Planning Commission



REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Date: 4/20/2020 Time: 7:00 p.m.

GoToWebinar.com - ID #228-837-467

A. Call To Order

Chair Andrew Barnes introduced staff person Leo Tapia. Mr. Tapia indicated he would act as the meeting clerk and provided information on procedures and mechanics for participation in the online public meeting.

Chair Andrew Barnes called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

B. Roll Call

Present: Andrew Barnes (Chair), Chris DeCardy, Michael Doran, Larry Kahle, Henry Riggs (Vice Chair), Michael Tate

Absent: Camille Kennedy

Staff: Kaitie Meador, Senior Planner; Leigh Prince, Assistant City Attorney; Corinna Sandmeier, Senior Planner

C. Reports and Announcements

Senior Planner Corinna Sandmeier said the City Council at its April 21, 2020 meeting would hear the 11 Greenwood Place project that was approved by the Planning Commission on March 23, 2020 for a new two-story home on a substandard lot. She said that project also included a variance request for the front setback from the City's Subdivision Ordinance that the Council had to consider for action. She said the Council would also discuss next steps for the Belle Haven Community Center and Library project. She said that Commissioner Camille Kennedy emailed that she would not be in attendance for this evening's Planning Commission meeting

Commissioner Chris DeCardy asked how staff was addressing inequity for those without internet service related to public access to the meetings. Planner Sandmeier said in response to an earlier comment staff received about those who only had audio access to the meetings staff would read written comments not included in the staff report in full rather than just showing them on the screen.

Commissioner Michele Tate asked about additional steps made to make community members aware of meetings. Planner Sandmeier noted that notifications for projects are mailed to those within a 300-foot radius of a subject property and include a published legal notice in the newspaper. She said notices and agendas were posted online and people could request to receive notice whenever a new agenda was posted. Commissioner Tate said her question was guided toward Belle Haven as a number of persons there did not have internet access.

Commissioner Michael Doran noted his question at the last Commission meeting as to whether the City was accepting new building permit applications. He asked if the City was now accepting new

applications or whether a schedule was available as to when they would be. Planner Sandmeier said she thought they were looking at starting with smaller permit applications such as encroachment permits or water heater permits. Commissioner Doran commented that many people's livelihoods depended on getting back to work. He said once the quarantine situation was better that the faster people could get back to work the better off everyone would be.

D. Public Comment

Mr. Tapia referred to the green hand icon to be used by those wanting to speak. He noted that there were no attendees showing at this time.

Chair Barnes read the agenda item.

Chair Barnes closed the item as there were no speakers.

E. Consent Calendar

E1. Approval of minutes from the March 23, 2020, Planning Commission meeting. (Attachment)

ACTION: Motion and second (DeCardy/Henry Riggs) to approve the Consent Calendar consisting of the minutes from the March 23, 2020 Planning Commission meeting; passes 6-0-1 with Commissioner Kennedy absent.

F. Public Hearing

F1. Use Permit/Ruchi and Rajeev Goel/930 Hermosa Way:

Request for a use permit to demolish an existing one-story, single-family residence and detached garage, and construct a new two-story residence and detached accessory dwelling unit on a substandard lot with regard to lot width in the R-E (Residential Estate) district. **Continued to a future meeting by the applicant**

F2. Use Permit and Architectural Control/R. Tod Spieker/1466 San Antonio Street:
Request for use permit for excavation to a depth of greater than 12 inches within the required front and side setbacks associated with revised/reconstructed retaining walls, and architectural control to approve exterior modifications to an existing multi-family residential building in the R-3 (Apartment) zoning district. (Staff Report #20-022-PC)

Chair Barnes outlined the process for hearing the item.

Staff Comment: Senior Planner Kaitie Meador said she had no updates to the item.

Applicant Presentation: Gauri Gupte, Edwin Bruce Associates Architects, introduced Edwin Bruce. Ms. Gupte said the remodeling project consisted mainly of replacing windows and adding new trim. She said the walkway from the sidewalk on San Antonio Street to the building was repaved and walls were added to each side of it. She said when they started the application process some improvements were permitted and carried out such as the fence wall between the subject and neighboring property.

Commissioner Larry Kahle said the staff report noted vertical wood siding under the windows and the photos showed horizontal wood siding. He asked if that was an error or if the siding would be

replaced in the future. Mr. Bruce said he was looking at a picture on their cover page and the panels under the windows had horizontal lap siding. Ms. Meador said that should have read horizontal. Commissioner Kahle confirmed with Mr. Bruce that all the work was already completed. Commissioner Kahle noted the parking below a soft story building and asked if an engineer had looked at this for any potential seismic upgrades to strengthen the building. Mr. Bruce said he had been an architect for the property owners for several years and to his knowledge that had not occurred. Kevin Livingston, Spieker Companies, said no structural engineer had looked at the carport.

Chair Barnes said the staff report indicated the improvements had already been completed prior to seeking approval. He asked how that transpired. Mr. Livingston said retrofit windows were installed to replace single-pane aluminum windows, which was step one. He said to remedy a couple of windows that went from floor to ceiling in the living room that included the lap siding mentioned to bring them 24-inches up off the finished floor level. He said next the building was painted. He said the walkway and fence that were wooden were rotting as the wood was against the dirt and those were replaced with the stucco walls for the walkway. He said in reply to Chair Barnes that the previous owner did some upgrade work. He said Spieker Companies did the window work. Chair Barnes asked why with its extensive property management expertise the firm did not get the proper permitting for the work. Mr. Livingston said it was their understanding that retrofit windows did not require removal of any structural or exterior weatherproofing materials and thus did not require a permit. He said regarding the walkway and below the 12-inch depth that an existing wood pathway at the front of the building, which structurally was not holding material back as the wood was rotting was replaced with the CMU (concrete masonry unit) build block. He said they did not think retrofit windows required a permit as they were not breeching any of the building weatherproofing. He said regarding the CMU walls the height of them and the area they were located they thought constituted same-as replacement of the wood fence.

Chair Barnes opened the public hearing and closed it as there no speakers.

Commission Comment: Commissioner Kahle said the changes were fairly minor and if the 12-inch excavation and cosmetic work had come before them prior to completion it would have been straight forward. He said the request now was coming as a violation especially with the extra unit that was included and he thought the work should meet a higher bar. He said he was concerned that the building was not seismically safe. He proposed adding a condition that the property owners have a licensed structural engineer do a seismic study. He said the condition would not require the work recommended by that study be done but to provide information to the property owners so they could look at doing the work to ensure safety in the event of an earthquake. Mr. Livingston said that they would be open to doing such a study.

Commissioner Kahle moved to approve with an added condition that a structural engineering study be done of the building to evaluate the soft story for seismic safety. Commissioner Riggs said he hesitated to add a condition as the improvements although done without proper permitting were acceptable and a benefit to the community. He said as Mr. Livingston was agreeable to the condition proposed that he would second the motion.

Chair Barnes said an engineering study on the soft story was a public good and he could support the motion.

ACTION: Motion and second (Kahle/Riggs) to approve the item with the following modification; passes 6-0-1 with Commissioner Kennedy absent.

- 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 California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines.
- 2. Make findings, as per Section 16.82.030 of the Zoning Ordinance pertaining to the granting of use permit, that the proposed excavation into the required yard 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. 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.
- 4. Approve the architectural control and use permit subject to the following **standard** conditions:
 - a. Development of the project shall be substantially in conformance with the plans prepared by Edwin Bruce Associates Architects, consisting of 11 plan sheets, date stamped April 13, 2020, and approved by the Planning Commission on April 20, 2020, 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.
- 5. Approve the architectural control and use permit, subject to the following project-specific condition:
 - a. The applicant shall conduct a structural analysis of the building and provide a report for review and approval of the Planning and Building Divisions prior to building permit issuance and resolution of the code enforcement case.

G. Study Session

G1. Study Session/Andrew Morcos/165 Jefferson Drive: Request for a study session review for a future application for a use permit, architectural control, environmental review, and BMR agreement. The proposal includes demolition of an existing 24,300- square-foot office building and redevelopment of the site with approximately 158 multi-family dwelling units and a 14,422-square-foot commercial space with an above grade, three-story parking garage integrated into the proposed eight-story building, located in the R-MU-B (Residential Mixed Use, Bonus) zoning district. The proposal includes a request for an increase in height, density and floor area ratio (FAR) under the bonus level development allowance in exchange for community amenities. The proposal would also utilize the density bonus provisions in the BMR Housing Program, which allows density and FAR bonuses, and exceptions to the City's Zoning Ordinance requirements when BMR units are incorporated into the project. (Staff Report #20-023-PC)

Staff Comment: Planner Meador noted that two written comments had been received. Chair Barnes confirmed those would be read under public comment.

Questions of Staff: Commissioner Kahle asked if the location of the paseo on the east side was prescribed or if there was some flexibility about its location. Planner Meador said she believed it was required on the side shown and it had to be shared by this property and the neighboring property. She said ConnectMenlo indicated where and on what properties paseos should be.

Commissioner DeCardy said the staff report on the top of page 3 said: Staff has reviewed the project components and determined that the preliminary application is complete. He asked what the date was for that. Planner Meador said that date was based on the original submittal date of the SB330 preliminary application. She said that occurred the end of January 2020 and she could look up the exact date. Commissioner DeCardy said that was not necessary.

Commissioner Riggs said SB330 put heavy restrictions on design review. He asked if design review was more extensive for bonus level development based on City code. Planner Meador noted that Assistant City Attorney Leigh Prince was available if her own explanation was not full enough. She said bonus level projects would be subject to design review the same as base level projects. She said SB330 had restrictions on the Commission requesting a reduction of the proposed project density. She said the Commission could still comment on design elements but those comments could not require a reduction in the density of the proposed building.

Chair Barnes noted on pages 11 and 12 of the staff report items listed for the Commission's discussion this evening. He asked about the one on density and the question: *Does the Planning Commission believe that the proposed project is generally appropriate for the site?* Planner Meador said under SB330 the Commission could not ask for a reduction of the proposed density. She said the Commission might look in general at height or such things rather than unit count and density while keeping in mind that height could impact density.

Chair Barnes asked for more detail about the questions under the topic of Building Modulations. Planner Meador said the applicant could request a use permit to modify any of the design standards. She said that this project might need some minor changes to the proposed modulations to meet the modulation requirements of the R-MU-B zoning district. She said the applicant could choose not to make those edits to meet the requirements for the modulations or could make a use permit request to modify those slightly. She said the question was whether the Commission thought the modulations met the intent of the modulation requirements as proposed and if it would be supportive of a use permit to modify them. She said she did not know if the applicant would want to pursue a use permit. She said staff noticed through preliminary review that there were a few changes that needed to be made to comply.

Chair Barnes referred to the topic of community amenities. He said there was a list of community amenities for the area. He asked if it was a strict understanding that something had to be on that list to be considered. He asked if there was a process for considering a community amenity that was not on the list. Assistant City Attorney Leigh Prince said within SB330 projects that an applicant was limited to the list that was in place at the time the completed application was submitted. She said that had to come from the resolution adopted by the City Council listing community amenities. She said the bullet point in the staff report she believed came from that community amenities list. She said they were looking at what the Commission wanted in terms of community amenities from those on the list.

Commissioner Kahle said page 10 of the staff report read: Several minor modulations are proposed along the Jefferson Drive and paseo frontages. These proposed recesses would not meet the minor modulation requirements and the design would need to be revised because these elements do not extend to the full height of the building, as required by the design standards. He asked staff to explain more fully. Planner Meador said the issue was the minor modulations were not extending to the full height of the building and currently were proposed to extend to the base height of the building. She said also they might need more clarification on the dimensions to confirm actually if the modulations were meeting all the requirements.

Applicant Presentation: Andrew Morcos, Senior Development Director for Greystar in Menlo Park, said Menlo Flats was his firm's fourth multi-family project in the Bayside area of Menlo Park. He said its 158 units were made up of small studios and four bedroom, four baths, with 21 affordable below market rate (BMR) units located onsite and equitably distributed throughout. He said over 5,400 square feet of publicly accessible open space was included and consolidated along the paseo. He said it exceeded the requirement by 46%. He said the project included over 14,000 square feet of commercial space on the ground floor street frontage and could contribute to the community amenity requirement. He said the paseo was to create a future connection between Constitution and Jefferson and had 232 bicycle parking spaces along it. He said the project was consistent with Menlo Park's environmental goals and would achieve 100% LEED Gold design standard and be powered by 100% renewable energy along with substantial EV charging opportunities.

Chair Barnes said he had asked through staff to have Greystar provide an overview of their Menlo Park projects either completed or in the pipeline.

Mr. Morcos said Greystar started its work in Menlo Park in 2013 along Haven Avenue. He said that project was completed in 2017 and had 146 units of one, two and three-bedroom units. He said the next project introduced since adoption of ConnectMenlo was Menlo Uptown. He said that would have 483 housing units with 441 of those multi-family rentals and 42 townhomes. He said target entitlement for that project was December 2020. He said the project Menlo Portal on Constitution and Independence was located between Menlo Gateway with 335 multi-family units and 36,000 square feet of commercial space. He said target entitlement for that project was also December 2020. He said Menlo Flats presented tonight at 165 Jefferson Drive had 158 housing units and 15,000 square feet of commercial space. He said the projects would provide over 1100 housing units.

Clark Manus, Heller Manus Architects, said the project would have 176 parking spaces with 138 residential and 38 commercial spaces. He said there was a two-foot grade interior and exterior difference for sea level rise. He showed slides of the different elevations. He then provided slides of the different floor level plans. He showed a plan of the private and public open space.

Karen Krolewski, PGA Design, provided information on the ground level landscape plan. She said the paseo would feature lush plantings including a robust canopy with low water use, bicycle parking, sculptural benches, pedestrian-scale light decorative paving, and location for public art.

Commissioner Doran said he understood that Greystar was a build and hold developer and operated its rental facilities. Mr. Morcos said that Greystar generally operated its holdings long term but whether they owned them during that period depended upon the development. Commissioner Doran noted AB1482 enacted the past fall that placed rent caps in California and eviction controls that would immediately apply to this project. He asked how that bill and others like it impacted their planning and their view of the desirability of California as an investment opportunity. Mr. Morcos said it was a bigger industry question on how it affected rental property owners. He said a few things could happen noting that rent control had shown to impact the quality of housing in the area where it had been enacted. He said the reason was landlords did not want to invest in their properties if they could not realize return on their investment. He said it artificially set a cap on rent and that of course affected an investment's performance. He said where it was allowed it could incentivize apartment owners to convert to condominiums, which exacerbated the housing crisis even more. He said Greystar was a rental manager, developer and owner so those laws impacted them and signaled a city or state's willingness to change the rules. He said changing rules in the middle of a process caused unintended consequences and caused issues with bringing housing to the Bay area.

Commissioner DeCardy asked if the 21 BMR units would be at the moderate income level. Mr. Morcos said those were at the low income level per the BMR requirements. Commissioner DeCardy referred to sheet A004D and said the view of the paseo with the adjoining property showed quite a drop-off. Ms. Krolewski said a guardrail would be needed on that edge about 42-inches high, somewhat transparent, perhaps a cable rail. She said in time that would probably be removed as other sites were raised. She said on that west side they also had a planting buffer about five feet wide with trees that would help break up that grade change.

Commissioner Riggs asked why the multitude of four-bedroom units was planned. Mr. Morcos said next door they had 483 units with a multitude of one-bedroom and some two- and three-bedrooms. He said Menlo Portal had 335 units with a similar mix with the majority one-bedroom. He said given the significant number of units coming on line around the same time they thought this was a perfect opportunity to diversity the unit mix. He said upward of 40% of people were in a shared home in that they have a roommate or another adult that they were not in a relationship with and these four-bedroom units could possibly satisfy a need for that type of renter. Commissioner Riggs said that was what he suspected and he thought it a fantastic idea and would make life affordable for a great number of people.

Commissioner Kahle confirmed that the project could not go underground because the base elevation was 10 feet. He asked how much they were raising it. Mr. Morcos said two-feet for sites this size. He said for the site next door, Menlo Uptown, they had to raise it an additional two feet or four feet. Commissioner Kahle said Menlo Uptown had stacked parking and this project had self-parking and asked what the reasoning was. Mr. Morcos said it was a matter of fitting the number of spaces they needed within that other project as it was higher density than this one would be. Commissioner Kahle asked if at some point whether stacked parking would allow the removal of one level of parking from this building. Mr. Morcos said they had not anticipated or looked at that. that and did not look at that. Mr. Manus said the footprint was so small and the maneuvering relatively tight so he did not think they would gain much doing that. He said also there were significant cost increases with a stacking system. He said when there was enough density, they were able to amortize stacked parking but this one was essentially half the size of the Menlo Uptown site. Mr. Morcos said the 14,000 square feet of commercial space required a significant amount of parking that was not conducive to stacked parking.

Chair Barnes opened the public hearing.

Public Comment:

Pamela Jones, Menlo Park, District 1, said the community amenities list was created in 2014 and approved in 2015. She said by the time this project was competed that amenities list was going to be significantly out of date. She said when these projects were complete in a couple of years that they would be living in an entirely different economy system than they were living in now. She said they probably would just be moving forward with economic recovery. She recommended increasing the number of affordable units at a minimum of 10%. She said in the past she always recommended 20 to 25%. She said they needed to begin thinking about the market for these apartments. She said if Facebook was finding that employees working from home worked than there might not be a thousand employees living in the District 1 building area. (Written comments were: Planning Commission and Staff, The Community Amenities List is based on a survey completed in 2015 and is severely out of date. I recommend the most

appropriate amenity is an increase of at least 10% the affordability of units. By the time these units are completed we will be in the middle of a significant down-turn in the economy. Respectfully, Pamela D Jones)

Planner Meador said one of the emails received was from Pamela Jones who had just spoken. Chair Barnes said Ms. Jones had made her points well this evening and the email did not have to be read.

Planner Meador said the next email was from Adina Levin and read it in its entirety.

- Dear Planning Commissioners, Menlo Together is a group of Menlo Park and Peninsula residents who envision a city that is integrated and diverse, multi-generational, and environmentally sustainable. Following are a few comments regarding the project proposal at 165 Jefferson Drive that you are reviewing this evening. We understand that because of SB330, the City of Menlo Park is limited in the scope of its discretion with regard to housing projects that fit the city's General Plan and Zoning. That said, there are several open issues with regard to this project that relate to Menlo Together's goals of housing affordability, sustainable transportation, and social equity.
 - ❖ Affordable housing and Community Amenities. The development is proposed to include 15% Below Market Rate housing units, in line with the city's inclusionary policy. The development is also required to offer community amenities in line with the proposal at the Bonus level of development. The City Council has set a preference for the R-MU-B zoning district, the City Council included a preference that additional affordable housing units be provided as the community amenity. Menlo Park has a major need for affordable housing, and we recommend that the Planning Commission prioritize affordable housing for the community amenity.
 - ❖ Paseo design walk-bike access and public space. We support the Staff report's good analysis and recommendations regarding the improvements to the Paseo to connect it to the public open space and commercial uses, and to connect to adjacent properties as they redevelop in the future. These improvements would help the Paseo do a better job of contributing to public access to amenities for city residents and encouraging healthy active transportation.
 - ❖ Parking and Transportation Demand Management. The development is proposed to have 158 apartments including 21 affordable homes with 138 car parking stalls, to be offered unbundled and 267 bike parking stalls. We used the TransForm Connect tool to analyze the transportation features of this project. The results of the analysis can be seen here: https://connect.greentrip.org/map-tool.php?p=258098 The GreenTrip analysis indicates that the building would generate 50% less driving and climate impact considering the affordable housing and unbundled parking, and with the addition of transit passes, carshare and bikeshare. Based on this analysis, we recommend that:
 - The residents should be provided with transit passes
 - The developer and city should work with SamTrans to ensure that the area has bus service, which can be improved in the current Reimagine SamTrans planning process
 - The developer should provide carshare and micromobility share (bike and/or scooter)

Thank you for your consideration, Adina Levin, for Menlo Together, https://menlotogether.org

Chair Barnes closed the public hearing.

Commission Comments: Commissioner Kahle noted the site was smallish at 60,000 square feet with a fairly dense project and maxed out as much as it could be. He asked if there were any caps built into the overall Menlo Park general plan that would prohibit this entire area from being maxed out in a similar manner. Planner Meador said they did have a maximum of residential units that were studied under the original ConnectMenlo Environmental Impact Report (EIR). She said she believed that was met with this project so any future housing projects would have to have a full EIR process. Ms. Prince said if a housing project went over the number of housing units studied through ConnectMenlo and identified in the General Plan not only would a full EIR be needed but a General Plan amendment as well.

Commissioner Kahle asked about the background of not requiring additional parking for BMR density bonus projects and if the rationale were the units were closer to mass transit or an assumption that extra cars were not needed for BMR tenants. Planner Meador said she did not know the entire background for the ordinance but knew it was offered as an incentive for an applicant to provide additional housing. She said the BMR units required parking. She said the additional market rate units they were allowed for providing BMR units were exempted from the overall parking requirement. Commissioner Kahle asked if it was assumed that the units would be closer to mass transit. Planner Meador said based on the ConnectMenlo plan they were trying to minimize parking for these sites and encourage other TMD plan measures to reduce the overall number of cars in general.

Commissioner Doran said the Commission was asked to discuss the appropriateness of the garage screening. He said there were a couple of elevations shown but he had not heard much about the proposed screening. Mr. Manus said along Jefferson Drive frontages there was only a small portion where the garage basically poked out into the paseo. He said that would become either a landscape element or a potential place for art. He said on the east and north they were trying to create uses against the garage, but where they could not that they were looking at some type of dense screening. He said on the east elevation it was really the flanking sides of the garage entrance where the garage was visible and on the north side that they were looking at putting significant landscape buffer against that edge. He said they would either be looking at some sort of screen, art activation or landscaping treatment. He said they were looking for feedback and they were trying everything they could to make sure the parking did not have any visible presence on any side of the project.

Commissioner Riggs said he was concerned about the glazing along the pedestrian level commercial space. He said transparency was addressed by having large expanses of glass, which was wonderful. He noted the instance of commercial space along El Camino Real with glazing similarly set back from the sidewalk, which might have been anticipated as display space but ended up being mostly posters. He asked if they had a plan such as tenant guidelines that would activate the glazing. Mr. Manus said having a tenant block the windows was far from any intent they were proposing. Mr. Morcos said they had not thought a lot yet about who the tenants would be. He said his preference would be to create an indoor / outdoor floor space especially with publicly accessible open space at the southeast corner of the site. He said glazing was not intended to be fogged or an obstruction of view.

Commissioner Riggs asked if they had envisioned what the commercial space could or could not be. Mr. Morcos said it depended on whether a portion of the space could be used toward their community benefit. He said that would involve Commission and community input on a proposed use. He said otherwise their intent was to be somewhat flexible especially with a huge shift in the market

now. He said a restaurant use or a retail use if those would satisfy the community amenity would be a big win for the project.

Commissioner Riggs said the underlying code for the R-MU-B indicated that commercial space would be supportive of the residential units. He asked to what degree that was decided already and if they were separating community benefits from project and zoning requirements. Planner Meador said ConnectMenlo envisioned a mix of live, work, and play spaces and staff had encouraged developers and applicants to incorporate a balance of commercial, office and residential to achieve that goal. She said they thought it was beneficial for the project to incorporate commercial space even if it were not part of the community benefit. She said the amenities list included retail. She said she noted in the staff report there was some question of whether that could be used as a benefit for multiple projects. She said staff was still in the process of reviewing the community amenities appraisals and would have to look into that further.

Chair Barnes said he looked at information on ConnectMenlo and found a table noting 4500 residential units at buildout and asked if that was the correct number and whether this project would hit that number. Planner Meador said she misspoke somewhat when she said with this project and the others that they were at the cap. She said they were not at the cap for the General Plan but they were at the cap for what was studied in the ConnectMenlo EIR and additional proposed residential units would need a full EIR but she did not think they were at the cap for the General Plan yet so a General Plan amendment was not needed yet. Replying further to Chair Barnes, Planner Meador said she did not think they were at the residential unit cap for the Bayside area under the General Plan but she would have to research to get exact numbers.

Ms. Prince said the proposed project in the EIR for ConnectMenlo studied the existing development potential for residential units, which was 150 units plus the proposed Bayfront area potential of 4500 residential units. She said the 4500 residential units seen in the General Plan were the additional units that were studied in the EIR.

Chair Barnes questioned what projects were being counted if the 4500 residential unit potential had been reached. Ms. Prince said Planning staff had prepared an extensive spreadsheet of all the projects that were included. She said she believed the Willow Village units were included. She said it was applications submitted that counted toward that cap. She said they could doublecheck and certainly get the Commission a copy of that spreadsheet.

Replying to Chair Barnes, Planner Meador said when a developer provided BMR units onsite they could add market rate units at a 1:1 ratio.

Chair Barnes asked how the applicant would conclude whether to add inclusionary BMR units or some other type of community amenity. Mr. Morcos said their understanding was that there was an appraisal process that established a dollar amount to be used for community amenities. He said they saw it as one list and included in that list was additional affordable units and that had a value associated with it. He said they were looking at what was the need of the community, what were most people asking for, what worked within the dollar amount that was requested and what would work within the project.

Replying further to Chair Barnes, Mr. Morcos said they would get a value from the appraisal process and City staff would help them assign a value to the affordable units. He said in their project they might not find that the latter value aligned with the project.

Chair Barnes said he thought BMR units were currently valued at \$274,000 and asked how that was determined. Ms. Prince said staff anticipated bringing a study through the Housing Commission and then Planning Commission to discuss that very thing. She said they had BAE look at how much it cost to produce a housing unit. She said that study also took into consideration that under the BMR ordinance a developer was allowed another market rate unit for every BMR unit provided. She said they were looking into how that played into the value of the additional. She said they should have more information on this in the future.

Commissioner Riggs asked if the harlequin paving pattern was expected to guide pedestrians and bicyclists. Ms. Krolewski said that the pattern was meant to be seen from the spaces above. She said when it started to expand across to the other site it would start to be read a bit more. She said it was intended to make the space more dynamic when you were walking through it as opposed to just doing a straight path through there. She said the shape of it was allowing for benches and seating areas to develop and pauses for pedestrians walking through there. Commissioner Riggs said that it would need to be more than just two colors of concrete paving to read at the pedestrian scale. He said it needed more attention but that was understandable at this stage. He noted the public space at the southeast corner noting that such public space tended to be judged on whether or not they were visually interesting and particularly on whether they were inviting. He said it would be great if this space had that sense of place as well as invitation.

Commissioner Riggs said the roof screen on a building could degrade the overall perception of a building if not handled with some consistency and design intent. He said it should be attractive on its own.

Commissioner Riggs said regarding the paseo and publicly accessible open space in general that at this point they were fine. He said he did not expect the paseo to be located next to retail space when the paseo location was defined as code and the retail space was defined by the building use and its frontage. He said in terms of form and layout that they looked fine. He said they discussed the commercial use some and the hope for active space. He said the Commission needed to have a better sense of whether they would consider restaurant or retail space to be a community amenity or something that served the building and its occupants and was consistent with base code for mixed use. He said at this point he did not have an opinion either way. He said in terms of architectural design and materials without having a close view at the pedestrian level he thought those were excellent. He said in terms of building modulations that literally following the design guidelines whether in ConnectMenlo or the Downtown Specific Plan was actually a risk. He said he thought this project addressed the intent of the modulation guideline guite well. He said he could support modifications of the guidelines if necessary to help the architecture move forward as intended by its designer. He said regarding garage screening that its visibility was fairly limited and at the paseo for the most part and part of the north side he thought the initial approach looked workable. He said it was challenging to have two or three levels on grade and elevated a couple of feet and there were downsides to having enclosed above grade parking. He said he thought the architects were approaching it well. He said he had no comments on density. He said regarding the overall approach that he thought it was quite successful.

Commissioner DeCardy said regarding overall approach that he too thought this would be a successful building. He said regarding the paseo and publicly accessible open space he would love the paseo to meet the definition of what he thought a paseo was, which was to be inviting of a leisurely stroll. He encouraged developing something that people would want to walk the length of the building and then turn and go somewhere else. He said he did not have an opinion on the commercial use and that they really needed to listen to the needs of the community if possible. He said regarding community amenity he agreed with comments from the public speakers that there

was such a need for affordable housing and encouraged looking at that to see if that would work for the developer to do. He said he liked all he had seen of the architectural design, materials, and building modulations. He said related to the issue with the building modulations that if they could address those to fit with what the City wanted to see that would be great and if not, they could to request changes, which he would be open to. He said he thought the garage screening was nicely discussed. He said regarding parking and TDM that he really appreciated the Menlo Together comments. He said where they were going with future transportation that they would need less parking. He said he was in favor of building for that future as it provided incentive for better public transportation and more people relying on it and getting a favorable feedback loop. He said that a robust TDM program was needed.

Commissioner Kahle said adding 1,100 units into the area was great. He said adding BMR units was a great factor and if more could be added that would be a better benefit. He said on the paseo he agreed that it could better integrate with the common open space. He said on the site plan the common space appeared adjacent to the paseo. He said looking at the rendering there was a lot of landscaping there and it was not clear if there was a direct connection to there. He said in general the paseo was going in the right direction but was better at its southeast corner than at the north end with a seven-story building adjacent to it. He said an offset there would help. He said the parking and the visibility were fine. He said on the commercial use that they were asked to weigh in on whether it was an important component. He said absolutely it was an important component to the project. He said having some commercial use there would reduce traffic and have more convenience. He said he would like to see whatever produced the greatest benefit for the immediate area whether that was pharmacy, retail, or food service, something that benefitted all the Greystar projects going in plus the Tide Academy and other places in the area that could use those services. He said he was less inclined to do a nonprofit in that area as he thought something that would serve the general area was much more useful. He said regarding the architecture he thought the articulation and modulation were very good and would work well with the other two Greystar projects. He said they were asked about the relief for the additional average height of four feet and that was a reasonable relief especially since the total overall height was 10 feet under the maximum allowed. He said regarding the general layout that the podium level with the swimming pool was on the eastside of the project which worked well with the paseo but he thought in the afternoon the whole area would be in shadow and its use would suffer for that. He said he would like to see attention paid to the solar access to that interior courtyard. He said overall it was a great project.

Commissioner Tate said she also liked the project but again as with other Greystar projects she thought there should be more BMR units. She said in this instance there would be community amenity and she said BMR units were a definite community amenity. She said she did not think having commercial space onsite was the intent when community amenity was written into ConnectMenlo. She said at that point it was what would serve the Belle Haven community and not the community that was blossoming in that area. She said a restaurant or mini-market there would really only serve the people who lived there. She said the Commission had discussed that on another project and had come to that conclusion. She said she supported all of Menlo Together's comments.

Commissioner Doran said the paseo could work better and it risked being dead space. He said if the commercial use was retail, he thought it would be great to locate some of it along the paseo. He said regarding what types of commercial use he was content to allow market forces decide that. He said if the need was to serve people in the building, he thought that was fine. He said regarding community amenity he preferred more BMR units as opposed to any retail or eating establishments. He said regarding architecture, design, materials and building modulations that he had no objections. He said regarding garage screening that he did not have enough information on whether

it was appropriate or not. He said the proposed density was appropriate to the site. He said he thought the overall approach was good and the project was really helping to alleviate the housing shortage in Menlo Park.

Chair Barnes said regarding community amenity he did not think that restaurant and tenant serving amenities were in the spirit of community amenities. He said among the list of retail and among the list of restaurants and coffee shops he would look very specifically for those that he could consider to be of greater good to the community as opposed to the 1100 Greystar units in the area. He said regarding the commercial use that he did not have an opinion if it was not to be a community amenity as then it should be whatever was needed to make the development successful. He said daycare was a strong public serving commercial use. He said he was fine with the average height going to what was proposed. He said he was fine with the reduction in parking associated with it. He said Greystar would have critical mass in the area to implement TDM measures. He said none of the trees shown on the landscape plan were on the City's list of heritage trees.

Commissioner Tate said the idea of a daycare for the commercial space was a great idea.

H. Informational Items

H1. Future Planning Commission Meeting Schedule

• Regular Meeting: May 4, 2020

Planner Sandmeier said at the May 4 meeting that the Transportation Division would provide updates to the Transportation Impact Analysis guidelines and then take those to the City Council for approval. She said they were being updated to match current state laws and the California Environmental Quality Act.

Commissioner Riggs asked whether a meeting would be held on May 11. Planner Sandmeier said the City Council at its April 21 meeting would get an update on the Belle Haven Community Center and Library project and staff would ask for Council direction on whether the Planning Commission should meet May 11 for that project.

Regular Meeting: May 18, 2020Regular Meeting: June 8, 2020

I. Adjournment

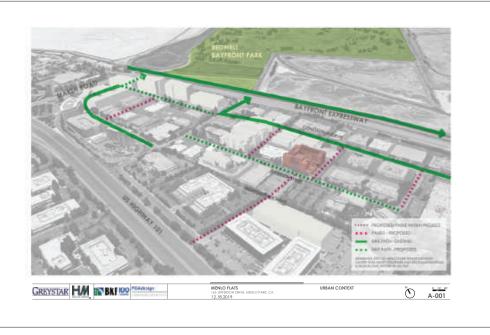
Chair Barnes adjourned the meeting at 9:35 p.m.

Staff Liaison: Corinna Sandmeier, Senior Planner

Recording Secretary: Brenda Bennett

Approved by the Planning Commission on May 18, 2020







Project information

Site area: 1.38 acres / 60,112 SF

Public open space: 5,487 SF (Paseo + Plaza)

Proiect Info

Multifamily units: 158 units (includes 21 proposed BMR units located onsite)

• Commercial: 14,422 SF (first 2 levels of Jefferson Dr. frontage)

• **Vehicular parking:** 176 (138 residential + 38 commercial)

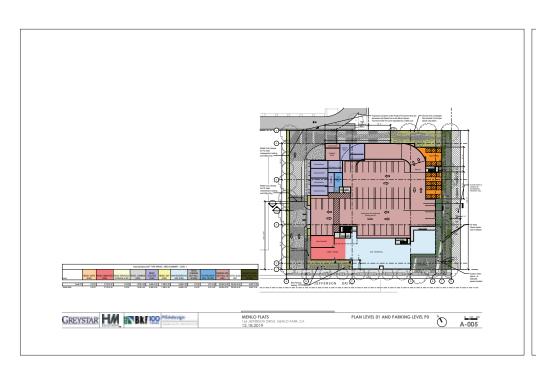
Bicycle parking: 232 (208 long-term + 24 short-term)

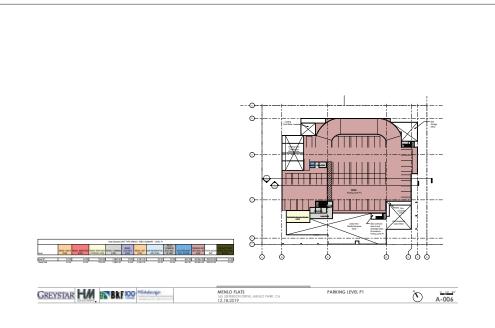


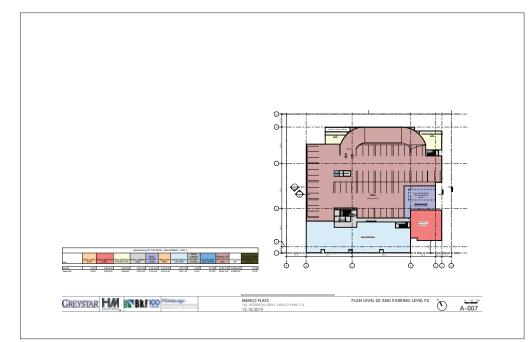


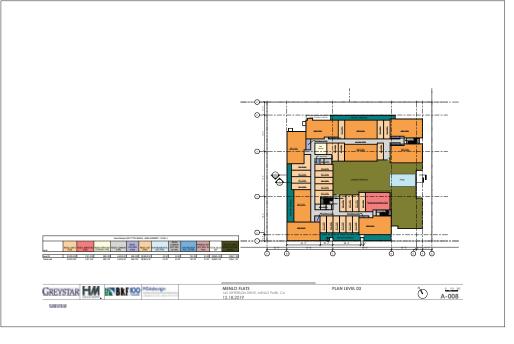


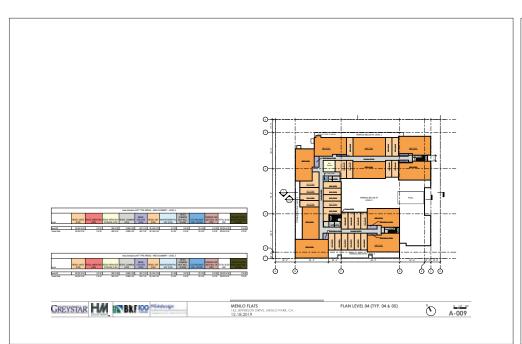


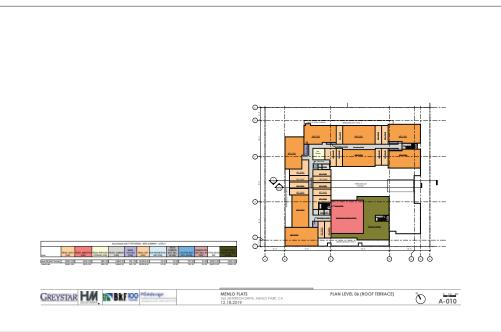


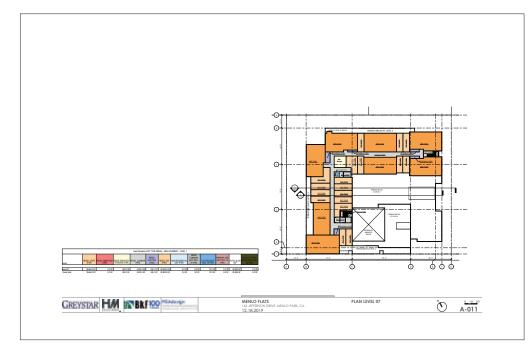


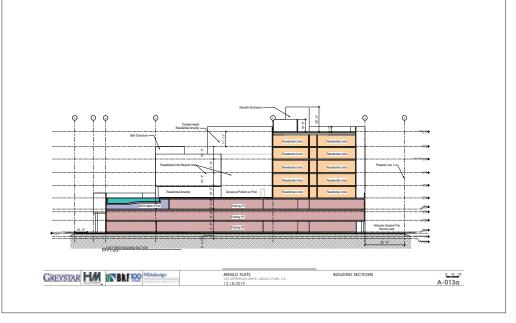


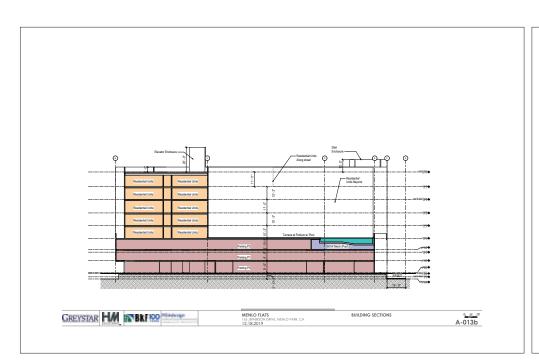


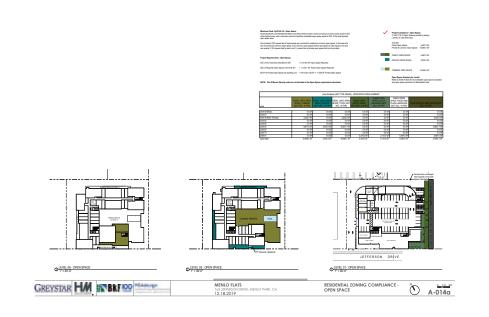


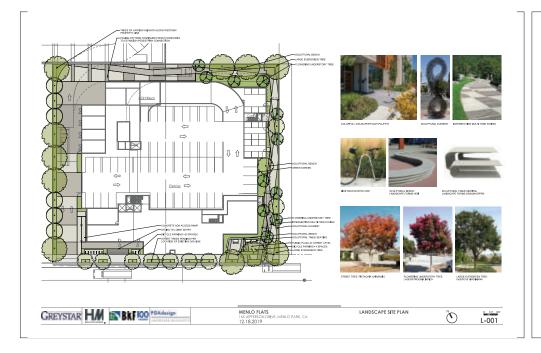








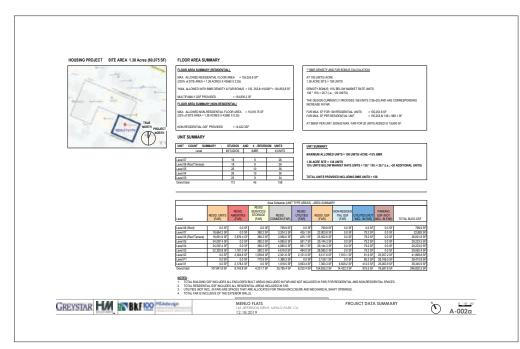


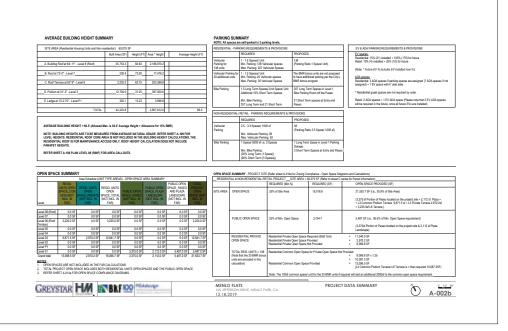


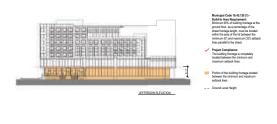


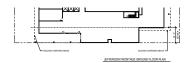




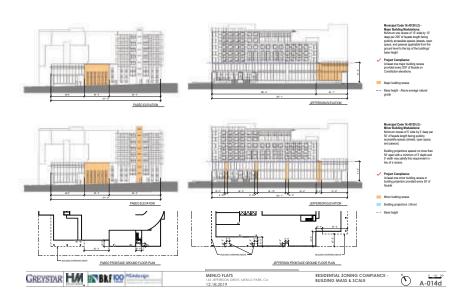


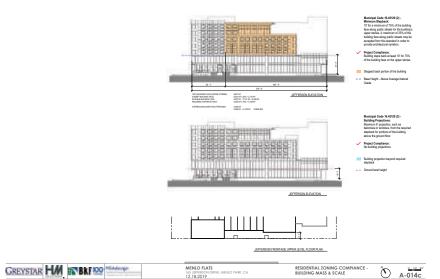


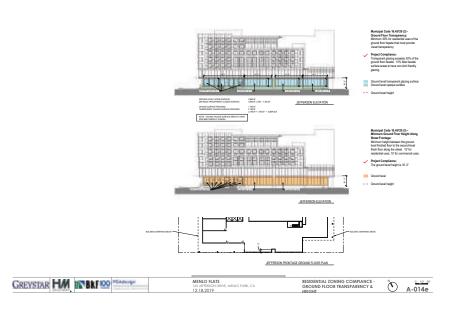


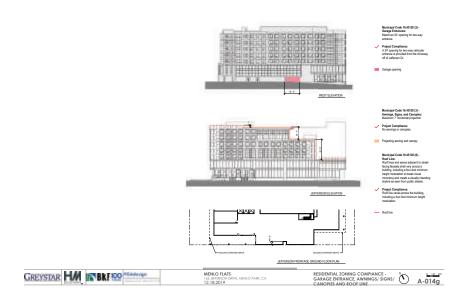


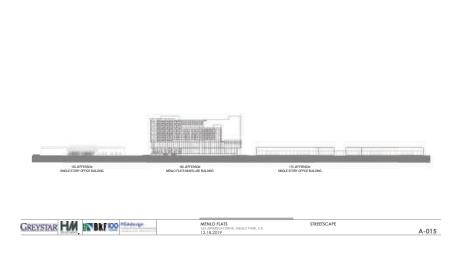


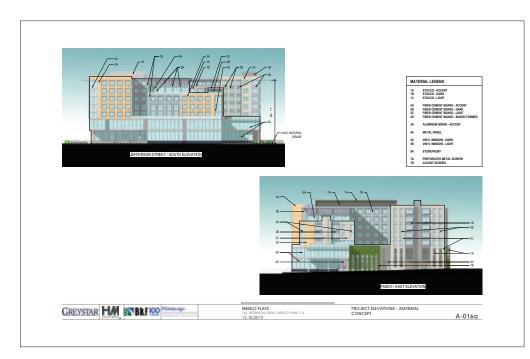


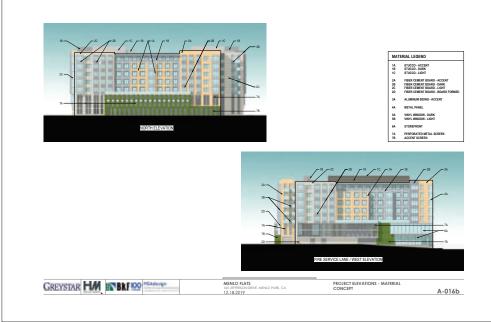


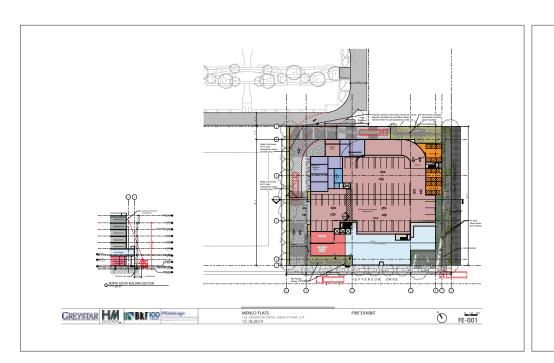


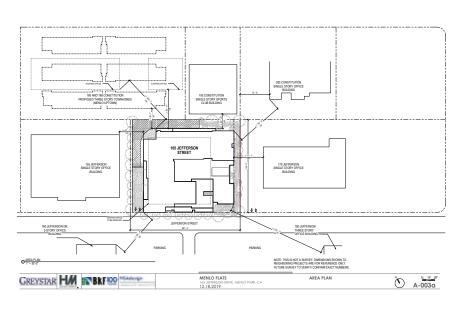


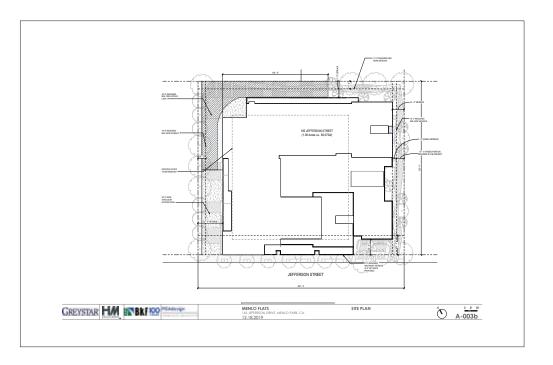












Greystar Projects in Menlo Park



MENLO FLATS

165 Jefferson Drive 158 Units + 15K Commercial Target Entitlements: May 2021 Anticipated Construction Start: Fall 2021 Anticipated First Units: Fall 2023



From: Adina Levin

To: <u>Planning Commission</u>

Subject: Planning Commission - 165 Jefferson Drive Date: Monday, April 20, 2020 6:33:58 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Unless you recognize the sender's email address and know the content is safe, DO NOT click links, open attachments or reply.

Dear Planning Commissioners,

Menlo Together is a group of Menlo Park and Peninsula residents who envision a city that is integrated and diverse, multi-generational, and environmentally sustainable.

Following are a few comments regarding the project proposal at 165 Jefferson Drive that you are reviewing this evening.

We understand that because of SB330, the City of Menlo Park is limited in the scope of its discretion with regard to housing projects that fit the city's General Plan and Zoning.

That said, there are several open issues with regard to this project that relate to Menlo Together's goals of housing affordability, sustainable transportation, and social equity.

Affordable housing and Community Amenities. The development is proposed to include 15% Below Market Rate housing units, in line with the city's inclusionary policy. The development is also required to offer community amenities in line with the proposal at the Bonus level of development. The City Council has set a preference for the R-MU-B zoning district, the City Council included a preference that additional affordable housing units be provided as the community amenity.

Menlo Park has a major need for affordable housing, and we recommend that the Planning Commission prioritize affordable housing for the community amenity.

<u>Paseo design - walk-bike access and public space.</u> We support the Staff report's good analysis and recommendations regarding the improvements to the Paseo to connect it to the public open space and commercial uses, and to connect to adjacent properties as they redevelop in the future. These improvements would help the Paseo do a better job of contributing to public access to amenities for city residents and encouraging healthy active transportation.

<u>Parking and Transportation Demand Management.</u> The development is proposed to have 158 apartments including 21 affordable homes with 138 car parking stalls, to be offered unbundled and 267 bike parking stalls.

We used the TransForm Connect tool to analyze the transportation features of this project. The results of the analysis can be seen here: https://connect.greentrip.org/map-tool.php?p=258098

The GreenTrip analysis indicates that the building would generate 50% less driving and climate impact considering the affordable housing and unbundled parking, and with the addition of transit passes, carshare and bikeshare. Based on this analysis, we recommend that:

- * The residents should be provided with transit passes
- * The developer and city should work with SamTrans to ensure that the area has bus service, which can be improved in the current Reimagine SamTrans planning process
- * The developer should provide carshare and micromobility share (bike and/or scooter)

Thank you for your consideration, Adina Adina Levin for Menlo Together https://menlotogether.org 650-646-4344 From: no-reply@menlopark.org
To:

Subject: Online Form Submittal: April 20, 2020, Planning Commission Meeting Public Comments

Date: Monday, April 20, 2020 5:03:15 PM

April 20, 2020, Planning Commission Meeting Public Comments

April 20, 2020, Planning Commission Meeting Public Comments Thank you for your interest in the Planning Commission's upcoming discussions. Please use the form below to submit your comments no later than one (1) hour before the meeting. Comments received by that time will be forwarded to the Planning Commission and included as part of the public record for the meeting, just as if you had come to comment in person.

Agenda items on which to comment:

D. Public Comment (general)

E1. Approval of minutes from the March 23, 2020, Planning Commission meeting.

F1. Use Permit/Wenfen Wang/488 Gilbert Avenue (Continued to a future meeting by the applicant)

F2. Use Permit and Architectural Control/R. Tod Spieker/1466 San Antonio Street G1. Study Session/Andrew Morcos/165 Jefferson Drive

Agenda item number	Ga
Subject	165 Jefferson
Meeting date	Field not completed.
Public comment	Planning Commission and Staff, The Community Amenities List is based on a survey completed in 2015 and is severely out of date. I recommend the most appropriate amenity is an increase of at least 10% the affordability of units. By the time these units are completed we will be in the middle of a significant down-turn in the economy. Respectfully, Pamela D Jones
First name	Pamela
Last name	Jones
Email address	
What is your affiliation?	Resident
Other	Field not completed.
Address1	1371 Hollyburn Avenue
Address2	Field not completed.

City	Menlo Park
State	CA
Zip	94025-1309

Email not displaying correctly? View it in your browser.