



PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

Regular Meeting
February 9, 2015 at 7:00 p.m.
City Council Chambers
701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, CA 94025

CALL TO ORDER – 7:00 p.m.

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

INTRODUCTION OF STAFF – Deanna Chow, Senior Planner; Justin Murphy, Assistant Community Development Director (Absent); Kyle Perata, Associate Planner

A. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

A1. Update on Pending Planning Items

- a. 700 Oak Grove Avenue (Fire Station #6) – City Council (January 27, 2015)

Senior Planner Chow noted that the City Council adopted Ordinances for the rezoning of properties at 700 Oak Grove and 1231 Hoover Street an amendment related to the PF Zoning District at its January 27 meeting.

- b. Economic Development Goals – City Council (January 27, 2015)

Senior Planner Chow noted that the City Council approved the Economic Development Goals, subject to a minor modification to highlight the City's ownership of the downtown parking plazas.

- c. ConnectMenlo (General Plan Update)
 - i. GPAC Meeting #4 (January 28, 2015)
 - ii. GPAC Meeting #5 (February 12, 2015)

Senior Planner Chow provided an update on the past and upcoming GPAC meetings, which focused on the preliminary draft M-2 Area preferred land use alternative and the Draft Existing Conditions Reports.

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

There were no public comments.

C. CONSENT

Senior Planner Chow noted that some modifications to the minutes had been sent by email and distributed to the Commission at the dais. She said there were no additions to the staff reports or comment cards received for items C2 or C3.

Commissioner Strehl said for the minutes of the January 12, 2015 meeting that she recalled the Commission had prioritized their recommended projects for the Capital Improvement Program. She said they had listed downtown parking structures first, then El Camino Real Specific Plan improvements for east-west traffic, and lastly single-family residential development advisory guidelines. Chair Eiref noted that discussion was on page 6 of the draft minutes.

Commissioner Combs said he recalled discussion on prioritizing and he specifically recalled Commissioner Kadvany's suggestion to de-prioritize single-family residential development advisory guidelines. Chair Eiref confirmed with Commissioner Strehl that she wanted the bullets of #2 and #3 reversed in order from how they were currently shown.

Commissioner Strehl moved to approve the minutes with the modifications noted and approve items C2 and C3.

Commissioner Kadvany said he wanted to pull item C2 for discussion.

Commissioner Strehl modified her motion to approve the minutes with the modifications previously sent by email and as discussed this evening and approve item C3. Chair Eiref seconded the motion.

C1. Approval of minutes from the January 12, 2015 Planning Commission meeting
([Attachment](#))

Commission Action: Strehl/Eiref to approve with the following modifications.

- Page 6, 1st paragraph, 1st line: Replace "Commissioner's" with "Commissioners"
- Page 6, 2nd paragraph, 1st line: Replace "Commission Kadvany" with "Commissioner Kadvany"
- Page 6, 5th paragraph, bulleted list: Switch the order of items #2 and #3

Motion carried 7-0.

C2. Sign Review/Bow Wow Meow/654 Santa Cruz Avenue: Request for sign review for a new awning that would feature greater than 25 percent of the sign area in a bright orange color. In addition, the sign graphics would be located on the angled (non-vertical) portion of the awning. The signage would be located on an existing building in the SP-ECR/D (El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan) zoning district. ([Attachment](#))

Commissioner Kadvany asked for this item to be pulled from the consent agenda for discussion.

Staff Comment: Planner Perata said staff had no additions to the staff report.

Public Comment: Mr. Mitchell Bearg, business owner, said the awning was part of the business' branding. He said that big trees in front and on the side blocked the storefront from view. He provided the Commission with samples of the logo and the color orange used.

Commissioner Strehl asked if the orange for the awning was the same as the orange on the sign. Mr. Bearg said it was as close as they could get to with the products from Sunbrella.

Commissioner Kadvany asked if they had talked to other store owners and managers about the proposed awning. Mr. Bearg said he had talked to some managers and store owners and had not gotten any negative reaction. He said he was not able to get the attention of every manager or store owner about the proposed awning. He said his ongoing goal was to create an appealing storefront and streetscape.

Ms. Fran Dehn, Chamber of Commerce, said she had visited nearby businesses and found support for this proposed change. She noted recent color changes downtown such as Cheeky Monkey and Suzie's Cakes were liked by downtown merchants as they created a more lively-looking street façade.

Commissioner Onken moved to approve as recommended in the staff report. Commissioner Ferrick seconded the motion.

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

1. Make a finding that the project is categorically exempt under Class 1 (Section 15301, "Existing Facilities") of the current CEQA Guidelines.
2. Make a finding that the sign is appropriate and compatible with the businesses and signage in the downtown area, and is consistent with the Design Guidelines for Signs.
3. Approve the sign review request subject to the following **standard** conditions of approval:
 - a. Development of the project shall be substantially in conformance with the plans prepared by Brandon Silkscreen, dated received February 3, 2015, consisting of two plan sheets and approved by the Planning Commission on February 9, 2015, except as modified by the conditions contained herein, subject to review and approval of the Planning Division.
 - b. The applicant shall comply with all West Bay 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 applicant shall comply with all requirements of the Building Division, Engineering Division, and Transportation Division that are directly applicable to the project.

Motion carried 7-0.

C3. Architectural Control/Pauline Schley/2700 Sand Hill Road: Request for approval for architectural control for exterior modifications to the main entrance of an existing office building in the C-1-C (Administrative, Professional and Research District, Restrictive) zoning district, including the addition of new building coverage for an entry awning.
([Attachment](#))

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

1. Make a finding that the project is categorically exempt under Class 1 (Section 15301, "Existing Facilities") of the current California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines.
2. Adopt the following findings, as per Section 16.68.020 of the Zoning Ordinance, pertaining to architectural control approval:

- a. The general appearance of the structure is in keeping with the character of the neighborhood.
 - b. The development will not be detrimental to the harmonious and orderly growth of the City.
 - c. The development will not impair the desirability of investment or occupation in the neighborhood.
 - d. The development provides adequate parking as required in all applicable City Ordinances and has made adequate provisions for access to such parking.
 - e. The property is not within any Specific Plan area, and as such no finding regarding consistency is required to be made.
3. Approve the architectural control request subject to the following **standard** conditions of approval:
- a. Development of the project shall be substantially in conformance with the plans prepared by AP+I Design, dated received January 22, 2015, consisting of six plan sheets and approved by the Planning Commission on February 9, 2015 except as modified by the conditions contained herein, subject to review and approval of the Planning Division.
 - b. The applicant shall comply with all West Bay 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 applicant 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 of the Planning, Engineering and Building Divisions. Landscaping shall properly screen all utility equipment that is installed outside of a building and that cannot be placed underground. The plan shall show exact locations of all meters, back flow prevention devices, transformers, junction boxes, relay boxes, and other equipment boxes.
 - e. Heritage trees in the vicinity of the construction project shall be protected pursuant to the Heritage Tree Ordinance.

Motion carried 7-0.

D. PUBLIC HEARING

There were none.

E. REGULAR BUSINESS

There were none.

F. COMMISSION BUSINESS

There were none.

G. INFORMATION ITEMS

G1. ConnectMenlo/City of Menlo Park: ConnectMenlo (General Plan and M-2 Area Zoning Update) Status Update ([Attachment](#))

Senior Planner Chow said this was an informational item to update the Commission on the status of the General Plan and M-2 Area Zoning Update. She said the Commission had met in a joint session with the City Council on the guiding principles to follow and next would meet with them on land use and preferred alternatives for the M-2. She said the Existing Conditions Report was being circulated for comment which was requested by February 19. She said that report provides an overview of land use, economics, circulation and community character.

Commissioner Onken commented on the unusual uses being proposed in the M-2 recently such as a high school and that much of the area was being purchased by Facebook. He said the upcoming plan might be obsolete by the time it was adopted.

Commissioner Strehl said that Facebook bought the Prologis site over the weekend. She said upon her inquiry that staff had indicated that Facebook was participating in the GPAC meetings.

Commissioner Kadvany said he thought the consultant had captured the joint session well. He said the Council spent time on the wording in the document prepared by the consultant at its next meeting which he thought weakened the meaning of what had been said.

Responding to a question from Chair Eiref about Belle Haven participation, Senior Planner Chow said that there has been increased participation by community members. She said in reply to Commissioner Strehl that in addition to online noticing there had been some bilingual notices mailed.

Commissioner Kadvany said in reference to things happening quickly in the M-2 and what the Commission's role was that this was not just a process about buildings but about other projects that could happen in Belle Haven. He said multiple outcome planning was the goal and upgrades such as the grocery store, the pharmacy, and the bike path on the Dumbarton should be tied to the development occurring. He said these were talked about in the Existing Conditions Report. He said the Planning Commission and City Council needed to fight for the best outcomes.

Commissioner Bressler said he was on the GPAC and that at their last meeting he had noted the City was making the same mistake they had made on the Specific Plan, which was to say what was wanted but not how to get what was wanted. He said for instance that development agreements helped get what was wanted. He said the City was rushing to get things done.

Senior Planner Chow said the concept of community benefits was weaved throughout all of the discussion on development and the potential of development. She said they have a list of

benefits drawn from community members. She said at an upcoming workshop they would look at identifying the priorities based on the anticipated revenues.

Commissioner Onken said if there were going to be community benefits for development in the M-2 that consistent rules had to be established, which would encourage development because of its certainty.

Commissioner Kadvany said the framing of the distribution of benefits from developer to community had to be developed by the City.

Commissioner Combs asked for a copy of the Existing Conditions Report. Senior Planner Chow said she would provide a hard copy to any of the Commissioners who wanted one. Chair Eiref noted that the report was online.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Staff Liaison: Senior Planner Chow

Recording Secretary: Brenda Bennett

Approved by the Planning Commission on March 9, 2015