

City of Albany
Planning and Zoning Commission
Minutes March 8, 2011, Meeting

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 Arkin, in the City Council Chambers at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 8, 2011.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call

Present: Arkin, Eisenmann, Maass, Panian
Absent: Moss
Staff present: Planning and Building Manager Jeff Bond, Planning Clerk Amanda Bennett

4. Consent Calendar

- a. 841 San Pablo. Planning Application #11-010. Conditional Use Permit.** The applicant seeks City approval for a conditional use permit to allow a martial arts studio in vacant commercial space at 841 San Pablo Avenue.
Recommendation: approval.

- b. 520 Cornell. Planning Application #11-005. Design Review & Parking Exception.** The applicant is requesting Design Review approval to add a total of 397 square feet to the home by adding an addition to the rear of the home. A parking exception is required to allow one off-street parking space.
Recommendation: approval.

No one wished to pull any consent calendar items. Commissioner Maass moved approval of the consent calendar. Commissioner Panian seconded. There was unanimous approval of the consent calendar.

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. 918 Ventura. Home Occupation.** The applicant is requesting a home occupation permit to allow jewelry art instruction in the garage of a single-family residence.
Recommendation: provide direction to staff and the applicant.

Planning Manager Bond delivered the staff report. Vice Chair Arkin opened the public hearing and invited the applicant to make a presentation. Avi Jacobson, husband of Hadar Jacobson, spoke in favor of the application. Mary Elliott, neighbor, stated there were never any parking problems or any other problems. Susan Boat, neighbor, agreed. No one else wished to speak. Vice Chair Arkin closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Eisenmann noted this was already a busy block because of proximity to Solano Avenue. She thought "two visits" did not mean "two visitors." Commissioner Panian thought this could be considered an educational service, like music lessons, and eligible for a special exception. He thought parking was not that bad in that neighborhood in general. He thought the findings could be made.

Commissioner Maass agreed this could work. He recommended residential permit parking and meters on Solano Avenue. Vice Chair Arkin did not think the education service exemption would work. He proposed two visitors per day equaled ten per week. If there were to be more than ten visitors per week, he thought there should be a conditional use permit. Commissioner Maass asked whether it should equal 14. Hadar Jacobson stated it is usually five at a time. She has Friday night open houses, too, but those are free, social gatherings.

Commissioner Panian stated either staff could approve administratively or they could come back with a conditional use permit. Planning Manager Bond agreed. There was consensus among the Commissioners that two visits equaled ten visitors.

- b. 963 Curtis. Planning Application #11-006. Design Review.** The applicant is requesting Design Review approval to add a total of 1,280 square feet to the home by adding a two-story addition to the rear of the home.

Recommendation: approval.

Commissioner Maass recused himself due to proximity to his residence, and excused himself from the remainder of the meeting. Planning Manager Bond delivered the staff report. Vice Chair Arkin opened the public hearing and invited the applicant to make a presentation. No one wished to speak. Vice Chair Arkin closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Panian stated the drawings were small and there was very little detail. He asked staff to review the requirements with the applicant before building plans were submitted. He thought the addition could work. He wanted to be sure the height would not be excessive. He recommended lowering the plate heights and vaulting the bedroom ceiling.

Commissioner Eisenmann liked the design. She asked whether they would retain the green siding. John Miki, property owner, wanted to remove it but that would be further in the future. Other future plans included a front porch and replacing all of the windows with casement windows with divided lights. Vice Chair Arkin agreed it was nicely designed. Commissioner Panian asked for this to come back on consent with details and a street elevation.

Commissioner Eisenmann asked about alternative material for the driveway. Mr. Miki explained the existing driveway was concrete. Commissioner Panian stated that should be on the site plan. Vice Chair Arkin was comfortable with approving this item and letting staff work with the applicant on being sure the plans were consistent and complete. Commissioner Eisenmann moved approval, Commissioner Panian seconded.

Vote to approve item **6b**:

Ayes: Arkin, Eisenmann, Panian

Nays: None

Motion passed, 3-0.

Findings. 963 Curtis.

Findings for Design Review approval (Per section 20.100.050.E of the AMC)

Required Finding	Explanation
<p>1. <i>The project conforms to the General Plan, any applicable specific plan, applicable design guidelines adopted by the City of Albany, and all applicable provisions of this Chapter.</i></p>	<p><i>The General Plan designates this area for residential development. Additionally, the project meets City zoning standards for location, intensity and type of development.</i></p>
<p>2. <i>Approval of project design is consistent with the purpose and intent of this section, which states “designs of projects...will result in improvements that are visually and functionally appropriate to their site conditions and harmonious with their surroundings, including natural landforms and vegetation. Additional purposes of design review include (but are not limited to): that retention and maintenance of existing buildings and landscape features are considered; and that site access and vehicular parking are sufficient.”</i></p>	<p>The proposal is in scale and harmony with existing development near the site. The architectural style, design and building materials are consistent with the City’s Residential Design Guidelines as described in the staff report. The project will not require significant grading or excavation. The project will not create a visual detriment at the site or the neighborhood.</p>
<p>3. <i>Approval of the project is in the interest of public health, safety and general welfare.</i></p>	<p><i>The proposed project will not be detrimental to the health, safety, convenience and welfare of those in the area and would not adversely affect property, improvements or potential future development in the area. The proposed addition will result in a home with an FAR of 0.49, which is modest in scale, and fitting for the neighborhood.</i></p>
<p>4. <i>The project is in substantial compliance with applicable general and specific Standards for Review stated in Subsection 20.100.050.D.</i></p>	<p><i>The project as designed is in substantial compliance with the standards as stated, including harmonious materials, and well proportioned massing.</i></p>

7. Announcements/Communications:

- a.** City of Albany Planning and Zoning Update “E-Notification”

Planning Manager Bond explained about the City's new e-mail notification feature.

- b. Update on City Council agenda items related to Planning and Zoning activities.**

The proposed farmers market street closure would go before City Council next week.

- c. Review of status of major projects and scheduling of upcoming agenda items**

New plans were coming from Safeway. University Village would also be coming back.

8. Future Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting Agenda Items:

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

Next regular meeting: Tuesday, March 23, 2011, 7:30 p.m.

Submitted by:

Jeff Bond
Planning Manager