

City of Albany

Planning and Zoning Commission Minutes July 9, 2014 Meeting

1
2 *Note: These minutes are subject to Planning and Zoning Commission approval. The*
3 *minutes are not verbatim. An audiotape of the meeting is available for public review.*
4

Regular Meeting

- 5
6
7 **1. CALL TO ORDER-** The meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission was called
8 to order by Chair Donaldson in the City Council Chambers at 7:00 p.m. on
9 Wednesday, July 9, 2014.

10
11 **2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

12
13 **3. ROLL CALL**

14 Present: Arkin, Donaldson, Eisenmann, Moss, Pilch
15 Absent: None.
16 Staff present: City Planner Anne Hersch
17 Community Development Director Jeff Bond
18 Planning Intern Rania Ahmed
19

20 **4. CONSENT CALENDAR**

21 (Consent Calendar items are considered routine and will be enacted by one
22 motion. By approval of the Consent Calendar, the staff recommendations will be
23 adopted unless otherwise modified by the Commission. There will be no separate
24 discussion on these items unless a Commission Member or a member of the
25 audience requests removal of the items from the Consent Calendar.)
26

27 **A. PA 14-037 Design Review for a Single-Story Addition & Accessory**

28 **Structure at 822 San Carlos-** The applicant is seeking Design Review
29 approval for a rear, single-story addition, 129 sq. ft. in area, at 822
30 San Carlos. The subject lot is 3,950 sq. ft. with a 1,038 sq. ft. two
31 bedroom, one bathroom, single-story home. The addition will be
32 14'6" in height, located at the southwest corner of the home, used
33 for storage, and will include a half bathroom. A new deck is also
34 proposed and will be accessible from the addition. The applicant is
35 also seeking Design Review approval for a rear yard accessory
36 structure, 326 sq. ft. in area, and will be used for storage and
37 workshop space. The structure will be 12 ft. in height and 5.5 inches
38 off of the property line. The existing structure will be demolished. Two
39 off-street parking spaces are provided in the adjacent driveway.
40

41 ***Recommendation: Approve subject to the attached findings and***
42 ***Conditions of Approval.***
43

1 ***CEQA: Categorically exempt pursuant to Section 15303, "New***
2 ***Construction or Conversion of Small Structures" of the CEQA***
3 ***Guidelines***
4

- 5 **B. PA 14-034 Design Review for Attic Conversion at 839 San Carlos-** The
6 applicant is seeking Design Review approval for the conversion of an
7 existing attic space at 839 San Carlos to a new master suite. The
8 subject site is a 3,800 sq. ft. lot with a 987 sq. ft. two bedroom, one
9 bathroom home. The applicant is proposing to convert the existing
10 attic space, 500 sq. ft. in area to a new master suite with laundry and
11 storage. New windows will be installed on the north and south
12 elevations. No changes are proposed for the front and rear
13 elevations. This addition will result in a three bedroom, two bathroom
14 home, 1,487 sq. ft. in area. Two off-street parking spaces are
15 provided in the detached garage.

16
17 ***Recommendation: Approve subject to the attached findings and***
18 ***Conditions of Approval.***
19

20 ***CEQA: Categorically exempt pursuant to Section 15303, "New***
21 ***Construction or Conversion of Small Structures" of the CEQA***
22 ***Guidelines***
23

- 24 **C. PA 14-036 Design Review & Parking Exception for a Second Story**
25 **Addition at 941 Jackson -** The applicant is seeking Design Review and
26 Parking Exception approval for a second story addition. The subject
27 lot is 3,700 sq. ft. and contains an 855 sq. ft. two bedroom, one
28 bathroom home built in 1943. The applicant is proposing to expand
29 the first floor to accommodate a new family room and master
30 bedroom. The new second story will include two bedrooms and one
31 bathroom. The overall living area will increase by 820 sq. ft. This will
32 result in a three bedroom, two and half bathroom home, 1,675 sq. ft.
33 in area. The maximum building height is proposed to be 24'7". The
34 home is Minimal Traditional in appearance and is proposed to remain.
35 A Parking Exception is required to accommodate a 7'8" wide parking
36 space and two allow the second space to encroach into the
37 required front yard setback.

38
39 ***CEQA: Categorically exempt pursuant to Section 15303, "New***
40 ***Construction or Conversion of Small Structures" of the CEQA***
41 ***Guidelines***
42

- 43 **D. Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes November 20, 2013**
44 **E. Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes January 22, 2014**
45 **F. Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes February 12, 2014**
46

1 **Motion to approve the Consent Calendar:** Arkin

2 **Seconded by:** Moss

3 AYES: Arkin, Donaldson, Eisenmann, Moss, Pilch

4 NAYES: None.

5 Abstain: Arkin for Item 4F as he was absent, Eisenmann for Item A and B due to
6 proximity reasons, Donaldson for Item 4E as he was absent

7 **Motion passes, 5-0.**

8

9 **5. PUBLIC COMMENT**

10 For persons desiring to address the Commission on an item that is not on the agenda
11 please note that each speaker is limited to three (3) minutes. The Brown Act limits the
12 Commission ability to take and/or discuss items that are not on the agenda; therefore,
13 such items are normally referred to staff for comment or to a future agenda.

14

15 No one wished to speak.

16

17 **6. DISCUSSIONS & POSSIBLE ACTION ON MATTERS RELATED TO THE FOLLOWING ITEMS**

18 **A. PA 14-039 Design Review for a Second Story Addition at 919 Ordway-** The
19 applicant is seeking Design Review approval for a second story addition
20 at 919 Ordway. The subject site is a 5,750 sq. ft. lot with an existing 1,515 sq.
21 ft. with three bedrooms and one bathroom. The applicant is proposing to
22 add 1,092 sq. ft. of new living space and will reconfigure the first floor and
23 create a new family room, closet space, and remodeled kitchen. The new
24 second floor will include a master suite with sunroom, two bedrooms, one
25 bathroom, and upstairs laundry. This will result in a four bedroom, three
26 bathroom home 2,607 sq. ft. in area, with a height of 28'. The existing
27 home is Craftsman in appearance and is proposed to remain. Two off-
28 street parking spaces are provided in the adjacent driveway.

29

30 *Recommendation: Approve subject to the attached findings and*
31 *Conditions of Approval.*

32

33 *CEQA: Categorically exempt pursuant to Section 15303, "New*
34 *Construction or Conversion of Small Structures" of the CEQA*
35 *Guidelines*

36

37 Anne Hersch noted the applicant was not here yet. Chair Donaldson requested that
38 this item be taken out of order and that the agenda move to Item 6B first.

39

40 **B. PA 14-038 Design Review, Conditional Use Permit & Parking Exception for a**
41 **2nd Story Addition at 833 Pomona:** The applicant is seeking Design Review,
42 Conditional Use Permit, and Parking Exception approval at 833 Pomona.
43 The subject lot is 2,500 sq. ft. and contains a 729 sq. ft. two bedroom, one
44 bathroom home. The applicant is proposing to add 778 sq. ft., The
45 addition includes a new master suite with an office and second story
46 deck. The first floor addition will accommodate an expanded bedroom

1 and new stairway. The home will increase from two bedrooms and one
2 bathroom to three bedrooms and two bathrooms, 1,417 sq. ft. in area,
3 26'2" in height. The exterior appearance will change from Spanish Revival
4 to a modern appearance. A Parking Exception is required to allow one
5 parking space in the front yard setback. A Conditional Use Permit is
6 required to allow the vertical extension of the north wall which is 6" off of
7 the property line.

8
9 ***Recommendation: Approve subject to the attached findings and***
10 ***Conditions of Approval.***

11
12 ***CEQA: Categorically exempt pursuant to Section 15303, "New***
13 ***Construction or Conversion of Small Structures" of the CEQA Guidelines***

14
15 Commissioner Eisenmann recused herself for proximity reasons. Anne Hersch
16 presented the staff report.

17
18 **Patrick Flynn**, property owner and applicant- said he decided on the addition to
19 accommodate his growing family. He noted he had worked with both staff and
20 neighbors to make this project agreeable to everyone.

21
22 **Isabella Conti**- introduced herself as the property owner of the property directly
23 the south of this project and said that while the applicant had received support
24 from the tenant, she had just received news of this project. She had concerns
25 about parking and the size of the project.

26
27 **Bernard Knapp**, 825 Pomona- supported the project. He also made a general
28 comment on parking and preserving the look of one story houses was misguided
29 and led to bad design decisions. Chair Donaldson responded briefly to Knapp's
30 general comments.

31
32 **Ben Weinstein**, 829 Pomona- did not see parking as a problem but suggested that
33 the parking situation may be different on his end of the block compared to the
34 area next to Solano. He supported the project.

35
36 Commissioner Arkin- noted the Commission did not actively encourage or
37 discourage pop-up at the rear of the house but pointed out this pattern.

38
39 Commissioner Moss- commented that the design could use improvement and has
40 a hard time selling the project. He stressed that graphics were important. Flynn
41 responded to questions from the Commission and noted that the printed plans
42 may have been a poor reproduction of the original drawings. He commented on
43 the need for the parking exception, pointing out the lack of space and the current
44 parking situation on that block.

45
46 Chair Donaldson- noted he would support the parking exception in this case.

1
2 Commissioner Moss- gave Flynn feedback regarding the design but felt the
3 parking exception was warranted in this case.

4
5 Commissioner Pilch- agreed with the exceptions as well.

6
7 **Motion to approve Item 6B:** Moss
8 -with request that final design and railing details be worked out with staff.

9 **Seconded by:** Pilch
10 AYES: Arkin, Donaldson, Moss, Pilch
11 NAYES: None.

12 **Motion Passes, 4-0.**

13
14 Chair Donaldson asked the applicant to take down the story poles when the
15 appeal period has ended.

16
17 The Commission moved back to Item 6A.

18
19 **6A. PA 14-039 Design Review for a Second Story Addition at 919 Ordway**

20 Commissioner Eisenmann returned to the meeting. Anne Hersch presented the
21 staff report.

22
23 **Jason Kaldis**, project architect and applicant- explained various aspects of the
24 project including the roof orientation and solar panels. He described some
25 changes in the subdivision of the windows and the kitchen layout.

26
27 Commissioner Moss- asked to see shadows. Commissioner Eisenmann suggested a
28 metal flue be put in rather than the traditional brick chimney.

29
30 **Eric**, tenant at 917 Ordway- wanted to see the project get approved but asked a
31 few questions regarding the timeline of the project and changing the conditions
32 to the application. He noted he was fine with wider construction hours if the
33 project could move along faster and was concerned for the applicants' privacy.
34 He wanted to see the story poles moved as well.

35
36 Commissioner Arkin- thought this was a handsome project and thought the new
37 modifications improved the project. He had no problem with the cantilevering. In
38 regards to the neighbor's concerns, he said the construction hours could not be
39 changed and reassured that a landscaping plan was part of the conditions of
40 approval.

41
42 Commissioner Moss agreed with Arkin's comments and did not have anything else
43 to add.

44
45 Commissioner Pilch- agreed with the comments of his fellow commissioners but
46 said he did not like some aspects of the window design.

1
2 Commissioner Eisenmann- liked the new window design. Kaldis explained the
3 reasoning behind various design details.

4
5 Chair Donaldson- liked the design and supported the project.

6
7 **Motion to Approve Item 6A:** Arkin

8 -Incorporating elevation received that night with window changes.

9 -modification of gas insert with staff review of detail

10 **Seconded by:** Pilch

11 AYES: Arkin, Donaldson, Eisenmann, Moss, Pilch

12 NAYEs: None.

13 **Motion Passed, 5-0.**

14
15 Chair Donaldson reminded the applicant to remove the story poles after the
16 appeal period has ended.

17
18 **C. PA 14-020 Design Review for an Addition and Remodel 911 Carmel** - The
19 applicant is seeking Design Review approval to lift and convert existing
20 space to new living quarters at 911 Carmel. The subject lot is 4,400 sq. ft.
21 with an existing 1,119 sq. ft. two bedroom one bathroom home. The
22 applicant is proposing to the lift the home and create a new kitchen and
23 living area in the lower level and create three bedrooms and two
24 bathrooms on the second floor. Parking will be provided in the new
25 attached two car garage. The overall height will increase to 24'9" and the
26 appearance of the home will change from Spanish Revival to a modern
27 appearance with horizontal siding and stucco. This will result in a 2,420 sq.
28 ft. home.

29 *Recommendation: Approve subject to the attached findings and*
30 *Conditions of Approval.*

31
32 *CEQA: Categorically exempt pursuant to Section 15303, "New Construction or*
33 *Conversion of Small Structures" of the CEQA Guidelines*

34
35 Commissioner Moss recused himself from this item for proximity reasons. Anne Hersch
36 presented the staff report.

37
38 **Gary Samonsky**, project architect and applicant- explained the project.

39
40 **Kevin Goess**- commented on the close knit community on that block. He thought the
41 two car garage door impersonalizes the house and did not fit in with the neighborhood.

42
43 **Keith Weinstein**- noted that the house kept going up without notice to neighbors. He
44 was concerned about the design as he felt it did not fit in with the character of the rest
45 of the neighborhood.

46

1 Commissioner Pilch- noted there were two magnolia trees in the street view while only
2 one was addressed in the staff report. He was bothered by the garage doors and
3 referenced the design review guidelines.

4
5 Commissioner Eisenmann- thought the house was plain and the language could be
6 modified on this. She thought the large size of the project was inconsistent and asked
7 for more thoughtful details within the original design. She mentioned the pool house
8 may be able to be a second unit in the future.

9
10 Commissioner Arkin- did not think the building was overly modern or out of character
11 with Albany, but pointed out a couple of conflicts in the building. He said a number of
12 homes on the block had side entries that walked around the living room, while this
13 house walked around the garage. He said there is not much of contribution to the
14 street. The Commissioners proposed shaping the driveway and curb cut to
15 accommodate two cars.

16
17 Samonski- replied the driveway could be reduced. He commented it would be better
18 to narrow the driveway for a better side between neighbors. He explained some details
19 of how he tried to make the house more inviting.

20
21 Commissioner Donaldson- said there were a few items that did not fit with the City's
22 Design Guidelines. He liked the overhang, large bank of windows, and approach. He
23 pointed out the large stucco south elevation and possible privacy issues.

24
25 Commissioner Arkin proposed continuing the item but would be open to approving it
26 on two conditions, 1) that the garage be lowered by one foot and the upper floor
27 lowered by two feet 2) the driveway is narrowed to preserve two on-street parking
28 spaces so there would be a net zero gain or loss of on-street parking. Samonski asked
29 that the condition regarding height not be defined and be left up to the applicants to
30 respond to the comments and reduce visual height.

31
32 **Motion to Approve Item 6C:** Eisenmann

33 With additional conditions that the architect addresses bringing down the height of the
34 garage façade and volume (for example by lowering water table, windows, and/or
35 height) and have staff approve final elevation during the permitting process.

36
37 Winestein said they would likely appeal since they are not letting neighbors see the
38 approved changes and just doing it through staff.

39
40 Commissioner Pilch offered to make an alternative motion. Chair Donaldson checked
41 to see if there was a second for Commissioner Eisenmann's motion. There was none.

42
43 **Motion to continue Item 6C to date certain of July 23, 2014:** Pilch

44 **Seconded by:** Arkin

45 Ayes: Arkin, Donaldson, Eisenmann, Pilch

46 Nays: None.

1 **Motion Passed, 4-0.**

2
3 **7. NEW BUSINESS**

4 **A. Review of the El Cerrito Draft San Pablo Ave. Specific Plan and Draft**
5 **Environmental Impact Report-** the proposed plan runs from the City of Albany
6 border northward. The Plan includes form based Zoning Code, Complete
7 Street, and infrastructure planning.

8 **Recommendation: *For review only.***

9
10 Commissioner Moss returned to the meeting. Jeff Bond gave a quick overview of
11 the plan and introduced planning intern, Rania Ahmed. Ahmed presented the staff
12 report, identifying key impacts of El Cerrito's plan and EIR.

13
14 Chair Donaldson- pointed out that neither the El Cerrito plan nor EIR addresses
15 Central Avenue, for example the signalized intersection with Pierce Street. He liked
16 the gateway policies. He suggested working with El Cerrito on similar projects and
17 combining funds.

18
19 Commissioner Arkin- suggested that the City make a proposal to control its portion
20 of San Pablo Avenue as El Cerrito does and said given the community's concerns-
21 form based codes may be needed. He proposed that bordering areas between El
22 Cerrito and Albany's residential district/Cerrito creek be more residential to make a
23 smoother transition.

24
25 Commissioner Moss- thought El Cerrito's shadow and setback requirements will help
26 Albany areas as well.

27
28 Jeff Bond- noted that the Albany General Plan and El Cerrito General Plan should
29 also be checked to make sure they were in agreement with one another for shared
30 areas such as San Pablo Avenue.

31
32 Chair Donaldson- also mentioned that the Complete Streets project should also be
33 checked with El Cerrito to make sure those plans were in agreement as well.

34
35 **8. ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS/DISCUSSION**

36 (Staff discussion and Commission member announcement of status of previous
37 agenda items and requests for future agenda items. No public comment will
38 be taken on requests for future agenda items).

39
40 Commissioner Pilch announced that at the City Council meeting that week
41 Allen Merris had complimented Albany's Planning and Zoning Commission.

42
43 Commissioner Arkin said he would not be able to make the July 23, 2014
44 meeting.

45
46 **9. ADJOURNMENT**

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The meeting was adjourned at 10:10 PM.

Next regular meeting: Wednesday, July 23, 2014, 7:00 p.m. at Albany City Hall

Submitted by: Anne Hersch, City Planner

Jeff Bond, Community Development Director