



REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Date: 11/18/2024
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Location: Zoom.us/join – ID# 858 7073 1001 and
City Council Chambers
751 Laurel St., Menlo Park, CA 94025

A. Call To Order

Chair Jennifer Schindler called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

B. Roll Call

Present: Jennifer Schindler (Chair), Andrew Ehrich (Vice Chair), Katie Behroozi, Linh Dan Do, Katie Ferrick, Misha Silin, Ross Silverstein

Staff: Connor Hochleutner, Assistant Planner; Kyle Perata, Assistant Community Development Director; Matt Pruter, Associate Planner

C. Reports and Announcements

Assistant Community Development Director Kyle Perata said the City Council at its November 19, 2024 meeting would consider a resolution declaring the downtown parking plazas 1, 2 and 3 exempt from the Surplus Land Act and authorizing staff to prepare a request for qualifications for potential affordable housing development on those plazas and also a request for funding from the City’s Below Market Rate (BMR) fund for a 100% affordable housing project at 320 Sheridan Drive.

Chair Schindler reported that she attended a walking tour in Palo Alto with three local architects that focused on the history and architecture of five tall residential buildings in the University Avenue downtown area. She said more information was available by request to info@paloaltoforward.com.

D. Public Comment

None

E. Consent Calendar

- E1. Approval of minutes from the October 28, 2024 Planning Commission meeting (Attachment)
- E2. Approval of minutes from the November 4, 2024 Planning Commission meeting (Attachment)

Chair Schindler opened the consent calendar for public comment and closed public comment as no persons requested to speak.

ACTION: Motion and second (Ferrick/Silverstein) to approve the consent calendar consisting of the minutes from the October 28 and November 4 Planning Commission meetings; passes 7-0.



F. Public Hearing

F1. Use Permit/Kathleen Liston/801 Hermosa Way:

Consider and adopt a resolution to approve a use permit to demolish an existing one-story, single-family residence and accessory structures and construct a new two-story, single-family residence and accessory structures on a substandard lot with regard to minimum lot width in the R-E (Residential Estate) zoning district, at 801 Hermosa Way; 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 a detached accessory dwelling unit (ADU), which is a permitted use and not subject to discretionary review. The proposed project includes the removal of one heritage tree which has been reviewed and conditionally approved by the City Arborist. (Staff Report #24-048-PC)

Assistant Planner Connor Hochleutner said three comment letters were received after publication of the staff report, which had been shared with the Commission and were available for the public. He said staff, in response to a number of neighbor inquiries about tree protection and utility trenching, had several recommended conditions to add. Those were:

Add condition 2.b.: Concurrent with the submittal of a complete building permit application, the Project Arborist shall submit an addendum to the project arborist report to include specific protection measures to protect Coast live oak trees #23 and 24 during fence removal, subject to review and approval of the City Arborist and the Planning Division.

Add condition 2.c.: Concurrent with the submittal of a complete building permit application, the Project Arborist shall review and evaluate the civil plan sheets to ensure all utility work, including trenching, would be outside the tree's designated tree protection zone (TPZ) from heritage trees or identify measures to reduce any potential impact to heritage trees on the project site or adjacent sites. The project arborist shall submit an addendum to the project arborist report with this evaluation and, if applicable, additional tree protection measures, subject to review and approval of the City Arborist and the Planning Division.

Add condition 2.d.: During project construction, the project arborist shall conduct monthly monitoring of the project site and submit a monthly monitoring report to the City Arborist for review and approval.

Kathleen Liston, property owner, spoke on behalf of the project.

Chair Schindler opened the public hearing.

Public Comment:

- Beth Benjamin expressed concerns about heritage tree preservation.
- John Durrett expressed concerns about heritage tree preservation and privacy.
- Moira Cullen expressed concerns about heritage tree preservation and arborist review.

Chair Schindler closed the public hearing.

The Commission discussed various aspects of tree preservation, PG&E work, structure location, and privacy solutions with the applicant and discussed the additional conditions with staff.

Commission discussion continued with general acknowledgement of the applicant's thoroughness in developing the design and plan and expression of some concern with condition 2.d being duplicative and potentially creating an undesirable precedent.

ACTION: Motion and second (Silin/Behroozi) to adopt a resolution approving the item as presented with the following modifications; passes 7-0.

Add condition 2.b.: Concurrent with the submittal of a complete building permit application, the Project Arborist shall submit an addendum to the project arborist report to include specific protection measures to protect Coast live oak trees #23 and 24 during fence removal, subject to review and approval of the City Arborist and the Planning Division.

Add condition 2.c.: Concurrent with the submittal of a complete building permit application, the Project Arborist shall review and evaluate the civil plan sheets to ensure all utility work, including trenching, would be outside the tree's designated tree protection zone (TPZ) from heritage trees or identify measures to reduce any potential impact to heritage trees on the project site or adjacent sites. The project arborist shall submit an addendum to the project arborist report with this evaluation and, if applicable, additional tree protection measures, subject to review and approval of the City Arborist and the Planning Division.

Add condition 2.d.: During project construction, the project arborist shall conduct monthly monitoring of the project site and submit a monthly monitoring report to the City Arborist for review and approval.

- F2. Use Permit Revision and Architectural Control Revision/Laurie Shepard/2800 Sand Hill Rd.: Consider and adopt a resolution to approve a use permit revision and architectural control revision for minor alterations to the north elevation of an existing two-story office building located within the C-1-C (Administrative, Professional, and Research District, Restrictive) zoning district; determine this action is categorically exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15301's Class 1 exemption for existing facilities. (Staff Report #24-049-PC)

Associate Planner Matt Pruter said staff had no additions to the written report.

Tim Murphy, principal architect, spoke on behalf of the project.

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

ACTION: Motion and second (Ferrick/Behroozi) to adopt a resolution to approve the item as presented; passes 7-0.

- F3. Use Permit Revision and Architectural Control Revision/Olana Khan/2245 Avy Ave.: Consider and adopt a resolution to modify the previously approved use permit and architectural control permit that allowed a temporary classroom to be located at an existing school (Phillips Brooks) in the P-F (Public Facilities) zoning district, until November 15, 2024. The proposed modifications to the permit would allow the current temporary classroom to remain for an additional three years, until November 15, 2027; determine this action is categorically exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15301's Class 1 exemption for existing facilities. (Staff Report #24-050-PC)

Planner Pruter said staff had no updates to the written report.

Olana Khan, Assistant Director, Phillips Brooks School, spoke on behalf of the project.

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

The Commission discussed a potentially longer extension with the applicant and staff.

ACTION: Motion and second (Schindler/Do) to adopt a resolution approving the item as presented; passes 7-0.

G. Informational Items

- G1. Future Planning Commission Meeting Schedule

- Regular Meeting: December 2, 2024

Mr. Perata said the December 2 agenda had three public hearing items and the 2025 Planning Commission calendar.

- Regular Meeting: December 16, 2024

H. Adjournment

Chair Schindler adjourned the meeting at 9:23 p.m.

Staff Liaison: Kyle Perata, Assistant Community Development Director

Recording Secretary: Brenda Bennett

Approved by the Planning Commission on January 13, 2025