

**CITY OF SAN MATEO
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
DECEMBER 9, 2014**

Approved

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

Those present were Commissioner Whitaker, Vice-Chair Drechsler, Commissioner Hugg (recused for item 3), Chair Bonilla, and Commissioner Massey absent and excused.

Ken Chin, Public Works, introduced Evan Albert, Associate Engineer, to the Commission as a new City staff member who will be attending Planning Commission meetings.

No quorum available to approve the minutes. There are no revisions to the minutes. Will be held over to the next regular Planning Commission meeting.

The Chair recognized Marcus Clarke, Economic Development Manager, to share with the Commission the parking situation in the downtown.

- Parking is a high priority of the city council
- Parking plan adopted earlier in 2014
- Parking management contract going to council in January 2015
- Active plan

***** PUBLIC COMMENT**

Chair Bonilla opened the public comment period.

Kevin Contreras, representative of Sheet Metal Local 104. Requested the use of local contractors.

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

ITEM 1

PA14-079, 221 South El Camino Real Pre-Application Study Session

Simon Vuong, Associate Planner, gave the staff presentation

The Planning Commission had no questions for staff.

Catie Baldwin, BDE Architecture; Jon Ennis, BDE Architecture gave the applicant presentation.

The following people spoke on this item: Bertha Sanchez, San Mateo; David Zigal, San Mateo; Daniel Gilbrech, San Mateo; John Ebnetter, San Mateo.

- Parking a major concern. This building and the building across Third Avenue are not proposing any parking. Can this building be connected to the 2nd Avenue garage? An automated parking system would work at this location. Add additional stories to this building in order to accommodate parking? Use the 2nd Avenue garage.
- Let's look outside the box for parking solutions.
- Retail can still remain on the first floor and office on the 2nd and 3rd with parking in between the floors.
- Love this building; love the look; but parking is still a major concern. Where are the cars for this building going to park? Does the city have property where additional parking can be built and provide a shuttle? Can parking go underground such as on the E. W 3rd Avenue is proposing?
- I don't want the overflow of the parking going into the neighborhoods. We don't want San Mateo to become San Francisco.
- These buildings will be a great addition to the city. Smaller buildings. The Title 24 requirements in place are great. Encourage as much energy-efficiency as possible in these buildings.
- Roof top gardens, local union labor, huge opportunities for great buildings acting as a gateway to the downtown. The water that is being constantly pumped out of the mail library garage can be used as grey water to these new building being built instead of being put in San Mateo Creek.

No other speakers wishing to speak, the Chair closed the public comment period.

The Planning Commission had the following questions:

- The proposed site plan shows two driveway curb cuts on el Camino? Is that a layer of the CAD drawing that should have been removed? *Public Works (PW) Staff: these are old curb cuts from the gas station that will be removed.*
- Existing parking in-lieu fee per stall is approximately \$9,000. What is the new fee? *PW Staff: looking at the actual cost of the parking stalls and could increase at a gradual pace up to around 70% of the costs.*
- Surface parking is one cost, structure parking is a higher cost and underground parking is even higher. Are they looking at an average? *PW Staff: they are looking at the overall cost.*
- Was there any thought of continuing the stonework up the building through the middle? *Applicant: we looked at several options but did not want to take away from the base of the building. Those elements would look spindley.*
- Did you have any dialogue with our arborist regarding the tree selection? *Applicant: we will have that discussion.*
- How do you see the signage on the building? *Applicant: building elevation above the awnings can handle the signage.*

- Conformance with the sustainable streets plan? *Staff: Has been reviewed to ensure that the project will not conflict with eventual implementation of the sustainable streets plan. However, the sustainable streets plan has not been approved yet and implementation has yet to be developed.*
- Third floor plantings? *Architect: roof area and there will be plantings but the area will not be an area to go out and sit. The doorway access that is shown on the plans is for the gardeners as the planters are flow-through.*

The Commission had the following comments:

- I like the overall design and believe it is a gateway to downtown.
- Would like to see terrace area widened and utilized.
- Parking a concern. Examine potential joint solutions because of these 3 corners being developed.
- Concern over loss of metered parking spaces on 3rd avenue to allow for loading zone.
- The use of in-lieu fees for parking is permitted by the Zoning Code, should continue to authorize its use for this project.

ITEM 2

PA14-081 2 E. 3rd Avenue Pre-Application Study Session

Simon Vuong, Associate Planner, gave the staff presentation.

Mike Field, Windy Hill Property Ventures, gave the applicant presentation

No speakers from the public people spoke on this item.

The Planning Commission had the following comments:

- Need to consider continuity among buildings on both the north and south sides of Third Avenue.
- Look at potential for an archway between this building and 2 West 3rd Avenue. Need to develop specific list of 'green' aspects that would be brought to this building.
- Since building height is below the 55' limit, look at any amenities that can be added.
- The architect/developer would entertain the idea of a mural on the back blank wall.
- The use of in-lieu fees for parking is permitted by the Zoning Code, should continue to authorize its use for this project.

ITEM 3 (This item was heard first by request of the public and consent of the Planning Commission)

PA14-080 2 W. 3rd Avenue Pre-Application Study Session

Gavin Moynahan, Associate Planner, gave the staff presentation.

The Planning Commission had the following questions for staff:

In the Administrative Report, page 8, why is site design, building design and use of automated parking highlighted? : Open space, landscaping, etc. *Staff: we would recommend you use this list as a basis of Planning Commission discussion on this item.*

Robert Van Dale, EDI Architecture, International gave the applicant presentation. Representative John Hunter, from Klaus, gave information regarding the automated underground parking system. A short video regarding the parking was shown.

The following member(s) of the public spoke: Jan Prins, San Mateo; Joel Talcott, San Mateo; David Zigal, San Mateo; Bertha Sanchez, San Mateo; Dan Gilbrech, San Mateo.

- Live in San Mateo a long time and appreciates parking being addressed.
- People are reluctant to park in the garage at the library.
- I would like to propose that the residential parking limit be shortened during the weekends; perhaps down to 30 minutes.
- What is the actual height of the building including equipment on the roof?
- A living roof would be beneficial.
- Concern for the trees on west property line.
- Is it appropriate to have the retail directly adjacent to the Towers? On 3rd Avenue? I believe it is problematic.
- Concern over the building materials.
- Seems like it would take 4 minutes to park and retrieve a car from the automatic system suggested. I believe people will continue to look for on street parking.
- This building is not a gateway to the downtown, whereas the other two corners can be viewed as a gateway.
- Would prefer to see more residential at this corner rather than retail. It would be nice to have something that blends in more with the other buildings around it. Garage space, no retail on ground floor (where is the retail parking going to be?),
- Examine a rooftop garden and use of solar panels.
- Breakdown of the parking? Are these luxury apartments/condos? Suggesting 2 cars for a 2-bedroom unit and 3 cars for 3-bedroom units
- Nice to see someone looking forward with technology with this garage.

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

The Planning Commission addressed the public comments:

- Height of the cars? System makes adjustment electronically, to estimate the size of the cars. *Applicant: the system is not currently designed to accept the larger SUV vehicles: Cadillac Escalades, Chevrolet Suburbans, etc. However, the system can be designed to attract this type of vehicle. In order to make room for this type of vehicle, adjustments*

would have to be made such as adding another floor to the garage or reducing the overall number of spaces in the structure

- What is the number of parking spaces per unit? *Staff: parking will be handled based upon the city's parking requirements.*

The Commission had the following questions:

- Arroyo Court is a two-way street? *Public Works (PW) Staff: Yes.*
- Arroyo Court runs on the north side of the Towers and some garages along the road. *PW Staff: Generally Arroyo Court is two-way, but there is a private road.*
- Bicycle parking? *PW Staff: Still under discussion and being developed by the applicant.*
- Is it feasible to consider a turn-in lane along 3rd Avenue, such that the two handicap accessible parking can be somewhere else other than the back? Can we bring the curb in toward the front of the building to allow for handicap accessible parking on a safer drop-off of people? *Staff: We have not discussed this in particular, but can examine as the formal submittal is developed.*
- Three short term and 14 long-term parking spaces for bicycles. The trend today seems to be a storage type room for bike storage. Has that been discussed? *Staff: there was one item that we discussed. Clearly, internal bike storage is a better long-term solution.*

The Commission had the following comments:

- Roof garden and landscaping in general – along El Camino, is this going to be sufficient landscaping for this building? Looking for places to add more landscaping around the building, both in open space and public space context. This is an entrance to a nice residential neighborhood.
- Can we soften this architecture a bit? Perhaps a half-way step between the proposed buildings across the street and the rest of the residential neighborhood a few doors up the street. Perhaps something a bit more residential looking. Retail is a smaller part of the middle. Can the building have a bottom, middle, and top, using architectural details and color? There is a blank wall on one side of the building that needs some additional architectural modification.
- Happy that you are going to be looking at using local contractors. Happy to hear you are thinking about solar as this will cut down on our carbon footprint and contributes to sustainability. We are in a drought and I would like to see if the applicant is open to connecting the recycled water that the city is currently investigating.
- Below Market Rate (BMR) unit(s) will contain all of the same amenities as the other units in the building.
- We should be more proactive in separating compost and recycling from the garbage.
- Appreciate the effort to do something regarding the parking. I've seen several of these systems in place and am supportive of it.

- Concerned about open space and would like to see both the open space and the bicycle parking. Perhaps the secure room, as mentioned by another commissioner, is a good solution.
- Exterior of the building should reflect the activities are that going on inside – this is a residential building and should look more like a residential building. Why use the main library as a context for this building? The library is a civic building and it would be better if you looked at other residential buildings. Soften the building, too sharp, cold looking.
- Look at west side of property closest to the Towers or the corners would be good places to look at for open space. I do not see this building as a gateway. Is a more generous opening at the corner feasible?
- There are a lot of other old buildings that can be looked at for guidance/ideas of designing this building. Respect for the integrity of the architecture. The mosaic on the Bank of America building is a treasure.
- Hopefully the design of this building will interact with the other 2 buildings.

Staff wrap up comments

- None

COMMUNICATIONS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Communications from Staff

- a. Hillsdale Pre-application has come in for the shopping center.
- b. January 6, 2015 joint meeting with the Sustainability Commission.
- c. January 13, 2015: Station Park Green Public Hearing and the Sustainable Streets Plan
- d. Staff summarized the work completed by the Planning Commission in 2014 and noted the large body of work. Look forward to working with the Commission in 2015.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further items before the Planning Commission, the meeting adjourned at 11:30 p.m. on Tuesday, December 09, 2014.