

City of Albany

Planning and Zoning Commission Minutes May 27th, 2015 Special & Regular Meeting

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

4 6:00 PM SPECIAL MEETING

5 6 1. CALL TO ORDER

7
8 2. **DISCUSSION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING** - Last week the East Bay Housing
9 Organization (EBHO) held their annual affordable housing week. Several members of the
10 community attended EBHO sessions. The purpose of this special meeting is to provide an
11 opportunity for members of the community to share insights gained from the events.
12

13 **This discussion was not recorded as it was an informational discussion**
14

15 3. **ADJOURNMENT TO REGULAR MEETING AT 7:00 PM**

16
17 Note: These minutes are subject to Planning and Zoning Commission approval. The
18 minutes are not verbatim. An audiotape of the meeting is available for public review.
19

20 7:00 PM REGULAR MEETING

21
22 **CALL TO ORDER-** The meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission was called to
23 order by Chair Donaldson in the City Council Chambers at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday,
24 May 27th, 2015.
25

26 **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

27
28 Chair Donaldson announced that item 6C, PA 15-018, St. Mary's College High School
29 Design Review was moved to the next Planning and Zoning Commission meeting on
30 June 10th, 2015 due to a litigation issue.
31

32 **ROLL CALL**

33 Present: Friedland, Giesen-Fields, Donaldson, Kent, Menotti
34 Absent: None.
35 Staff Present: City Planner Anne Hersch
36

37 4. **CONSENT CALENDAR**

38 (Consent Calendar items are considered routine and will be enacted by one motion. By
39 approval of the Consent Calendar, the staff recommendations will be adopted unless
40 otherwise modified by the Commission. There will be no separate discussion on these
41 items unless a Commission Member or a member of the audience requests removal of
42 the items from the Consent Calendar.)
43

- 44 **A. PA 15-029 Design Review and Conditional Use Permit for a Basement Conversion at 1050**
45 **Cornell-** The applicant is seeking Design Review approval for a basement conversion at
46 1050 Cornell. The subject lot is 3,750 sq. ft. with an existing 1,222 sq. ft. three bedroom,
47 one bathroom home built in 1923. The applicant is proposing to lift the home and
48 excavate the lower level to create a new family room and bathroom, 842 sq. ft. in area.

1 The home height is proposed to increase by 3'8" to 22'11". This will result in a three
2 bedroom, two and a half bathroom home 2,064 sq. ft. in area. The home is Craftsman in
3 appearance and is proposed to remain. Two off-street parking spaces are provided on
4 the new parking pad at the southeast corner of the property. A Use Permit is need to
5 extend the north wall vertically with a side yard setback of 3'3" where 3'9" is required.

6
7 **Recommendation: Review and approve subject to the attached findings and Conditions**
8 **of Approval.**

9
10 **CEQA: The project is Categorically exempt pursuant to Section 15303 "New Construction**
11 **or Conversion of Small Structures."**

12
13 Anne Hersch made an announcement that the applicant submitted slightly different
14 proposed details but that it does not change the FAR.

15
16 Commissioner Giesen-Fields wished not to pull the item from the calendar but wanted to
17 clarify with staff that the applicant can ensure appropriate parking clearances. Anne
18 Hersch agreed to follow up with the applicant.

19
20 Commissioner Kent asked if the applicant would consider a gray water system because
21 they are redoing the plumbing.

22
23 **B. PA 15-030 Design Review & Conditional Use Permit for 1048 Curtis** - The applicant is
24 seeking Design Review and Conditional Use Permit approval for a 775 sq. ft. second story
25 addition and 121 sq. ft. single story addition. The subject lot is 3,900 sq. ft. with an existing
26 three bedroom, two bathroom home built in 1931. The second story is proposed to
27 include three bedrooms and two bathrooms. The first floor will be reconfigured to
28 include a remodeled kitchen, dining room, and living room. The first floor addition is
29 located on the south side of the home and will create a new foyer and powder room.
30 This will result in a four bedroom, three and half bathroom home, 2,050 sq. ft. in area. The
31 home is Craftsman in appearance and is proposed to remain. The proposed height of
32 the home is 27'6". Two off-street parking spaces are provided in the adjacent driveway.
33 A Conditional Use Permit is required to extend the north wall vertically which has a 3 ft.
34 setback.

35
36 **Recommendation: Review and approve subject to the attached findings and Conditions**
37 **of Approval.**

38
39 **CEQA: The project is Categorically exempt pursuant to Section 15303 "New Construction**
40 **or Conversion of Small Structures."**

41
42 **Motion to approve all items of the consent calendar: Friedland**

43 Seconded by: Giesen-Fields

44 AYES: Friedland, Giesen-Fields, Menotti, Donaldson, Kent

45 NAYES: None

46 **Motion passed, 5-0**

47
48 **5. PUBLIC COMMENT**

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

53
54 No one wished to address the commission.

1
2 **6. DISCUSSIONS & POSSIBLE ACTION ON MATTERS RELATED TO THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:**
3

4 **A. PA 15-026 Design Review Amendment for 1017 Ordway-** The applicant is seeking a
5 Design Review amendment for a previously approved project at 1017 Ordway. Design
6 Review and Parking Reduction for a second story addition was approved by the City
7 Council on February 3, 2014. The approval included a new roof deck for the home. The
8 applicant is proposing to modify the exterior wall detail at the roof deck to include a
9 more ornate cap detail. Three lancet stucco relief details are proposed for the north
10 elevation and would be decorated with glass tile. A new copper hood assembly is also
11 proposed. The height is not proposed to change.

12
13 **Recommendation: Review the proposed application and provide feedback to the**
14 **applicant and staff. Conditions and findings are included as attachments to the staff**
15 **report should the Commission choose to approve the project.**

16
17 ***CEQA: The project is Categorically exempt pursuant to Section 15303 "New Construction***
18 ***or Conversion of Small Structures."***

19
20 Anne Hersch presented the staff report.

21
22 Robin Pinell, architect. Explained further, the context of the project and the meaning for
23 the homeowners.

24
25 Commissioner Friedland clarified why this was brought back to the planning and zoning
26 commission. Anne Hersch explained that this project surpassed the small details that can
27 simply be reviewed by the building permit staff and because the elevation changed, it
28 had to be returned to the commission.

29
30 Commissioner Kent asked the applicant regarding the previous issue with the tower
31 structure. Anne Hersch explained that there had been complaints about the height and
32 the architect then modified the design in order to address complaints.

33
34 Commissioner Menotti asked about the progress of construction and building materials.
35 The architect clarified the proposed design.

36
37 PUBLIC HEARING OPENED

38
39 Suzanna Miranden- concerned about the ornate copper addition and how it will reflect
40 and affect neighbors.

41
42 PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED

43
44 Commissioner Giesen-Fields asked if the copper detail is different from the original
45 proposed designs.

46
47 The architect explained the copper installations.

48
49 Commissioner Giesen-Fields clarified the placement of the copper. The architect
50 explained the copper hood had been in the original design and addressed concerns
51 regarding bright reflection.
52

1 Commissioner Friedland clarified that in the proposed design there is no copper hood
2 design. The architect explained that the only copper would be in small details around
3 the proposed design.

4
5 Commissioner Giesen-Fields appreciated the design and supported the project for
6 approval.

7
8 Commissioner Friedland appreciated the design bringing diversity and international
9 design to the city in an elegant and subtle way.

10
11 Commissioner Kent agreed and appreciated the design.

12
13 Commissioner Menotti agreed.

14
15 Chair Donaldson expressed support of the design and briefly explained why he did not
16 approve the project twice before when the project was initially proposed.

17
18 **Motion to approve PA 15-026 Design Review for 1017 Ordway: Menotti**

19 Seconded by: Friedland

20 AYES: Friedland, Menotti, Donaldson, Kent, Giesen-Fields

21 NAYES: None

22 **Motion Passed, 5-0**

23
24 **B. Study Session on Variance and Design Review for a New Single-Family home at 1492**

25 **Posen-** A study session has been requested to review preliminary plans for a variance for
26 a new single family home at 1492 Posen. The subject lot is 5,196 sq. ft. with an existing 894
27 sq. ft. two bedroom, one bathroom home built in 1926. The applicant would like to
28 demolish the existing home and create a three bedroom, two bathroom ADA
29 accessible home. Due to the lot configuration, a variance is requested to allow a
30 relaxed front and rear yard setback. This is a study session and no action will be taken.

31
32 **Recommendation: Receive the report and provide feedback to the applicant. No formal**
33 **action is required.**

34
35 ***CEQA: The project is Categorically exempt pursuant to Section 15303 "New Construction***
36 ***or Conversion of Small Structures."***

37
38 Commissioner Menotti recused himself from this.

39
40 Anne Hersch presented the staff report.

41
42 Commissioner Giesen-Fields asked if the neighbors have been informed regarding their
43 proximity to the house.

44
45 Erick Mikiten, architect, further explained the proposed ideas and obstacles presented.

46
47 Commissioner Friedland asked about potential universal design elements. The architect
48 explained they have not yet come up with a super specific design, however, their goal is
49 to make the house completely accessible to wheelchair access.

50
51 Commissioner Giesen-Fields clarified the proposed distance from the sidewalk and
52 property line. The architect explained they would design consistently with adjacent
53 properties.

1 PUBLIC HEARING OPEN

2
3 No one wished to address the Commission.

4
5 PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED

6
7 Commissioner Friedland expressed openness to the variance and looked forward to
8 seeing what design is formed from an unfortunately tricky lot.

9
10 Commissioner Kent commented on the situation and expressed support of the variance.

11
12 Commissioner Giesen-Fields expressed an inclination to approve the variance for just the
13 yard setback.

14
15 Chair Donaldson expressed support of a variance however, urged the applicant to try
16 and downsize potential plans in order to not max out the FAR. Agreed with
17 Commissioner Giesen-Fields in terms of expressing concerns with parking.

18
19 Commissioner Giesen-Fields urged the applicant to think about ways to detail the front
20 entry.

21
22 Chair Donaldson commented that he didn't have a problem with the project building
23 up to the property line. Commented that he would like to know the landscaping plan of
24 projects above .45.

25
26 Commissioner Friedland also agreed that it would be helpful to see the landscape
27 design with the proposed design.

28
29 **C. PA 15-018 St. Mary's College High School Design Review for Campus Chapel 1600 Posen-**

30 The applicant has filed an application for Design Review for a new campus chapel at
31 St. Mary's College High School. A master use permit for the School was approved on
32 November 18, 2013. The use permit included a 4,400 sq. ft. Chapel located in the
33 southwest portion of the campus, near Albina Ave. The applicant is proposing a new
34 single-story concrete and glass building, 4,400 sq. ft. in area. The proposed design
35 includes a vertical element that slopes from 20 feet to 38 feet tall on the eastern
36 elevation. A Planning Commission study session was held on March 25, 2015. Action may
37 be taken at this hearing.

38
39 **Recommendation: Review and approve subject to the attached findings and Conditions**
40 **of Approval.**

41
42 *CEQA: A Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Master Use Permit for St. Mary's College*
43 *High School was adopted by the Albany City Council on November 18, 2013.*

44
45 ****This item was pulled due to a threat of litigation and will be re-noticed for a future**
46 **date.****

47
48 **7. NEW BUSINESS**

49
50 **A. Discussion of Commission Rules of Parliamentary Practice and Operation**

51
52 Anne Hersch gave a brief background regarding the new business of commission rules
53 of practice and operation. Informed the commission of different ideas and actions that
54 can be taken into consideration more formally.

1
2 Commissioner Friedland expressed the need for formalizing the ideas and creating a
3 very clear expectation for all who may be involved with the meeting.
4
5 Commissioner Kent expressed concern about the possibility of allowing people to speak
6 longer than three minutes.
7
8 Commissioner Friedland brought up the idea of potentially allowing public
9 commentators to cede their time in order to maximize efficiency and allow one person
10 to express the thoughts of multiple people.
11
12 Anne Hersch explained they had that policy previously, and unfortunately it did not work
13 as planned since people would end up talking for far too long a time.
14
15 Commissioner Giesen-Fields commented that a rule needs to be hard and fast and not
16 up to interpretation in order to be fair with everyone.
17
18 Commissioner Kent questioned whether the public would be allowed to clarify.
19
20 Commissioner Giesen-Fields explained that he would like to allow clarifications but not
21 allowing people to elaborate and speak on the same issue once again.
22
23 Chair Donaldson expressed concern about people being angry about being cut off,
24 however, in favor of efficient meetings.
25
26 Commissioner Friedland expressed appreciation for the hard job Chair Donaldson has.
27 Commented that three minutes is plenty of time and people can form concise, helpful,
28 comments within the time constraint.
29
30 Commissioner Kent commented that on nights with shorter agendas, is it necessary to
31 cut people off.
32
33 Commissioner Friedland commented that it's still plenty of time but it wouldn't be
34 consistent across each meeting.
35
36 Commissioner Giesen-Fields commented that in past meetings a big issue has been
37 allowing people to continue commenting after public comment had officially closed.
38
39 Chair Donaldson commented that they have not been enforcing the five minute rule for
40 the applicant.
41
42 Commissioner Friedland expressed the possibility of allowing applicants more time,
43 specific to the kind of project being presented.
44
45 Chair Donaldson suggested that staff recommend to applicants the appropriate
46 amount of time for them to speak.
47
48 Commissioner Friedland suggested that they ask the public to simply refer to a comment
49 they agree with and would like to emphasize rather than restating.
50
51 Commissioner Kent asked if the staff would enact all of what was just discussed.
52
53 Commissioner Giesen-Fields clarified that staff will comprise and concisely review the
54 discussion and put into action.

1
2 Anne Hersch mentioned she is working with the city clerk to comprise a clear policy.

3
4 Alexa Hauser- agreed with points made from the commission. Appreciated the
5 discussion and balance of efficiency and consideration of complex issues. Urged the
6 commission to come up with an alternate form of communication, different from
7 testimony, for more general public issues.

8
9 Commissioner Friedland appreciated the consideration of a different format.

10
11 Commissioner Giesen-Fields reminded the public that the commission does receive
12 emails from the public prior to the meeting.

13
14 Anne Hersch suggested that a generalized announcement or narrative on the agenda
15 might be a helpful way to remind new and older comers regarding the new rules.

16
17 **Recommendation: provide direction to staff to prepare resolution establishing rules of**
18 **operation pursuant to Albany Municipal Code Section 2-18.**

19
20 **8. ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS/DISCUSSION**

21 No appeal on 941 Jackson.

22
23 Chair Donaldson expressed concern about projects with a maxed out FAR without a
24 landscape plan. Suggested that they require a landscape design from projects with an
25 FAR greater than .45

26
27 Commissioner Friedland asked if the commission has discretion regarding landscaping.

28
29 Anne Hersch explained that it does fall under the design review but without specific
30 requirements.

31
32 Commissioner Friedland expressed concern about different personal preferences for
33 landscaping.

34
35 Commissioner Kent commented that they would be looking at functionality not
36 necessarily aesthetics.

37
38 Commissioner Giesen-Fields expressed support of asking for a landscape design.

39
40 Anne Hersch commented that they would need to look at the possible amendments for
41 their applications before being enforced.

42
43 **9. NEXT MEETING: June 10, 2015**

44
45 **10. ADJOURNMENT**

46
47 The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

48 Next regular meeting: Wednesday, June 10, 2015, 7:00 p.m. at Albany City Hall

49
50
51 _____
52 Submitted by: Anne Hersch, City Planner

53
54 _____
55 **Jeff Bond, Community Development Director**