

# *City of Albany*

## **Special Joint Discussion of the Planning & Zoning Commission, Traffic & Safety Commission, and Sustainability Committee Meeting Minutes**

**January 24, 2012**

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## **Planning and Zoning Commission Minutes January 24, 2012 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.*

### **Special Joint Meeting to Review Parking Policies**

#### **Planning & Zoning Commission, Traffic & Safety Commission and Sustainability Committee**

**1. Call to order-** The meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission was called to order by Chair Arkin, in the City Council Chambers at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, January 10, 2012.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance**

**3. Roll Call**

#### **Planning & Zoning Commission**

Present: Arkin, Eisenmann, Maass,

Absent: Moss, Panian

Staff present: Jeff Bond, Community Development Director  
City Planner Anne Hersch

#### **Traffic & Safety Commission**

Present: Anderson, Knapp, McCroskey, Miki, Mazur

Staff Present: Aleida Andrino-Chavez

#### **Sustainability Committee**

Present: Cooper, Jennings, Price, Smith-Heimer

- a. Parking Policy Discussion-** As requested by the Planning & Zoning Commission at the October 25, 2011 hearing, this is a joint effort by the Commission, the Traffic & Safety Committee and Sustainability Committee to review existing parking policies. All Committees will begin discussions to amend policies within their respective purviews, for consistency with the City's Climate Action Plan.

*Recommendation: Receive the report and provide feedback to staff.*

1 Ms. Hersch presented the staff report dated January 24, 2012 and provided an overview  
2 of the history of Measure D, the 1978 voter approved parking measure.  
3

4 Planning Commission Chair Arkin explained to everyone present that the purpose of the  
5 conversation this evening is to listen and gauge public opinion on parking policies in the  
6 City. Each Commission or Committee maintains different purviews on the topic of  
7 parking policy. He asked that all present Commission/Committee members briefly  
8 introduce themselves and briefly state their interest in parking policies. He indicated  
9 that the meeting would be casual and encouraged members in attendance to speak on  
10 the subject.  
11

12 **Ray Anderson, Traffic & Safety Commissioner-** stated that he was present to listen and  
13 particularly interested in permit parking policy.  
14

15 **Bernard Knapp, Traffic & Safety Commissioner-** agrees with Commissioner Anderson,  
16 and stated that the future should be thought about carefully.  
17

18 **John Miki, Traffic & Safety Commissioner-** agreed with the comments of his fellow  
19 Traffic & Safety Commissioners.  
20

21 **Thomas Cooper, Sustainability Committee-** the parking system should change  
22 behavior and get people out of their cars. He supported changes to the parking  
23 ordinance with Climate Action Plan policy support.  
24

25 **David Arkin, Planning Commissioner-** parking policies should be modernized and  
26 crafted to be more consistent with housing goals.  
27

28 **Stacy Eisenmann, Planning Commissioner-** the two-car per single-family residence  
29 requirement should be reduced. Compact car requirements should be reviewed and  
30 possibly amended.  
31

32 **Peter Maass, Planning Commissioner-** questioned the effectiveness of Measure D and  
33 the impacts of parking housing and sustainability.  
34

35 **Janet Smith-Heimer, Sustainability Committee-** the City's parking ordinance is  
36 outdated and should be updated.  
37

38 **Lubov Mazur, Traffic & Safety Commissioner-** stated that the City is not obligated to  
39 provide "free" parking on-street. She agreed with the statements of the other  
40 Commissioners.  
41

42 **Del Price, Sustainability Committee-** she deferred to other members and noted that it is  
43 hard to craft policies to change behavior. She noted that she sometimes observes up to 4-  
44 5 cars per household resulting in greater demand for on-street parking. She stated that

1 speed monitors have been effective at reducing speed in the City. Affordable housing  
2 and parking policies should flow together.  
3

4 **Megan Jennings, Sustainability Committee-** Measure D is a challenging topic and any  
5 proposed reforms could be an uphill battle, though it is worth having the conversation.  
6

7 PUBLIC HEARING OPENED.  
8

9 **Winkie Notar-Campbell, Executive Director of the Albany Chamber of Commerce-**  
10 encouraged the utilization of mixed-use development and making San Pablo Ave. more  
11 pedestrian friendly. If people are able to walk to services, auto traffic is reduced.  
12

13 **Michael Wallace, resident of Albany Hill-** the City should enforce the use of off-street  
14 parking spaces on private property. The City requires off-street spaces through the  
15 Zoning Code but does not enforce off-street parking. Residents park on the street more  
16 than they park in their garage. He suggested that the ownership of cars somehow be  
17 reduced.  
18

19 **Preston Jordan, Albany resident-** agrees with Michael Wallace's comments. He  
20 questioned the annual cost incurred by the City to maintain on-street parking. He  
21 further noted that development projects are not built to full capacity due to parking  
22 requirements. Parking requirements are not consistent with the City's Climate Action  
23 Plan or Transit First policies.  
24

25 **Peggy McQuaid, Albany resident-** people with disabilities need adequate parking.  
26 There are a limited number of ADA compliant spaces on Solano Ave. and San Pablo  
27 Ave. with rear access.  
28

29 **Clay Larson, Albany resident-** questioned the notion of crafting policy to change  
30 behavior and stated that it could be perceived as coercive and resistance would follow.  
31

32 **Ed Fields, Albany resident-** agrees with Preston Jordan's comments. He noted that in  
33 the R-3 Zoning District up to 63 units/acre is permitted. Density is good but perhaps not  
34 realistic in Albany.  
35

36 **Paul O'Curry, Albany resident-** does not support parking meters. He stated that there  
37 might be support for permit parking.  
38

39 PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED.  
40

41 **Tom Cooper-** suggested that other City memos and studies should be reviewed as part  
42 of future discussion. Other high traffic areas such as the local schools and community  
43 center should also be studied for parking adequacy.  
44

1 **David Arkin-** supports residential parking permits and changes to the Zoning  
2 standards. The fee for parking exceptions could be used as an in-lieu fee and dedicated  
3 as a future funding source. He encouraged the development of second units and  
4 modifying the ordinance to be consistent with state law. He suggested that staff review  
5 the City of Santa Cruz's Second Unit Ordinance. He also suggested that employee  
6 permit parking be reviewed as employees for businesses on Solano Ave. as well as the  
7 local school rely on on-street employee parking.  
8

9 **Janet Smith-Heimer-** the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) data could be  
10 useful to the City as well as other internet sources. She encouraged further review of  
11 permit parking. She questioned whether Albany has enough on-street parking to justify  
12 parking meters and also thought that meters could create parking problems on the  
13 City's residential streets.  
14

15 **John Miki-** questioned the status of the General Plan update. He also questioned the  
16 ultimate goal of the parking policies. Development takes a long time and is often  
17 political. If parking reductions are granted, better development projects are the result.  
18 City policies could be changed to encourage bicycle parking and collection of in-lieu  
19 fees.  
20

21 **Peter Maass-** suggested a sliding scale for a parking permit fee based on the number of  
22 cars per household. For example, the first permit could be \$50 annually, with each  
23 subsequent permit, being slightly higher.  
24

25 **Lubov Mazur-** suggested that \$50 was not a high enough cost to change behavior and  
26 that the fees would need to be higher to change behavior.  
27

28 **The Planning & Zoning Commission, Traffic & Safety Commission and**  
29 **Sustainability Committee agreed to the next following steps:**  
30

- 31 • Determine what the public wants by including questions related to Measure D  
32 on the upcoming City-sponsored phone survey.
- 33 • Continue soliciting public input through the General Plan update process.
- 34 • Review permit parking provisions in place in Berkeley and Oakland and provide  
35 for future review.
- 36 • The paid parking survey and related program in the City of Berkeley should be  
37 reviewed and included for future discussion.
- 38 • Consider a future repeal of the Measure D two parking spaces per unit  
39 requirement. Signatures would have to be collected to place this issue on the  
40 ballot.  
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42 SPECIAL MEETING ADJOURNED.  
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## Regular Planning & Zoning Commission meeting

### 4. Consent Calendar

#### a. Meeting Minutes from October 25, 2011 Planning & Zoning Commission meeting

*Recommendation: Approve*

**Motion to approve: Commissioner Eisenmann**

**Seconded by: Commissioner Maass**

Ayes: Arkin, Eisenmann, Maass

Nays: None

Motion passed, 3-0.

### 5. Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items

None.

### 6. PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

**A. PA 11-065: 1455 Thousand Oaks Addition** - The applicant is seeking Design Review approval for an addition to an existing home at 1455 Thousand Oaks. The property owner recently acquired the adjoining property, demolished the neighboring home and is working to combine both parcels to create an 8,500 sq. ft. lot. The existing home is two-stories, 2,030 sq. ft. with four (4) bedrooms and two (2) baths. The applicant is proposing to add 1,109 sq. ft. to the first floor of the home, on the west side of the property (northeast corner of Thousand Oaks and Santa Fe) creating a new family room, enlargement of the kitchen and dining area, and new laundry area. Two off-street parking spaces, one covered and one uncovered, are provided.

*Recommendation: The Commission receive the report and provide feedback to the applicant and staff. Findings and project conditions for approval are attached should the Commission choose to approve the project.*

Ms. Hersch presented the staff report dated January 24, 2012.

**Commissioner Maass**-plans are difficult to read. Likes the family room addition and the north window design. How will the open space interface with the street? Roofs are overdone, the applicant should reconsider copper flashing as it may distract from other building details.

**Commissioner Eisenmann**- volumes that make up the house are out of balance. The south elevation is not in harmony with the rest of the home. She suggested modifying

1 the transition from the existing home to the new addition to have a better relationship in  
2 height. She commended the use of solar panels for the project.

3  
4 **Commissioner Arkin-** supports the application request and suggested that the applicant  
5 consider a window over the kitchen area.

6  
7 PUBLIC HEARING OPENED.

8  
9 **Sarah Robinson, property owner,** explained that she was an avid gardener and this  
10 project initially started with purchase and demolition of her neighbor's home to  
11 accommodate a garden. The idea of expanding the home was further considered after  
12 the demolition. She noted that the open air area below the family room would be used  
13 for plants and gardening equipment as well as nursing birds back to health.

14  
15 **Bennett Christopherson, project architect,** noted that he designed the home addition.  
16 He would be open to make changes to the plans if the Commission desired.

17  
18 PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED.

19  
20 **Commissioner Eisenmann moved approval of item 6b with the following additional**  
21 **conditions:**

22  
23 **Special 1-** The applicant shall provide documentation from the Alameda County  
24 Assessor's office of final recordation of the lot merger. Documentation shall be  
25 provided to Community Development staff prior to issuance of a building permit.

26  
27 **Special 2-** The applicant shall modify the proposed area joining the existing home  
28 and addition to have a better relationship in height. The applicant shall provide this  
29 detail to staff for review.

30  
31 **Special 3-** The applicant shall modify the plans to include an architectural detail  
32 above the kitchen area on the south facing elevation. The applicant shall provide this  
33 detail to staff at the time of building permit submittal.

34  
35 **Seconded by: Commissioner Arkin**

36  
37 Ayes: Arkin, Eisenmann, Maass,

38 Nays: None

39 Motion passed, 3-0.

40  
41 **7. NEW BUSINESS**

42 **None.**

43  
44 **8. Announcements/Communications:**

- 1       a. **City of Albany Planning and Zoning Update “E-Notification”**
- 2       b. **Update on City Council agenda items related to Planning and Zoning activities.**
- 3       c. **Review of status of major projects and scheduling of upcoming agenda items**
- 4

5 **9. Future Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting Agenda Items:**

- 6       a. **Next Regular Planning and Zoning Commission hearing scheduled for Tuesday,**
- 7             **February 14, 2012.**
- 8

9 **10. Adjournment**

10 The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 p.m.

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12 Next regular meeting:           Tuesday, February 14, 2012, 7:30 p.m. at Albany City Hall

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15 Submitted by: Anne Hersch, City Planner

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19 **Jeff Bond**

20 **Community Development Director**