

# City of Albany

## Planning and Zoning Commission Minutes April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2015 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 Chair Donaldson in the City Council Chambers at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2015.

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

3. **ROLL CALL**

Present: Friedland, Giesen-Fields, Donaldson, Kent, Menotti

Absent: None

Staff Present: City Planner Anne Hersch

Community Development Director Jeff Bond

4. **CONSENT CALENDAR**

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

**None.**

5. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

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

**Alexa Hauser-** Albany resident member of Diverse Housing Working Group. Announced the schedule for the East Bay housing organization Affordable Housing week. Expressed the hope that commissioners and city council members would take the time to attend these events in order to generate discussion about affordable housing possibilities in Albany.

**Bob Urhammer-** 700 block of Pierce Street. Wanted to see the whole parcel zoned as park, not as anything else or split up into different zones.

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

A. **PA 14-036 Design Review & Parking Addition for a Single Story Addition at 941**

**Jackson-** The applicant is seeking Design Review and Parking Exception approval

1 for a single story addition and secondary residential unit. The subject lot is 3,750 sq.  
2 ft. and contains an 855 sq. ft. two bedroom, one bathroom home built in 1943. The  
3 applicant is proposing to expand the first floor by 485 sq. ft. which includes a new  
4 master suite, family room, and bedroom. This will result in a three bedroom, two and  
5 bathroom home, 1,340 sq. ft. in area, 16'6" in height. The home is Minimal Traditional  
6 in appearance and is proposed to blended with a modern style addition with shed  
7 roof. The applicant is also seeking approval to convert the existing accessory  
8 structure into a secondary residential unit. A Parking Exception is required to  
9 accommodate the third parking space in the required front yard setback.

10  
11 **Recommendation: The Planning & Zoning Commission hold a public hearing,**  
12 **receive public comment, and provide feedback to the applicant and staff. Due to a**  
13 **public notification issue, new public hearing notices will be sent for April 21, 2015**  
14 **Planning & Zoning Commission hearing.**

15  
16 **CEQA: Categorically exempt pursuant to Section 15303 "New Construction or**  
17 **Conversion of Small Structures," of the CEQA Guidelines**

18  
19 Anne Hersch presented the staff report.

20  
21 Commissioner Kent asked about the existing nonconforming shower in the  
22 accessory structure.

23  
24 Chair Donaldson asked about the potential tandem parking spaces. Anne Hersch  
25 clarified to code per this situation.

26  
27 Colin Mahan, property owner of 941 Jackson. Explained wanting to get started on  
28 the project.

29  
30 Commissioner Giesen-Fields expressed concern regarding the parking width. Colin  
31 explained how they have altered the design plan to utilize more space.

32  
33 Commissioner Kent asked about potential worries about a fence blocking view.  
34 Colin explained that it had been changed.

35  
36 PUBLIC HEARING OPENED

37  
38 **Alan Chen-** 943 Jackson. Concerned with the Stop order not enforcing a fix.

39  
40 **Igor Basauski-**expressed support for this house to be expanded in order to  
41 accommodate a larger family.

42  
43 **Julia Shaver-** 943 Jackson St. Expressed concerns about the fire code and wanting it  
44 to be addressed while still supporting the project.

45  
46 **Chris Benynon-** Wanted to support the family and this project as a way of investing  
47 in Albany's infrastructure. Commented that the accessory structure addresses  
48 housing goals for the new General Plan.

49  
50 **Barbara Chambers-** 937 Jackson. Expressed the concern that once an inspector left,  
51 illegal work would be done and they want the illegal work addressed.

1 **Alexa Hauser-** Spoke in support of the additional housing unit as a way of supporting  
2 housing goals of the city.

3  
4 **Robert Cheasty-** Expressed support of this project as a way of bringing a low-impact  
5 addition to bring an additional housing unit.

6  
7 PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED

8  
9 Commissioner Friedland appreciated the design and commended the applicant for  
10 garnering community support.

11  
12 Commissioner Giesen-Fields spoke regarding the 1-inch issue and expressed no  
13 concern with that slight change in the rule given the small scale of the issue.

14  
15 Commissioner Menotti agreed about the parking and liking the scale of the design.

16  
17 Commissioner Kent expressed concern about a history with code violations.

18  
19 Chair Donaldson reminded the commission of this exception as still being illegal by  
20 the books. Frustrated with the applicant and would urge the commission to not  
21 allow this exception.

22  
23 Commissioner Friedland expressed support again as a way of objectively looking at  
24 this project without considering the past violations and seeing the proactive  
25 changes this applicant has made on the newly revised proposed design.

26  
27 Commissioner Giesen-Fields recognized the concerns with the existing code but  
28 expressed support of this design because of how small the one inch exception  
29 would be.

30  
31 **B. PA 15-013 Design Review & Parking Reduction for 1211-1215 Solano Ave.-** The  
32 applicant is seeking Design Review and Parking Exception approval to add 892 sq.  
33 ft. to an existing commercial mixed use building at 1215 Solano Ave. The subject site  
34 is 2,969 sq. ft. with an existing 2,873 sq. ft. mixed use office building with two  
35 apartments. The overall height of the building will increase by 6 ft. from 19'1" to  
36 25'1" and the appearance will remain mid-century modern. One off-street parking  
37 space is provided in the attached garage. The overall building area will increase to  
38 3,698 sq. ft. A Parking Reduction is required as a second off street parking space  
39 cannot be provided on-site. Per Commission direction, the applicant is now  
40 proposing to add 842 sq. ft. to the second story apartment and preserve the lower  
41 level 425 sq. ft. unit.

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

45  
46 **CEQA: Categorically exempt pursuant to Section 15303 "New Construction or**  
47 **Conversion of Small Structures," of the CEQA Guidelines**

48  
49 Anne Hersch presented the staff report.

50  
51 Chair Donaldson clarified the differences between the square footage.  
52

1 Commissioner Friedland confirmed the shrinkage of commercial square footage.

2  
3 Daniel Winkler- expressed support of the project and his support of Albany and how  
4 his intentions of this building are nothing but good. He also explained how they have  
5 addressed all previous concerns.

6  
7 Commissioner Giesen-Fields clarified the building material of the newly proposed  
8 design.

9  
10 Chair Donaldson asked about potential bike parking. David Winkler explained that  
11 they have the infrastructure for tenants and for employees.

12  
13 Rudy Woodman addressed questions regarding the newly proposed height.

14  
15 Commissioner Kent clarified the new building height.

16  
17 Chair Donaldson concerned about the railing/ banister design. Also clarified the  
18 change in the story pole. Rudy Woodman explained the changes.

19  
20 Chair Donaldson asked about the structure of the existing courtyard. Rudy  
21 Woodman explained current usage and the changes proposed.

22  
23 **Jenny Sevedra-** Neighbor at 815 Talbot Ave. Concerned about parking and the  
24 new design aesthetic.

25  
26 **Harry Prine-** Owner and Manager of Albany Cleaning Center. Concerned about the  
27 cut down of parking spaces and still concerned about his solar panels being  
28 shaded.

29  
30 **Bonnie Elterman-** Owner of As You Wish. Wanted to the commission to address the  
31 shading issue with architect with a potential new design.

32  
33 **Alice Sevadra-** 815 Talbot. Frustrated with the mention money as a consideration of  
34 the commission.

35  
36 **Alexa Hauser-** appreciated the commission's decision to request a second housing  
37 unit.

38  
39 **Francesco Papalia-** commented about the parking being a total issue, not an issue  
40 of just this one business. Additionally, he added that the businesses are on the sunny  
41 side of the street and the shading should not be considered an issue.

42  
43 **Rita Norbee-**asked about the changing office space dimensions.

44  
45 Commissioner Kent asked about the potential of moving the design. Rudy  
46 Woodman explained it would block sunlight from the office and the construction  
47 process would be quite disruptive.

48  
49 Commissioner Friedland asked about the change in office space. Rudy Woodman  
50 explained it's a net increase but a decrease from the design proposed last time.

51

1 Commissioner Kent asked about the window up against the eve. Rudy Woodman  
2 explained they were attempting at some better lighting and explained that the  
3 windows would be exterior details and they would not interfere with the rafters.  
4

5 Chair Donaldson brought the discussion back to the commission.  
6

7 Commissioner Menotti appreciated the changes they have made to address  
8 concerns from neighbors and that they have kept the secondary unit.  
9

10 Commissioner Kent appreciated the letter sent to employees asking them not to  
11 park on Solano Ave. Also commented on a past shading study.  
12

13 Commissioner Giesen-Fields mentioned that no one has the legal right to object to  
14 shade or access to light. Appreciated all the steps the applicant has taken to  
15 address problems and concerns from neighbors and community members.  
16 Appreciates the additional housing unit.  
17

18 Commissioner Friedland agreed with Commissioner Menotti.  
19

20 Chair Donaldson appreciated all the efforts of the applicant to address problems  
21 the commission had previously to this meeting. Would like to approve of the parking  
22 exception.  
23

24 **Motion to approve PA 15-013 Design Review with parking reduction and increased**  
25 **bicycle parking: Menotti**

26 Seconded: Giesen-Fields

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

28 NAYES: none

29 **Motion passed, 5-0**  
30

31 **C. PA 15-018 St. Mary's College High School Design Review for Campus Chapel 1600**  
32 **Posen: \*\*Study Session\*\***

33 The applicant has filed an application for Design Review for a new campus chapel  
34 at St. Mary's College High School. A master use permit for the School was approved  
35 on November 18, 2013. The use permit included a 4,400 sq. ft. Chapel located in the  
36 southwest portion of the campus, near Albina Ave. The applicant is proposing a new  
37 single-story concrete and glass building, 4,400 sq. ft. in area. The proposed design  
38 includes a vertical element that slopes from 20 feet to 38 feet tall on the eastern  
39 elevation. This is a study session and no action will be taken.  
40

41 ***Recommendation: Receive report and provide feedback to the applicant and staff.***  
42 ***This is a study session item and no action will be taken.***  
43

44 ***CEQA: A Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Master Use Permit for St. Mary's***  
45 ***College High School was adopted by the Albany City Council on November 18,***  
46 ***2013.***  
47

48 Commissioner Menotti recused himself from the discussion because he lives in close  
49 proximity with the project.  
50

51 Anne Hersch presented the staff report and explained she will be brief in order to  
52 accommodate the architect's presentation.

1  
2 **Vivian Kahn**, architect for project. Gave more detailed presentation about the site  
3 history and the new chapel project specifically.  
4

5 Mark Cavagnero, architect with another architect (name not discernible) reviewed  
6 the specific design and importance of the project for the campus.  
7

8 Chair Donaldson asked about sidewalk access from the bridge. The architects  
9 explained the flow of pedestrian student traffic in regards to the new design.  
10

11 Commissioner Friedland asked about what informed the proposed changes. The  
12 architects explained that it might become more clear when they review the three-  
13 dimensional drawings.  
14

15 Emily from Andrea Cochran Landscape Architecture spoke about specific  
16 landscaping plans to accompany the proposed chapel design plans.  
17

18 Commissioner Giesen-Fields asked about the placement of a more landscaped  
19 garden. The architects responded with more specific details of the enclosed garden  
20 space.  
21

22 Chair Donaldson asked the architects whether they have considered acoustics and  
23 potential music facilities within the space. The architects explained that the  
24 materials for the ceilings and walls will make it suitable for multi-uses.  
25

26 Commissioner Friedland asked about exterior building materials. Architects  
27 explained the design plans for the chapel including certain metal details and  
28 softening wood. Commissioner Friedland expressed positive feedback for the  
29 architects about the design and overall aesthetic.  
30

31 Commissioner Kent asked about the path pedestrians would take to enter the  
32 space. The architects explained the path as part of the journey of entering the  
33 space (by the creek and through the garden).  
34

35 PUBLIC HEARING OPEN  
36

37 Person from neighborhood council around St. Mary's. Supported the new design in  
38 stark contrast to the previous design proposal.  
39

40 PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED  
41

42 Commissioner Giesen-Fields asked staff about the different potential issues that had  
43 been previously cited. Anne Hersch explained there had been a need for traffic  
44 calming and that had been one condition and the other had to do with a  
45 compliance plan and the school will spend money each year to monitor  
46 compliance.  
47

48 Anne Hersch explained that one of the conditions is tied to the previously proposed  
49 music building and the commission would need to clarify that condition.  
50

51 Commissioner Giesen-Fields appreciated the modest, good design.  
52

1 Commissioner Kent asked a clarification about the drawings provided in contrast  
2 with the presentation slides.

3  
4 Chair Donaldson appreciated the design and the revisions that were made in  
5 response to neighbor concerns. Clarified the role of the commission for this project.  
6 Anne Hersch explained it is only the design review.

7  
8 Chair Donaldson commented on the public art integration in the building so  
9 explained past context for denying this kind of proposal. Anne Hersch clarified the  
10 past project in greater context.

11  
12 **7. NEW BUSINESS**

13 None.

14  
15 **8. ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS/DISCUSSION**

16 None.

17  
18 **9. NEXT MEETING:** April 22, 2015

19  
20 **10. ADJOURNMENT**

21  
22  
23 The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 p.m.  
24 Next regular meeting: Wednesday, April 22, 2015, 7:00 p.m. at Albany City Hall

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26  
27 Submitted by: Anne Hersch, City Planner

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29  
30 **Jeff Bond, Community Development Director**

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