



REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Date: 7/10/2023
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Location: Zoom.us/join – ID# 862 5880 9056 and
City Council Chambers
751 Laurel St., Menlo Park, CA 94025

A. Call To Order

Chair Cynthia Harris called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

B. Roll Call

Present: Cynthia Harris (Chair), Linh Dan Do (Vice Chair), Andrew Ehrich, Henry Riggs, Jennifer Schindler

Absent: Andrew Barnes, Katie Ferrick

Staff: Calvin Chan, Senior Planner; Rambod Hakhamaneshi, Senior Civil Engineer; Fahteen Khan, Associate Planner; Matt Pruter, Associate Planner; Corinna Sandmeier, Principal Planner; Chris Turner, Associate Planner

C. Reports and Announcements

Principal Planner Corinna Sandmeier reported the City Council at its July 11, 2023 meeting would consider an item to clarify the process for determining the appraisal value for bonus level development projects and an updated community amenities list for Bayfront projects as well as hold a study session on the preferred concept for the Middle Avenue Caltrain crossing.

D. Public Comment

None

E. Consent Calendar

None

F. Public Hearing

- F1. Use Permit/Salar Safaei/1380 Cotton Street:
Consider and adopt a resolution to approve a use permit for excavation within the required side setbacks (east and west) for two basement lightwells associated with a new two-story residence on a standard lot in the R-1-S (Single Family Suburban Residential) zoning district; determine this action is categorically exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15303’s Class 3 exemption for new construction or conversion of small structures. The proposal also includes an attached accessory dwelling unit (ADU), which is a permitted use, and not subject to discretionary review. (Staff Report #23-045-PC)



Senior Planner Calvin Chan introduced the item.

Mehdi Maghsoudnia, property owner, spoke on behalf of the project.

Chair Harris opened the public hearing and closed it as no persons requested to speak.

ACTION: Motion and second (Ehrich/Schinder) to adopt a resolution to approve a use permit for excavation within the required side setbacks (east and west) for two basement lightwells associated with a new two-story residence on a standard lot in the R-1-S (Single Family Suburban Residential) zoning district and determine this action is categorically exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15303's Class 3 exemption for new construction or conversion of small structures; passes 5-0-2 with Commissioners Barnes and Ferrick absent.

F2. Use Permit/Jensen Smith/1055 San Mateo Drive:

Consider and adopt a resolution to approve a use permit to construct first-story additions and interior alterations to an existing nonconforming one-story, single-family residence located in the R-1-S (Single Family Suburban Residential) zoning district; determine this action is categorically exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15301's Class 1 exemption for existing facilities. The proposed work would exceed 75 percent of the replacement value of the existing nonconforming structure in a 12-month period. (Staff Report #23-046-PC)

Associate Planner Matt Pruter reported an additional email public comment was received in support of the project.

Justin Pirzadeh, property owner, spoke on behalf of the project.

Chair Harris opened the public hearing.

Public Comment:

- Sally Cole, Complete Streets Commission, said she was speaking as an individual. She said her property had proximity to the subject property and expressed concerns about the nonconforming setback and privacy and noise impacts. She requested that a landscape plan be resubmitted with more noise mitigation plantings if the project was approved and that the noticing be changed to provide plans to neighbors three business days in advance.

Chair Harris closed the public hearing.

Staff upon request clarified the public notice process for use permit applications.

Gary McClure, project manager, upon request, clarified the pool equipment would be relocated and enclosed in a sound enclosure, an insulated fence structure. He said three heritage Sequoia trees on the property reduced the viable planting area.

Commission discussion noted a use permit runs with the land and not the owner, the additions met setback requirements, past actions to allow projects to maintain nonconforming features were consistent, and the challenges of planting near Sequoia trees.

ACTION: Motion and second (Do/Schindler) to adopt a resolution to approve a use permit to

construct first-story additions and interior alterations to an existing nonconforming one-story, single-family residence located in the R-1-S (Single Family Suburban Residential) zoning district and determine this action is categorically exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15301's Class 1 exemption for existing facilities; passes 5-0-2 with Commissioners Barnes and Ferrick absent.

- F3. Architectural Control/Jonathan Hitchcock/1467 Chilco Street:
Consider and adopt a resolution to approve an architectural control permit for exterior and interior modifications to an existing public facility (Fire Station Number 77). The proposal includes additions for a new fitness room, expansion of the existing mechanic shop, and construction of a new carport. This proposal also includes interior remodeling to the fire station and the addition of an accessible parking stall, in the P-F (Public Facilities) zoning district. Determine this action is categorically exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15301's Class 1 exemption for existing facilities (Staff Report #23-047-PC)

Associate Planner Fahteen Khan commented that there were no updates to the written report.

Chair Harris opened the public hearing and closed it as no persons requested to speak.

Jon Hitchcock, Menlo Park Fire Protection District, spoke on behalf of the project and described the neighborhood outreach.

Staff shared visuals of the project plans.

ACTION: Motion and second (Schindler/Ehrich) to adopt a resolution to approve an architectural control permit for exterior and interior modifications to an existing public facility (Fire Station Number 77) and determine this action is categorically exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15301's Class 1 exemption for existing facilities; passes 5-0-2 with Commissioners Barnes and Ferrick absent.

- F4. Easement abandonment for 1585 Bay Laurel Drive:
Adopt a resolution determining that the vacation of a storm drain easement lying within 1585 Bay Laurel Drive is consistent with the General Plan and recommending that the City Council approve the requested abandonment; determine this action is categorically exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15305's Class 5 exemption for minor alternations in land use limitations. (Staff Report #23-048-PC)

Chair Harris opened the public hearing and closed it as no persons requested to speak.

Senior Civil Engineer Rambod Hakhamaneshi noted a typographical error on page A2 of the resolution and that the correct address was 1585 Bay Laurel Drive and not 1701.

Commissioner Ehrich clarified stormwater need with staff and that only 30 foot of a 60 foot storm drain easement was being requested for vacation.

ACTION; Motion and second (Riggs/Schindler) to adopt a resolution with the correction as noted by staff on page A2 determining that the vacation of a storm drain easement lying within 1585 Bay Laurel Drive is consistent with the General Plan and recommending that the City Council approve the requested abandonment and determine this action is categorically exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15305's Class 5 exemption for minor alternations in land use limitations; passes 5-0 with Commissioners Barnes and Ferrick absent.

G. Informational Items

H1. Future Planning Commission Meeting Schedule

- Regular Meeting: July 24, 2023

Planner Sandmeier said the agenda for July 24 would have an item on General Plan and Specific Plan amendments for street closures downtown, an information item on the environmental justice and safety elements, and Willow Village architectural control permits for parcels 6 and 7.

- Regular Meeting: August 14, 2023

I. Adjournment

Chair Harris adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Staff Liaison: Corinna Sandmeier, Principal Planner

Recording Secretary: Brenda Bennett

Approved by the Planning Commission on August 28, 2023