

**CITY OF SAN MATEO
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
MAY 12, 2015**

Approved

The meeting convened at 7:40 p.m. in the City of San Mateo Council Chambers and was called to order by Chair Drechsler, who led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Those present were Commissioner Whitaker, Commissioner Massey, Vice-Chair Hugg (recused for Item 2 Central Park South), Chair Drechsler.

Minutes of March 24, 2015. Motion by Commissioner Massey, 2nd by Vice-Chair Hugg to approve the minutes as amended. Vote: 4-0

Minutes of April 14, 2015. Motion by Commissioner Massey, 2nd by Vice-Chair Hugg to approve the minutes as amended. Vote: 4-0

***** PUBLIC COMMENT**

Chair Drechsler opened the public comment period.

No one wishing to speak, Chair Drechsler closed the public comment period.

ITEM 1 San Mateo Executive Park, addition of a 6th floor of parking.

Staff Presentation by Christy Usher, Associate Planner.

Blake Reinhardt, Project Director, gave the applicant presentation, Ted Korth, Architect

Planning Commission had the following questions:

- Is new gathering space being proposed publicly accessible? *Applicant: amenity space intended for the employees at the campus.*
- Findings for Approval:
 - First page: #2 regarding the negative declaration. Comment relating to City Council should be Planning Commission.
 - Page 3-4. Roman numerals 3 and 4. Reapproving the project. *Staff: findings being included again because the modification requires that all of the original project elements be approved.*
- Sidewalk feasibility study funded by applicant status: *Public Works (PW) Staff: Public Works. We have a consultant under contract that is currently taking pedestrian counts and the study is estimated to be complete in about 2 months.*

- If the study determines that a bike sidewalk is feasible, can that piece of the project be incorporated into the project. *Chief of Planning: 2 conditions of approval from the original project 1) a cash contribution for the feasibility study, and 2) obligation of the applicant that if the project is feasible applicant will provide an easement to the city for construction.*

Public Comment period.

Adrian Simi, Foster City had the following comments: carpenter's union fully supports the project.

No one else wishing to speak, the chair closed the public comment period.

The Planning Commission had the following questions:

- Which of the design consultant's recommendations were accepted? *Staff: the applicant chose to install climbing vines along the exterior of the parking structure.*
- A variety of different approaches to reduce mass and bulk were suggested.
- Comments from Larry Cannon, consulting architect.
 - The garage is very large. If the Planning Commission has reservations regarding the size, the design review report suggests various ways that can be mitigated.
- Is it just a matter of percentages that an additional 151 cars coming onto the site will not change the LOS currently entering the site. *Consultant: The modification does not include adding square footage of new office space so no new trips would be added.*
- Does the Hexagon analysis taking into account the street parking that the neighbors are talking about? *Traffic Consultant: The study did not look at off site parking.*
- Benchmarking is done with offices/building of similar types, sizes, and permitted use? *Traffic consultant: that is correct.*
- How much of the counting is considered out of date due to current open-cubicle/office space? *Traffic Consultant: we focus on peak traffic times, arrival patterns, etc. Arrival patterns are spreading out and people arriving to work are coming in as late as 10am, which previously was not the norm.*

The Planning Commission had the following comments:

- The developer is prepared to make the investment for future parking over and above what the city requires. They have responded to the concerns of neighbors. A Transportation Demand Management Program (TDM) has been created. This site is located away from the established Transit-Oriented Development area.
- Meets requirements in Findings. Adding an additional floor of parking is good. The TDM needs to be accurately managed, office use has intensified over the past few years. This area has no active transit management agreement (TMA) but the TDM is helpful. There should be more active watching of this site to revisit and revise data as needed.
- Thoroughly well-thought out project. Local labor to be used.

- There should be efforts for onsite solar, gray-water usage, encourage property owner to look at other ways to be mindful of water use.
- Several Planning Commissioners requested Condition of Approval A1.9 be modified as shown below to provide more oversight and analysis by a traffic engineering firm and to provide more flexibility for the City to modify measures based on those findings.

TRIP REDUCTION WRITTEN ANNUAL COMPLIANCE LETTER - The San Mateo Executive Office Park shall submit a written letter, prepared by a City approved traffic engineering firm, to the Zoning Administrator of the City Planning Division on an annual basis no later than January 15th of each year that includes an analysis of the effectiveness of the TDM measures and a written assessment of compliance with the Trip Reduction Plan by Nelson Nygaard dated January 8, 2013. The Zoning Administrator may examine and substitute measures recommended by the approved traffic engineering firm.

Motion to approve by Vice-Chair Hugg: to

1. Adopt the Addendum to the Negative Declaration, as adequate to assess the environmental impacts of the project, based on the Findings for Approval attached as Exhibit A; and
2. Approve the Modification to the Site Plan and Architectural Review for construction of a an additional level of parking (to an approved multi-level parking structure) and reconfiguring surface parking spaces to accommodate an outdoor amenity area, Site Development Permit for grading and tree removals; and Vesting Tentative Map to create separate parcels for each building on the property, based on the Findings for Approval attached as Exhibit A and subject to the Conditions of Approval in Exhibit B as revised.

2nd by Commissioner Massey

Vote: 4-0. Motion passes

ITEM 2 PA14-044 Central Park South, demolish the existing structures and construct a 4-story office building and 4-story residential building.

Lorraine Weiss, Contract Senior Planner, gave the staff presentation.

Dawn Jedkins, Architect gave the applicant presentation.

The Planning Commission had the following questions:

- Please explain the reduction in the front yard setback. *Staff: This only applies to 2 specific uncovered parking spaces and a loading space, not building walls, that are identified in the staff report.*

- How many BMR units are there? One sentence indicates 5 another 6. *Staff: There are 5 BMR units. The Density Bonus is 6.*
- Is there a list of all the trees that will be removed and a list of trees for planting on the project site? *Staff: yes*
- Landscape architect indicated that new trees to be planted will be considered drought tolerant.
- Why is the Density Bonus Request not part of the approval? *Staff: A Density Bonus Request is not an entitlement request.*

The Chair opened the Public Comment Period. The following 13 people spoke: Don Malinverno, San Mateo; Laurie Watanuki, San Mateo; Erika Powell, San Mateo; Kristi McAlister, San Mateo; Maria McAlister-Young, San Mateo; John Ebnetter, San Mateo; Patrick Leland, San Mateo; Adrian Simi, Foster City; Jen Rice, San Mateo; David Karp, San Mateo; James Panigada, San Mateo; Suzanne Flecker, San Mateo.

- Comments were received regarding the traffic that would occur on 9th Avenue as a result of construction; an increase in the number of cars because of the number of living units in the residential building and offices in the office building on the corner.
- Discrepancy in the Mitigated Negative Declaration regarding traffic, cultural resources, and aesthetics.
- Any historic criteria on the buildings to be demolished?
- Is there anything historic regarding Central Park?
- Cars go too fast along 9th Avenue between El Camino Real and the Railroad Tracks.
- It takes too long to go through the stop sign at Palm and 9th Avenues.
- Is Central Park parking going to spill over onto 9th Avenue?
- What will happen to Project 90?
- Too much traffic and not enough parking in the area.
- The noise study should be redone and consider noise from new balconies on the proposed apartment building.
- Too many trees would be removed; preserve more trees.
- Trucks are using 9th Avenue as a truck route through from El Camino towards 101 instead of using the designated truck route.
- Can a 2nd traffic study be done which includes Station Park Green and show the increase in traffic? *Staff: yes*
- City needs to continue working towards energy independence.
- This development should use more on-site power sources.
- Buildings should share resources including daytime solar on both buildings to power the residential building at night.
- The traffic study should address pedestrian traffic.
- Succession trees should be considered to mitigate those trees being removed.

- The intersection light length at 9th and El Camino Real benefits traffic on El Camino Real, though, not 9th Avenue.

No one else wishing to speak, the Chair closed the public comment period.

The Planning Commission had the following comments/questions:

- The project meets the General Plan and Zoning requirements.
- The traffic study addresses the issues and draws appropriate conclusions. Station Park Green is included in the 2030 cumulative traffic analysis. Traffic issues are existing issues/problems in the area that are not created by the project.
- Gary Black, Hexagon Transportation. Hexagon looked at queuing at 9th and El Camino Real. There are queues that would block the driveway of the office building so a 'KEEP CLEAR zone' needs to be in place. Traffic counts were conducted at 9th Avenue as it is a designated arterial. For cumulative development projected for traffic, there is an increase in traffic but it is within the city's acceptable limits.
- A primary concern is that one of the best sources of information, the Design Review Consultant's recommendation is ignored. The applicant did not choose to accept the recommendation of the local design consultant. This is the discretion and desire of the property owner.
- Can you explain why Mr. Cannon's recommendations were categorically ignored? The Applicant explained that Mr. Cannon's recommendations were considered but the property owner wanted a building design more traditional and decided against some of the recommendations.
- Not sure the office building elevation facing El Camino Real makes a real statement; not very inviting or interesting.
- The office building presentation on the Central Park side is a big blank wall. Something needs to be done to make it more interesting.
- Residential garage entry could mimic the other side of the building to create more depth and interest to mask garage entry.
- The money spent on the Arborwell Report was well spent; good advice.
- Some trees are at or near their life expectancy. Should consider different tree species for future plantings and sustainability.
- Julie Baigent, Jewel Property Advisors, indicated that the property owner has been working with Project 90 with regards to relocating, but Project 90 has now encountered some challenges with the Affordable Care Act.
- The earlier design of the building was better.
- A tree protection program is important.
- There is no evidence of impact on Central Park.
- The project adds housing to the City and a few affordable units.

Motion to approve by Chris Massey:

1. Adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration, as adequate to assess the environmental impacts of the project pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) regulations, based on the Findings for Approval as revised and attached as Exhibit A; and
2. Approve the Site Plan and Architectural Review (SPAR) for demolition of existing structures and construction of two four-story buildings consisting of an approximately 33,400 square foot office building at the corner of El Camino Real and 9th Avenue and an approximately 77,800 square foot apartment building with 60 rental apartment units located along 9th Avenue; Site Development Permit for grading and removal of 23 heritage trees and 18 non-heritage trees; and a Vesting Tentative Parcel Map to merge the three existing residential parcels into one parcel for the multi-family residential building development based on the Findings as revised in Exhibit A and Conditions of Approval in Exhibit B.

2nd by Commissioner Whittaker

Vote: 2-1 (Whittaker opposed). Motion passes

Communications/Announcements

1. Communications from staff
2. Communications from Commissioners
3. Other

Adjournment

There being no further items before the Planning Commission, the meeting adjourned at 11:40 p.m. on Tuesday, May 12, 2015.