

City of Albany
**Planning and Zoning Commission
Minutes March 9, 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 Chair Gardner, in the City Council Chambers at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 9, 2010.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call

Present: Arkin, Gardner, Maass, Moss, Panian
Absent: None
Staff present: Planning Manager Jeff Bond, Planning Clerk Amanda Bennett

4. Consent Calendar

a. Minutes from the December 8, 2009 Regular Commission Meeting.

Recommendation: Approve.

b. Minutes from the January 12, 2010 Regular Commission Meeting.

Recommendation: Approve.

c. Minutes from the January 26, 2010 Regular Commission Meeting.

Recommendation: Approve.

Planning Manager Bond apologized for the minutes not being ready. Commissioner Maass moved continuation to the next meeting. Commissioner Panian seconded.

Vote to continue items **4a, 4b, and 4c**:

Ayes: Arkin, Gardner, Maass, Moss, Panian

Nays: None

Motion passed, 5-0.

5. Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items

There was no public comment.

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

a. Saint Mary's College High School. 1600 Posen. Planning Application 06-053.

Conditional Use Permit. Update on the planning process associated with the preparation of a new master plan for the St. Mary's College High School and review of the school's use of the athletic field. The master plan includes a number of proposed changes to the site that would require amendments to a previously approved conditional use permit.

Recommendation: Discussion only. No action on the proposed project is to be taken at this meeting.

Commissioner Arkin stated his son was a freshman at St. Mary's College High School. He contacted the FPPC and the City Attorney and was told he was in the clear as far as participating on this item. Planning Manager Bond delivered the staff report. Commissioner Arkin asked about a consultant planner being brought in. Planning Manager Bond reported Diane Henderson was assisting him, starting with the Safeway project. Possibly she will work on St. Mary's and/or Whole Foods in the future.

Chair Gardner opened the public hearing and invited the applicant to make a presentation. Brother Edmond stated the required report on the athletic field was submitted last summer. The school had addressed noncompliance when it arose. They had some requests for change in usage (see Summer, 2009, letter): to increase the number of lacrosse games and add a one-week soccer camp during the day in the summer.

Vivian Kahn, Kahn, Mortimer, and Associates, Planning Consultant, working with St. Mary's, presented on the Master Plan process. Hal Brandes, project architect, reviewed the architectural plans.

Commissioner Panian asked about 148 parking spaces. Mr. Brandes stated there were 35 near Posen (auditorium/gym), 18 spaces between Brothers and neighbors on Ordway, 50 in the upper tiers, and 45 in the lower tier. Looked at putting more spaces on campus, but would be detrimental to overall plan – detrimental to neighbors or requiring extensive soils work. Landscaped terraces break up big parking lot feel. No headlights facing neighbors across the creek.

Chris Hamilton, Albina Avenue, Peralta Park Neighborhood Association, stated they were still waiting for a response to the public comment. The consultant would need to get responses from the school to complete the report. Mr. Hamilton stated Planning Manager Bond had stated they would not be asking the school those questions. Need information prior to mediation. Still concerned about the total number of students. Commissioner Arkin would still like to see comparison with other schools – square footage per student, etc. Chair Gardner asked about getting responses. Planning Manager Bond stated the consultant had presented requests to the school. Some of the information was available, but not all.

Albert Reese, Posen Avenue, was unhappy with the field landscaping – not seeing much layering to screen/break up massing of the bleachers. Deciduous trees were planted there – no screening six months of the year. Add second layer (non-deciduous) between sidewalk and property line, and shrubs at the substructure. Donna DeDemara, Albina Avenue, needed information about the existing and future uses. Weddings or not? Has heard mixed messages. Jennifer Winch, Hopkins Court, noted the Neighborhood Association did not speak for all of the neighbors. The school was probably building for what they are saying they are building for. Tom Rausch, alumni, parent, former member of the Board of Trustees, spoke in support of the school. Mike Harrington, Monterey Avenue, spoke in support of the school. Megan Harrington, alumna, spoke in support of the school.

Jerry Brown, Albany resident, stated this was the number one school in sports in the state.

Laurie Espinoza, Posen Avenue, parent, said the school was great. Paul Black, Posen Avenue, stated we all support the school, but schools have these kinds of problems with neighbors – traffic, parking, loudspeakers, etc. No one else wished to speak. Chair Gardner closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Arkin wondered if anyone had followed up with the City of Berkeley about changing the speed limit on Albina to 15 MPH. He was looking forward to this moving forward. Commissioner Maass appreciated the updates, but wanted to look at parking for the instructional day v. parking for special events. Commissioner Panian stated this was about process, not about the emotional things. Not really updated. Pieces needed: enrollment size; square footage; lot coverage; FAR; parking; max height; DR; unresolved technicalities in environmental report; use numbers; comparison with other schools; etc. Commissioner Moss stated master plans change over time, especially for schools because education changes so quickly – they should be general. Hopeful about mediation. Would like answers to neighbor questions, though.

Chair Gardner noted this was land use. The neighbor concerns were operational. It would be good to separate the two – get existing commitments and operations resolved. Use mediation. Handle master plan separately. Use estimates should be made explicit – more information needed (More specific than Commissioner Moss, less specific than Commissioner Panian). Planning Manager Bond agreed. Commissioner Arkin – area, bulk, height, narrative. Commissioners Arkin and Panian and Chair Gardner were okay with the administrative recommendation.

Chair Gardner announced due to the lateness of the hour item **6d** would be moved to the top of the next meeting agenda.

b. City of Albany Draft Climate Action Plan. Review the Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration, and the Final Draft Climate Action Plan.

Recommendation: Make recommendation to the City Council regarding final action on both documents

Planning Manager Bond and a Jeff Henderson from AECOM, delivered the staff report. Commissioner Arkin asked whether the survey was incorporated and how. The first survey went directly into the plan. The latter survey, to gauge community support for various measures, went through the Sustainability Committee. Commissioner Arkin asked how we would gauge how we are doing. There would be a community-wide inventory every three years. Commissioner Arkin asked whether there were more immediate methods. Greenhouse gas calculators were being created for immediate/perpetual updating. Commissioner Panian asked what happened to the parking. Parking management strategies analysis for future action.

Chair Gardner opened the public hearing. Clay Larson, Albany resident, pointed out a typo on survey question 10. He was not sure the Mitigated Negative Declaration actually contains any mitigations. The original hearing notice had an incorrect date in it. Now the comment period would close the same date as the Council meeting where it was to be approved. He also noted that the plan applied traffic reduction assumptions city-wide although mixed-use projects and

pedestrian improvements oriented to Solano Avenue and San Pablo Avenue. Ed Fields, Albany resident, re-emphasized the importance of adopting the CAP. He noted that it is not perfect, but suggested that it be looked at in the context of 40 years. Chair Gardner closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Moss stated the need to move forward and suggested a review in less than three years. Commissioner Panian noted that some of the metrics in the analysis had less than a direct connection to the policies, and the analysis was not served by being over-specific. He suggested the emphasis should be on parking issues and second residential units, and the need for CEQA review was not apparent.

Chair Gardner noted that every CAP she has reviewed has had a CEQA review. She noted that mitigation measures have to have performance measures. She also noted that many of the key strategies are not popular with people that responded to survey, and City Council need to be prepared to move forward on things that people are not going to like.

Commissioner Maass implementation will depend on political courage of the City Council and the availability of funding. Suggested that a group need to be established to explore parking issues in more detail.

Commissioner Arkin indicated that at this point, he is not inclined to seek major changes in the climate action plan. He said that it should be considered a master plan and that it will change over time. He also noted the very thorough discussion that has been held on the issue over time.

c. 713 Ramona. Planning Application 09-037. Design Review

Request for design review approval to allow a 1,427 sq. ft. two-story addition to an existing single-family home and expansion of an existing accessory structure to create a 420 sq. ft two-car garage.

Recommendation: Approval

Commissioner Arkin noted for the record that he had been contacted by the applicant. Planning Manager Bond delivered the staff report. Chair Gardner opened the public hearing and invited the applicant to make a presentation.

Project architect Winne Tam described the changes to the design of the project. Barry Ogilvie, Ramona Avenue, stated he was disappointed with the revised plans because they do not reduce the size of the structure. He also stated that the change in the architectural style of the home is a problem. An unidentified man spoke in fairness in considering application and inquired about neighborhood aesthetics. He noted that project is within legal guidelines. George DerBedrosian expressed concern about the project in that it is larger than anything else in the neighborhood, noted that it is on a narrow street, and suggested that a scaled down design should be considered.

Commissioner Moss stated that he had an issue with the height measurements calculation. He also stated that the design was too massive. Commissioner Panian noted that zoning

regulations are maximum amount, and not an entitlement. He stated that the project is creating something completely new and that it needs high quality, lower plate heights, articulation of side elevations. He also believes that the change in materials is too timid.

Commissioner Maass stated that the changes are on the right track, but the home needs to get more compact and not so wide. Commissioner Arkin stated that the Commission values quality. He suggested consistent bays and wrapping the band on the side of the home to continue to the window. He also suggested a narrower band.

Commission Panian made a motion to continue the discussion to March 23. Commissioner Maass seconded the motions, which passed 5-0.

d. 1111 Ordway. Planning Application 10-006. Design Review. Parking Exception.

Request for Design Review approval to allow a 1,000 square foot two-story addition to the rear of the home. A parking exception to allow one off-street parking space in the front yard also is required.

Recommendation: Approval

As noted above, this item will appear at the top of the March 23, 2010, meeting agenda.

7. Announcements/Communications:

- a. **Notice of staff intent to administratively approve minor changes to design of four-unit project at 1157 Brighton and single-family addition at 524 Talbot.**

8. Future Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting Agenda Items:

- a. **Next regularly scheduled Planning and Zoning Commission hearing scheduled for March 23, 2010.**
- b. **Scheduling of April 13, 2010, Planning and Zoning Commission hearing to be determined.**

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:06 a.m.

Next regular meeting: Tuesday, March 23, 2010, 7:30 p.m.

Submitted by:

Jeff Bond
Planning Manager