

**CITY OF SAN MATEO
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
FEBRUARY 14, 2012**



The meeting convened at 7:30 p.m. in the City of San Mateo Council Chambers and was called to order by Acting Chair Feinman, who led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Those present were Acting Chair Feinman, Commissioner Whitaker, Commissioners Massey, Commissioner Moran and Commissioner Hugg.

The Chair welcomed Joshua Hugg as our new Commissioner.

A motion was made by Commissioner Moran and seconded by Commissioner Massey to put over to next meeting on February 28, 2012 for the approval of the minutes of the Regular meeting of November 22, 2011.

Vote – 5 – 0

***** PUBLIC COMMENT**

Acting Chair Feinman opened the public comment period.

(No persons wishing to speak, the Chair closed the public comment period.)

ITEM 1

+ STUDY SESSION

PA 11-087 2090 S. DELAWARE STREET APARTMENTS preliminary review for the development of 111 residential housing units; 2090 S. Delaware St., (APN: 035-320-120).

The project site is 2.37 acres located on the northwest corner of Delaware Street and Pacific Blvd. The project site is zoned TOD (Transit Oriented Development).

PROJECT PLANNER: Lisa Ring, AICP, Senior Planner
330 W. 20th Avenue
San Mateo, CA 94403
Ph: (650) 522-7213
lring@cityofsanmateo.org

APPLICANT: Tim Ramm
Newport Equities, LLC
1601 Dove St, #250

Newport Beach, CA 92660
Ph: 949-553-4800
TRamm@provinvegroup.com

PROPERTY OWNER: Lithographix
12250 South Crenshaw Blvd.
Hawthorne, CA 92050
Ph: 323-770-1000

Lisa Ring gave the staff presentation, which included a power point presentation.

The Planning Commission had the following questions for staff:

- Would the sidewalk be consistent with the standards in the draft Pedestrian Master Plan? Staff: Yes
- Are there nineteen tandem spaces? Staff: There are actually thirty-eight spaces in a tandem configuration.
- Has the Fire Department taken a look at an emergency exit? This is the first project that I have seen in a long time that did not have an emergency access provided by a perimeter emergency vehicle access road. Staff: As part of the initial review, we route the plans to all the affected departments. The Fire Department has reviewed this plan extensively and determined that another emergency access is not necessary because of the site plan and street frontage configurations.
- The Olson Company – the former applicant on this site had a proposal with a lower density, including townhomes and flats. It was a combination project. The applicant withdrew the project. The townhomes had three floors and the condominium buildings had 5 floors of stacked units.

Tim Ramm, Newport Equities, LLC, Sherry Scott, Architect, Christiani Architects gave the applicant presentation.

The Planning Commission had the following questions for the applicant:

- If you could walk us through the parking again. How many tandem spaces? Applicant: one tandem space and one open parking space equals 19 tandem spaces.
- The entrance from the street has a stairway going up. Is there handicap accessibility? Architect: Yes we have an elevator.
- Is there an accessible walkway into the leasing office? Architect: Yes, there is a ramp.
- Is there any more detail to the shade and shadow studies? Architect: We have more detail showing times during the day. We can make this available to you now.
- What is the elevation for the ground? Architect: The site varies by three to four feet. However, the building is below 35 feet height level as compared to existing grade.

- The previous project doesn't have a pedestrian sidewalk connection to the station. Applicant: It was a condition that the previous developer included. We also intend to have easier access to the Cal Trans Station.
- Is this parcel in the FEMA flood zone? Applicant: No, it is not.
- What kind of landscaping would be there? Landscape Architect: The species of plants that we recommend on this property are non-allergenic and wouldn't cast any significant shadows on the property next door.
- We will need to look into street lights to ensure that there is enough light provided for pedestrian safety.
- Is there limited parking on Pacific Blvd. restricted by times that you can park, etc.? Staff: The parking on Pacific Blvd. is open and there is no plan in Public Works to change that.
- Have you considered Solar for this project? Architect: We could look into this and see what the most efficient system would be for this site.
- What about a tot lot? Architect: the project does not include this amenity at this time, but could function that way.

Acting Chair Feinman opened the public comment period for this item.

The following people spoke: (street name, city only)

- Maya Togashi, S. Delaware Street, San Mateo
- Ryan Vandebroek, S. Delaware Street, San Mateo
- Pernille Gutschick, S. Delaware Street, San Mateo
- Jennifer Diamond-Ducey, Gatetree Circle, Pleasanton
- Juan Ortega, S. Delaware Street, San Mateo
- Applicant

Their comments included the following:

- I am a resident owner in the Ironwood project. This neighboring parcel would make a great community garden. Our complex is made up of a variety of setbacks. Some are two floors and a few three stories. This plan will shade my home most of the day. I am concerned about the loss of light and privacy. Concerned about potential increase of noise levels.
- We are a two-story unit. The building is proposed to be built is directly behind my unit, five feet from the property line. On the bottom floor of our unit we have exactly one source of natural light and that's the window on the back wall and I am concerned that this will be blocked by the project. We have shared walls on either side and we don't have a source of natural light on the front side. We moved to San Mateo because of the quality of life here.
- The proposed plan to build next to us at 2090 Delaware Street presented by the third applicant warrant concerns, the main one is still shade and shadow: The neighbors across the street from the proposed project are protected from shade and shadow effects in various plans and policies. However, the "anomalous townhouse

development” to the north as (known as Ironwood) is described in the TOD plan in Chapter 2 will get plenty of shade and shadow. We are not enjoying the same protection as our neighbors across the street. The original plan from 2007 had a setback of 15’, Olson’s was 10’ and now the third applicant is proposing 5’. Twelve of the fourteen Ironwood backyards facing south are seriously affected by the new proposed project. Despite community members request for including a clear study with their plans on the city’s web site, the applicant has not provided the community with this prior to the Planning Commission meeting.

- The 2090 project proposed to be built 5 feet from our property line will create adverse shade and shadow impacts and does not address nor meet many of the stated requirements in the TOD plan. Ironwood fits the description of an isolated neighborhood right in the middle of the Civic section of the TOD, as we are the only housing development in this area. We are in an “area where change in use is likely and there is the need to ensure their protection from possible impacts from new development”.
- Parking is a hot topic. We virtually live in a red zone. The vicinity map of this project has 45 street parking spaces as counted by me at 11:10 PM on 2/10/12. When 2000+2090 projects are added as proposed, there will be 304 family dwellings sharing 45 spaces on the street. Ironwood is an oasis in the cityscape with a beautifully landscaped wide walkway with artist-like lofts on one side and cottages with yards on the other side creating the feeling of a small village. The architecture is bold, yet whimsical with lots of detail and a feeling of unity in design between iron and wood.
- I am very concerned about the trees that are going to be put on the property line. I propose to move the trees to the side of the buildings and it would not cast as much shade on our properties. Shade and Shadow Studies are so important to our community. Five feet is too close.
- I have a two-story cottage. We have very small yards. The buildings being built 5 feet from the property is too close.
- Applicant: The FAR is 2 and we are at 1.36. It is considerably smaller than the previous building.

(No other persons wishing to speak, the Chair closed the public comment period.)

The Planning Commission requested clarification on the following issues:

- Is the height of the ground elevation different? Applicant: No.
- The landscaping is still on the table? Applicant: Yes.

The Planning Commission made the following comments:

Architectural Design

- Why the glass element? The flat roofs are not very impressive. We need to know more.
- Liked where it is going. Not adverse to glass towers. Like the stoops and doorways. Everything is the same height so it is not very exciting.

- Liked the architectural design overall. Concerned about northeast corner – too bulky. Don't like flat roofs and would encourage you to look at different forms.
- Would like to see more articulation than flat roofs. Don't have problem with glass towers. Project is very similar to other projects that Commissioners have approved.

Site Plan

- We need more information on the Shade and Shadow Studies and the impact on the Ironwood Homes. I think this will make or break this development. The 5 foot setback is not enough.
- There are no fixed setbacks in the TOD zone. Staff: No, there are not. We look at each project in the TOD area individually and look at many policies, including those contained in the Multi-Family Design Guidelines.
- Why do the amenity portions of the buildings need to be 2 stories? It is just to have high ceilings in the amenity buildings for a fitness center/community room?
- The courtyards are nice. Generally like the site design. The guest parking has been put to the side of the buildings. Parking and traffic have been raised as issues. I'm not in favor of tandem parking. Landscape issues are important – trees.
- I am interested in the hours of 9 am, 12 pm and 3 pm and would like to see the changes in the Shade and Shadow Studies from what currently exists compared to the proposed project. "Please include current and proposed border fence and vegetation in the shadow studies."
- Landscaping is important. Alright with the parking where it is.
- I'm concerned about the walk up (steps) stoop, accessibility and how they will be designed.
- As a resident of the new project I would love the amenities. The barbecue in the courtyard. They all occur in the courtyard and it could impact the neighbors to the north (Ironwood).
- The noise impacts with any gatherings in the courtyards could impact the neighbors.

Building Scale/Roofline

- I have concerns about the flat roofs and would like more articulation.
- With regard to building scale (height) there is a 35 foot height limit. The applicant is proposing 35 feet plus or minus.
- The 5 foot setback is going to be the sticking point if you come back with the same number.

Summary:

We would like to see more articulation than flat roofs. More information is needed on the Shade and Shadow Studies particularly the hours of 9:00 am, 12 pm and 3:00 pm and the impact it has on the Ironwood Homes. Landscaping and species of trees are an important issue. The five-foot setback is inadequate – needs more space. Tandem parking is an issue. "Want individual unit

entries from street to look and function like front doors so that they don't become unused storage areas. Request applicant and neighbors work to find a mutually agreeable plan for landscaping the property boundary. Commission prefers a design that is modified to reduce shading of Ironwood; such modifications might include reducing the height of the amenity rooms and the north end of the building along Delaware."

This being a Study Session no motion was made.

COMMUNICATIONS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Communications from Staff
 - a. February 15 - City Council Goal Setting Session, 5:30, Senior Center.
 - b. February 28 – Planning Commission, Congregational Church SUP & SPAR.
 - c. March 13 – Planning Commission – Pedestrian Master Plan. You received an electronic copy.
 - d. March 27 – Planning Commission Study Session – potentially (1) Draper University (Ben Franklin Hotel) and (2) San Mateo Executive Park.
 - e. Chair Feinman, Commissioner Whitaker and Commissioner Hugg will be attending the Planners Institute & Mini Expo in March.
2. Communications from the Commissioners
 - a. Commissioner Moran and Commissioner Massey will be absent for the April 24 Planning Commission Meeting. Commissioner Moran may miss the 1st meeting in May.
 - b. "Do not want to set a precedent having an applicant speaking after public comment period to rebut public comments, but this does not mean to restrict the commission's dialog with applicant that is controlled by the Chair, which is a necessary part of study sessions."
3. Other
 - a. Election of Officers.

A motion was made by Commissioner Moran and seconded by Commissioner Massey to nominate Vice-Chair Feinman to Chair Feinman.

Vote – Passed – 4-0-1 Abstention Vice-Chair Feinman.

A motion was made by Commissioner Massey and seconded by Commissioner Hugg to nominate Commissioner Whitaker to Vice-Chair Whitaker.

Vote – Passed – 4-0-1 Abstention Commissioner Whitaker.

ADJOURNMENT

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There being no further items before the Planning Commission, Chair Feinman adjourned at 10:16 p.m. on Tuesday, February 14, 2012