself. She said housing near the Facebook project would optimally be used by Facebook employees lessening demands on transit infrastructure. She said she supported the creation of bicycle paths and pedestrian crosswalks and the extension of a bicycle lane into Redwood City. She said her major concern for the population that would be attracted to these sites was that the closest supermarket was just under a mile away but the route over the freeway owned by Caltrans was not hospitable for bicyclists and pedestrians. She said CEQA did not help with that situation and if there was not a legal requirement there was a moral requirement to work as a City with Caltrans for a safer way to get over this freeway area. She suggested that parking might be unbundled if some couples were car light. She said that palm trees did not provide shade and suggested looking at native species that would provide shade.

Commissioner Onken asked what was needed to make the route safe. Ms. Levin said the starting place was with the Caltrans bicycle and pedestrian professional who was the interface with Caltrans to make bicycle and pedestrian improvements. She said staff could contact this person for a process to review a bicycle and pedestrian path and what potential improvements could be made to see what was possible and what it would cost. Commissioner Onken said obviously signalized bicycle and pedestrian crosswalks were needed at the on and off ramps. Ms. Levine said at Facebook there would be an underpass to help people get to amenities two miles away. She said there might be a long term plan for an overpass on the Redwood City

side that was not funded and a potential for the City of Menlo Park to work with the City of Redwood City on that. She said more than signals were needed at the on and off ramps due to the circular construction as drivers' view of bicyclists or pedestrians were blocked within the turns.

Senior Planner Chow said in response to a question from Chair Eiref that the environmental review for this project had been completed and this was a study session to look at compliance with the R-4-S zoning district. She said the circulation over the freeway for bicyclists and pedestrians was not a mitigation that could be added on but was a broader discussion that could continue with the General Plan update which was focusing on the M2 area. She said they were looking at mobility as part of that. She said in response to another question from Chair Eiref that no other Commissions would be involved with the proposed project and the Community Development Director would take the public and Commission's comments under consideration in making a determination on whether the proposal was in compliance with the R-4-S development regulations and design standards.

Chair Eiref closed the public comment period.

Commission Comment: Commissioner Strehl said she appreciated Ms. Levin's comments. She asked if this project would have a convenience store like the St. Anton project. Mr. Ackerman said it would not. She asked if they would consider it. Mr. Ackerman said they would not. Commissioner Onken said the St. Anton shop was only for residents and not for the public.

Commissioner Bressler said there was a tremendous opportunity for retail in this area with all of the housing and he suggested that whoever was leading the General Plan update should be made well aware of this possibility and make it happen.

Chair Eiref said he liked the overall look of the design. He asked about the stucco as it was bubbly and rough and asked if it would be hard to clean. He said the wood looked very fake. Ms. Music said the plaster throughout the site was mostly 20/30 finish and the material flanking the entries was smooth stucco with a 30/30 finish. She said the engineering wood was a premium material that would be used at the project entry corners, between the windows that turn the corner, and project entry points on Haven Avenue.

Commissioner Strehl said she agreed about the look of the materials and asked about the life span of those. Ms. Music said she did not know the exact life span and the manufacturer warranty but pointed out that the material has metal backing which would be very durable.

Commissioner Onken said the front façade created a very attractive entry. He said there was a wide range of fake wood and veneers some of which looked great and some which did not. He said he hoped there might be mixed-use allowed in the future in this zoning district. He suggested that rather than creating three-bedroom units that the applicant create units that could combine one and two-bedroom units as needed for larger units. He said there were a number of reasons why three-bedroom units were not wanted.

Commissioner Ferrick said overall she thought it was a good looking project. She said she liked the site plan, the setbacks, the amenities in the center, and the smaller units. She said she shared concerns with Ms. Levin regarding the need for residents to drive pretty far for basic things. She said it was a disappointment that the project did not have even one below market

rate housing unit. She said she was concerned with the amount of asphalt as water would be moved off this site and become others' problem. She suggested using more permeable materials.

Senior Planner Chow said the project could not cross property lines with water sheeting and all runoff would need to be contained onsite onsite for treatment before discharging to the City system. She said with the engineering for the project that it would actually reduce runoff.

Commissioner Combs said it was a nice project. He said for the record that there was a problem with these insular larger housing complexes and massive office complexes as it seemed to be creating an "Irvine on the Bay." He said the palm trees did not help stop that thinking.

Commissioner Bressler said the project was attractive and it complied with the regulations. He said they would have to find ways through the General Plan update process to make this area more of a community. He said it was better if people did not have to cross the freeway.

Chair Eiref said he thought it was an attractive project. He said he had some concern with the materials but thought the materials board helped alleviate that concern. He agreed with the concerns about transit and safety, and saw that those matters needed to be addressed through the General Plan update. Commissioner Strehl added they need to be addressed through the Transportation Commission as well.

Commissioner Ferrick said she would agree that the project complied with the R-4-S development regulations and design standards. Chair Eiref asked if an informal vote was needed on that. Senior Planner Chow said she heard general consensus that the project complied with the zoning but heard some comments and interest in changes to the trees and landscape, changes in materials for permeability and less asphalt, and the wood material. Chair Eiref commented on the palm trees which he thought had a more Hollywood look. Planner Mammarella pointed out that the rendering did not show the street and other trees.

Mr. Ackerman said with the street trees and all the landscape trees they were adding that the palm trees were added at the end as an accent for the gateway to the project. He said regarding the paving permeability that all storm water would be contained onsite and then treated before being released into the City's system. He said the parking was de-bundled separate from the residential units. He said they have 146 bicycle parking spaces and 22 more visitor bicycle parking spaces. He said they were working with St. Anton on the bicycle pathways.

Commissioner Ferrick said she would like her concern about water runoff disregarded as it had been addressed by Senior Planner Chow and Mr. Ackerman.

The Planning Commission's review was advisory only and will be taken into consideration as part of the Community Development Director's determination on whether the proposal is in compliance with the R-4-S development regulations and design standards.

G. COMMISSION BUSINESS

There was none.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:17 p.m.

Commission Liaison: Thomas Rogers, Senior Planner

Recording Secretary: Brenda Bennett

Approved by the Planning Commission on September 22, 2014.