

City of Albany
Planning and Zoning Commission
Draft Minutes December 14, 2010, 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 Moss, in the City Council Chambers at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, December 14, 2010.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call

Present: Arkin, Maass, Moss, Panian

Absent: Gardner

Staff present: Community Development Director Anne Chaney, Planning Manager Jeff Bond, Planning Clerk Amanda Bennett

4. Consent Calendar

a. Minutes from the June 3, 2010 Special Commission Meeting.

Recommendation: Approve.

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

Recommendation: Approve.

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

Recommendation: Approve.

d. Minutes from the November 9, 2010 Regular Commission Meeting.

Recommendation: Approve.

Planning Manager Bond apologized the minutes were not in the packet. Commissioner Panian moved continuation of items **4a**, **4b**, **4c**, and **4d**. Commissioner Maass seconded.

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

Ayes: Arkin, Maass, Moss, Panian

Nays: None

Motion passed, 4-0.

5. Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items

Clay Larson, Albany resident, noticed there was a fourth massage parlor on San Pablo Avenue. He disagreed with staff that conditional use permits should not be required. He also asked the city to look at density of certain uses. Vice Chair Moss asked a discussion on this be agendized for the next meeting.

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

- a. **531 Stannage. Planning Application 10-055. Design Review.** The applicant is requesting Design Review approval to demolish the existing home and construct a new residence totaling 2,062 square foot, plus partially below-grade basement.

Recommendation: Approval.

Planning Manager Bond delivered the staff report. Vice Chair Moss opened the public hearing and invited the applicant to make a presentation. Aaron Nakahara, the project applicant, handed in a three-dimensional model and made a presentation. Commissioner Arkin asked what materials would be used for the awning and garage door. He asked who the architect was. Wen Chen, the rear neighbor, was concerned the about the height and loss of view. No one else wished to speak. Vice Chair Moss closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Arkin thought the design was well done within the style. He thought an all-aluminum garage door with glass or obscure glass panels would be appropriate. He hoped a few inches could be taken out of the floor heights. Commissioner Maass thought an awning would work best over the windows. He agreed reducing the floor heights would be good. He recommended considering another light inside the porch. Commissioner Panian was a little concerned about the height and bulk. He wanted staff to confirm the field measurements, and the applicant to consider excavating a little more. He was concerned about the horizontal railings being hazardous. He was concerned about the mass of the garage door. He recommended harmonizing the window types and using similar forms.

Vice Chair Moss thought it would be easy to take sixteen inches off of the height. He suggested the twenty inches per floor could be reduced to fourteen, saving one foot of height. He recommended adding landscaping at pavement level between the driveway and the entrance to the house. On the main floor deck where there was a partial wall, he would like to see it wrap the corner.

Commissioner Panian moved approval with the following added conditions: maximum roof height to be 26' 9" (one foot lower); additional landscaping be incorporated at grade along the driveway; garage door with translucent panels; and final window plan to be approved by staff. Commissioner Maass seconded. Vice Chair Moss recommended repeating the transom light to get more light in.

Vote to approve item **6a** as amended:

Ayes: Arkin, Maass, Moss, Panian

Nays: None

Motion passed, 4-0.

Findings. 531 Stannage

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

Required Finding	<i>Explanation</i>
1. <i>The project conforms to the General</i>	<i>The General Plan designates this area for</i>

<p><i>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>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 in the vicinity of the site. The architectural style, design and building materials are consistent with the City’s Residential Design Guidelines. 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 impact property, improvements or potential future development in the area.</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>

- b. **1500 Solano (Safeway). Planning Application #08-031. Design Review. Planned Unit Development.** The applicant is requesting approval to demolish an existing grocery store and to construct a new approximately 55,000 square foot grocery store above a partially sub-grade parking structure containing approximately 125 on-site parking spaces.
Recommendation: Study Session only. No action by the Commission will be taken at this meeting.

Vice Chair Moss recused himself due to proximity to his residence. Community Development Director Chaney delivered the staff report. Acting Vice Chair Panian opened the public hearing and invited the applicant to make a presentation. Steve Berndt, Vice President of Real Estate for Safeway, stated: Option 1 did not have enough parking; Option 2 presented nothing to the street at all; and Option 3 was the most workable.

Nancy Brandt, a Curtis St. neighbor, was concerned about circulation impacts to Neilson and

Curtis residents, was concerned about the architect working on the brainstorm having a conflict of interest, and was concerned about impacts to property values. John Shokouh, a rear/side neighbor, was concerned about traffic and loading at the rear. Brian Parsley, Albany resident, thought the most important thing to address was the loading. He did not think pedestrian and automobile circulation and use of on-street parking could be controlled.

Steve Pinto, Albany resident, liked the idea of trucks entering closer to Solano. Caroline Sanders, a side/rear neighbor, was concerned about circulation and traffic, and wanted the loading closer to Solano. Philip D'Agostino, project architect, noted they needed fourteen feet clear for the loading--not possible close to Solano. No one else wished to speak. Acting Vice Chair Panian closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Arkin wondered whether, with limited loading hours, A1.4 could be reconsidered by the City Engineer (the trucks backing down Neilson only as far as midblock). He would like to see mixed use with second-story residential on Solano. Or, if there was residential at the rear, the private street could be a partial block-length alley for garage access, or a pedestrian street. He felt one-way streets would not slow traffic down.

Commissioner Maass did not oppose trucks backing down Neilson; he had seen it in other urban areas and thought it could work with the use of special lights and perhaps a flag person. Acting Vice Chair Panian supported including residential uses. Option 1 had trucks circulating closer to Solano.

c. 722 Key Route. Planning Application 10-050. Design Review & Parking Exception.

The applicant is requesting Design Review approval to demolish the existing home and construct a new 2,140 square foot residence. One off-street parking space is proposed to be provided in a garage and a second off-street parking space is proposed to be provided in the front yard setback area.

Recommendation: Approval.

Planning Manager Bond delivered the staff report. Vice Chair Moss opened the public hearing and invited the applicant to make a presentation. Dennis Fox, the project architect, was available to answer questions. No one else wished to speak. Vice Chair Moss closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Arkin thought it was lovely and liked the parking solution. Commissioner Maass agreed, as long as the window details would match on the front. Commissioner Panian appreciated the parking being met and the mix of nice details. He recommended adding width to the driveway, since it was new construction. Vice Chair Moss noted the gate-posts might encroach on the driveway. Commissioner Arkin noted the gate could be a single-leaf off of the house. Commissioner Moss recommended the vents match the details and addition of a trellis over the garage.

Commissioner Arkin moved approval. Commissioner Panian seconded.

Vote to approve item 6c:

Ayes: Arkin, Maass, Moss, Panian

Nays: None

Motion passed, 4-0.

Findings. 722 Key Route

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

Required Finding	Explanation
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>	<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>
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>	The proposal is in scale and harmony with existing development in the vicinity of the site. The architectural style, design and building materials are consistent with the City’s Residential Design Guidelines. The project will not create a visual detriment at the site or the neighborhood.
3. <i>Approval of the project is in the interest of public health, safety and general welfare.</i>	<i>The proposed project will not be detrimental to the health, safety, convenience and welfare of those in the area and would not adversely impact property, improvements or potential future development in the area.</i>
4. <i>The project is in substantial compliance with applicable general and specific Standards for Review stated in Subsection 20.100.050.D.</i>	<i>The project as designed is in substantial compliance with the standards as stated, including harmonious materials, and well proportioned massing .</i>

- d. **1109 Garfield. Planning Application 10-050. Design Review & Parking Exception.**
 The applicant is requesting Design Review approval to construct a new 1,500 square foot residence.

Recommendation: Study Session only. No action by the Commission will be taken at this meeting.

Planning Manager Bond delivered the staff report. Vice Chair Moss opened the public hearing and invited the applicant to make a presentation. Lydia Chow spoke in favor of the project. No one else wished to speak. Vice Chair Moss closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Arkin recommended becoming familiar with the Design Review Guidelines and looking at how narrow lots were developed in Portland, Oregon. Commissioner Maass recommended working with an architect. Commissioner Panian recommended against the wide garage frontage (not pedestrian friendly). One solution would be a tandem garage. Vice Chair Moss suggested a one-car garage, with a parking pad next to it, not necessarily all concrete, and using that to improve the entry appearance, also, moving the entrance closer to the street. Commissioner Arkin suggested a front yard parking exception, with the parking in front of the garage. Commissioner Panian noted they could have a driveway and open space for parking in the rear.

- e. **Report on Association of Bay Area Governments "Sustainable Communities Strategy."** Discussion of the preparation of a Bay Area transportation and land use plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Recommendation: Approval

Planning Manager Bond provided a presentation on the Sustainable Communities Strategy.

- f. **Discussion of Timing and Content of Planning and Zoning Commission Applications, Public Notices and Staff Reports.** Review of staff proposal to improve public noticing and accessibility of application materials to citizens, including change in timeline for applicants to submit materials for Commission consideration.

Recommendation: Approve change in standard practice.

The Commission provided direction to staff on the timing and content of public documents.

7. Announcements/Communications:

- a. **Update on City Council agenda items related to Planning and Zoning activities.**
- b. **Review of status of major projects and scheduling of upcoming agenda items**
- c. **Brief overview of December 7, 2010 Neighborhood Meeting to Explore Potential Wednesday Afternoon Farmers Market on Solano Avenue between Adams and San Pablo**

8. Future Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting Agenda Items:

- a. **Next Regular Planning and Zoning Commission hearing scheduled for January 11, 2011.**
- b. **The Regular Planning and Zoning Commission scheduled for December 28, 2010, will be cancelled.**

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:18 p.m.

Next regular meeting: Tuesday, January 11, 2010, 7:30 p.m.

Submitted by:

Jeff Bond
Planning Manager