

City of Albany

Planning and Zoning Commission Minutes September 14, 2010, Meeting

APPROVED

Note: These minutes are subject to Planning and Zoning Commission approval. The minutes are not verbatim. An audiotape of the meeting is available for public review.

Regular Meeting

1. Call to order

The meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission was called to order by Vice Chair Moss, in the City Council Chambers at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, September 14, 2010.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call

Present: Arkin, Maass, Moss, Panian

Absent: Gardner

Staff present: Planning Manager Jeff Bond, Planning Clerk Amanda Bennett

4. Consent Calendar

There were no consent calendar items.

5. Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items

Michael Barnes, Albany resident, submitted a print document and magazine to the Commissioners and Planning Manager Bond. He stated he was frustrated there was not time to cover the science of cell phones and towers in a three-minute comment at a public hearing, so he was submitting items for the Commissioners to be able to read.

6. Discussions and Possible Action on Matters Related to the Following Items

a. 1600 Solano Avenue. Planning Application 10-017. Design Review, Conditional Use Permit, & Parking Exception for New Commercial Building

The subject property is a 5,127 square foot lot with an existing 2,766 sq. ft. commercial building. The applicant is requesting Design Review approval to demolish the existing building and construct a new two-story 6,275 square foot commercial building for medical offices with 18 off-street parking spaces. Revised concept plans have been prepared that reduce the size of the building and increase the amount of off-street parking.

Recommendation: for discussion only. No action to be taken at this time

Planning Manager Bond delivered the staff report. Vice Chair Moss opened the public hearing. Kava Massih, the project architect, made a presentation. Paul Kasrobi, the project applicant, was available to answer questions. Howard Graves stated the new plan was out of compliance with parking requirements, and many would have to back out onto Ordway Street near a busy intersection, or people would park on the street instead. He asked for a repeat parking study with attention to curb cuts restricting that parking. The project needed to be smaller so less parking would be needed. Julie Graves, Albany resident, wanted to be reassured the large deodar cedar and live oak trees would be protected. She questioned the need for the building to be so large.

Sue Brokken, Albany resident, found the parking plan unreasonable and had concerns about parking in the area; she opposed waiver of any required spaces. Seth Bing, Albany resident, was concerned about parking and pedestrian safety. He stated the applicant should meet the requirements unless bringing something exceptional to Albany. Earl Grinstead, Albany resident, stated it was already a dangerous corner. Simon Dobjensky, Albany resident, stated Ordway was already a busy street. Alison Atma, Albany resident, was concerned about parking and pedestrian safety. Karen Lysmer, Albany resident, was concerned about pedestrian safety. No one else wished to speak. Vice Chair Moss closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Arkin had suggestions for reducing the required number of parking spaces, and a redistribution of spaces on the plan. He felt all vehicles needed to be able to pull out front first. He agreed the parking study should be repeated. He wanted to see ample bicycle parking. Commissioner Maass agreed. Commissioner Panian noted the Commissioners would need to be able to make the findings to approve the project and reviewed what those were. Vice Chair Moss was interested in the idea of putting the entrance on Solano. He would like to hear an estimate of what the actual parking need would be. He wanted to see the entire intersection on the plans.

b. Discussion of City of Albany Bicycle and Pedestrian Plans Public Workshop.

Commissions and members of the public are encouraged to attend a public workshop to be held before this Commission meeting. Attached is a flyer describing the event. This item is being placed on the Commission agenda in order to allow Commissioners to discuss the workshop and bicycle and pedestrian planning.

Recommendation: for discussion only. No action to be taken at this time.

Planning Manager Bond delivered the staff report. Vice Chair Moss opened the public hearing. No one wished to speak. Vice Chair Moss closed the public hearing.

c. Review of State Comments on Proposed General Plan Housing Element.

In 2009, the California Department of Housing and Community Development provided the City with comments on its draft Housing Element. Staff has revised the Housing Element to incorporate HCD comments.

Recommendation: for discussion only.

Planning Manager Bond delivered the staff report. Vice Chair Moss opened the public hearing. No one wished to speak. Vice Chair Moss closed the public hearing.

7. Announcements/Communications:

a. Update on City's Grant Application to the State of California Sustainable Communities Planning Program

Planning Manager Bond reported this would be for General Plan revision, and that it would be a few months before they heard the results.

b. Update City staff participation in the ABAG Sustainable Communities Strategy and AB 32/SB 375 Implementation

Planning Manager Bond was working with staff from about fifteen communities and ABAG on greenhouse gas reduction.

c. Update on City Council agenda items related to Planning and Zoning activities.

Planning Manager Bond reported the 913 Carmel approval was appealed, and the City Council upheld the approval with minor changes to the conditions of approval.

d. Review of status of major projects and scheduling of upcoming agenda items

University Village/Whole Foods may be up for another work session. Also pending were St. Mary's conditional use permit changes and a site tour. Staff was trying to get a third party architect and traffic engineer team to look at the Safeway project with fresh eyes.

8. Future Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting Agenda Items:

- a. Next Regular Planning and Zoning Commission hearing scheduled for September 28, 2010.**

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:23 p.m.

Next regular meeting: Tuesday, September 28, 2010, 7:30 p.m.

Submitted by:

Jeff Bond
Planning Manager