# City of Albany

# Planning and Zoning Commission Minutes March 11th, 2015 Meeting

1 2 3

4

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** 

5 6 1. CALL TO ORDER- The meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission was called 7 to order by Chair Donaldson in the City Council Chambers at 7:00 p.m. on 8 Wednesday, March 11, 2015.

9

#### 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

10 11 12

13

14

15

#### 3. ROLL CALL

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

Absent: None

Staff Present: City Planner Anne Hersch

Community Development Director Jeff Bond

16 17 18

19

20

21

22

23

#### 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.)

24 25

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

A. PA 14-074 Design Review, Conditional Use Permit, & Parking Exception for 1112 Evelyn- The applicant is seeking Design Review, Conditional Use Permit, and Parking Exception approval for an 807 sq. ft. second story addition at 1112 Evelyn. The subject lot is 2,500 sq. ft. with an existing 807 sq. ft. 2 bedroom, 1 bathroom home built in 1922. The applicant received Design Review approval in July 2011 to add 168 sq. ft. at the rear of the existing home. As part of this scope, the applicant is proposing to build directly above the existing home and will add 807 sq. ft. to the existing second story. This will include 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, and new storage. The first floor will be reconfigured to include an expanded kitchen, living and dining room. The new maximum height of the home will be 25'4" and the appearance will change to Spanish Revival. A Conditional Use Permit is required to extend the non-conforming north wall vertically. A Parking Exception is required to allow the second parking space to be located in the front yard setback.

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

1 2 3		CEQA: Categorically exempt pursuant to Section 15303 "New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures," of the CEQA Guidelines
4 5		Commissioner Giesen-Fields pulled the item from the calendar.
6 7 8		Anne Hersch presented the staff report.
9 10		Commissioner Giesen-Fields wanted to pull to item in order to formally put his thoughts on record. Expressed support of the project after visiting the site.
11 12 13		Chair Donaldson explained what had happened at a previous meeting during a study session for this project.
14 15 16		PUBLIC HEARING OPENED
17 18		No one wished to address the commission.
19 20		PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED
21 22		Motion to approve PA 14-074 Design Review, Conditional Use Permit, and Parking Exception for 1112 Evelyn: Giesen-Fields
23 24		Seconded: Friedland
25 26		AYES: Friedland, Giesen-Fields, Menotti, Kent, Donaldson
27 28 29		NAYES: None
30 31		Motion Passed, 5-0
32 33 34 35 36 37	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.
38 39 40		Alice Savedra- Concerned about the massage parlors opening up in Albany.
41 42 43		Anne Hersch addressed the concerns by explaining the fluctuating California laws and how they are hoping to come back to the commission soon with tighter regulations for massage businesses.

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

A. PA-15-014 Design Review & Conditional Use Permit for 540 Cleveland Avenue -

The City is proposing a new 17,070 square foot two story building on a 0.864 acre parcel to serve the City of Albany Public Works Dept. The site, previously occupied by Western Forge and Flange, is currently vacant. The project includes ground floor warehouse for storage of materials and vehicles and second floor office and storage space. Twenty on-site parking spaces plus additional tandem parking are incorporated into the proposal. The exterior design of the building has been modified since earlier Commission review, and is now proposed to be finished in a modern architectural style with corrugated metal finish.

Recommendation: Approve subject to the attached findings and conditions of approval.

CEQA: A Mitigated Negative Declaration was prepared pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines (CEQA) and approved by the City Council on December 15, 2014.

Jeff Bond presented the staff report.

Janet Tam, Elizabeth Mcloud, Karen Burkes, and Ryan Marshall comprise the design team for this project.

Janet Tam explained the revised design. Elizabeth Mcloud highlighted features of the site, explained the parking space placement and areas for truck loading. She further explained landscaping details for the property area.

Karen Burkes offered additional information about design features and flow of the proposed building.

Janet Tam explained the proposed building materials and how they plan to tie in accent colors.

Elizabeth Mcloud discussed the LEED goal of the city and expressed confidence that the project will meet that goal.

Commissioner Giesen-Fields asked about the potential of decreasing overall height in regards to a previous council meeting earlier in the year. Karen Burkes explained that the proposed height in the revised design is actually a decrease from the original plan due to the removal of the mezzanine while still accommodating the large trucks and storage within the space.

Commissioner Giesen-Fields asked if the construction is going to be a space frame.

Ryan Marshall explained they saved money on metal stud framing because it will be a completely sealed building.

Commissioner Kent asked about the potential of wood on the proposed design. Elizabeth Mcloud and Janet Tam explained they are considering it as an accent piece but they are not completely sure yet.

Commissioner Kent asked Jeff Bond if the proposed design would accommodate future growth. Jeff Bond explained that the proposed design should accommodate some growth, however, the department is not expecting to grow by many employees in the coming years. Janet Tam also explained the expansion that this revised design has brought forward.

Commissioner Friedland appreciated the cost-saving approach and asked staff about potential color palette, scheme, and font for public buildings in Albany.

Commissioner Menotti asked about access to public transportation.

Karen Burkes explained that there are no BART stations or walking-distance bus stops from the site specifically.

Commissioner Menotti asked about the handicap accessible parking spot and the distance from the door. Janet Tam explained it was a space-saving decision but it does in fact meet code.

Commissioner Menotti asked about potential solar installations. Jeff Bond explained they are still trying to figure out the details and whether they would contract with a private company, however, that is a detail to be reviewed at a later time. Janet Tam explained they are planning on solar installations as part of their LEED goal checklist.

Commissioner Menotti asked about the potential for water recycling with this new development. Karen Burkes explained that there will be a mechanism for recycling water on site.

Commissioner Giesen-Fields asked about other details not covered—lighting, rooflines/rooftop, etc.

Jeff Bond explained that they are hoping to bring this project back to the commission as a full package for final review.

Chair Donaldson asked about the durability of the bright color paint proposed.

Janet Tam explained that the kind of paint is very durable and the side of the building where the colors are displayed will only receive morning sun, not harsh sun from later in the day.

Chair Donaldson expressed disappointment with the current design in contrast with the previously proposed design. He asked for an explanation for the newly proposed design.

Jeff Bond explained that it gives more flexibility for the building usage and expressed the city's need for storage space which would have been lost with the mezzanine.

Janet Tam expressed the consistency this design has with current buildings in the surround area.

Chair Donaldson asked about the potential fencing.

Jeff Bond explained that the fencing choice would also be brought back to the commission along with other detail-oriented choices. The design team explained they are looking into better alternatives to a chain-link fence.

Commissioner Giesen-Fields asked about funds for screening on the roof. Ryan Marshall explained that the team has discussed it, but it does not seem to be a foreseeable issue.

Janet Tam explained they will perform a site study. Commissioner Giesen-Fields supported the idea given that it might be an eyesore from higher-rise buildings in the surrounding areas.

## PUBLIC HEARING OPENED

Someone from the audience was concerned that between the two-highways the building would get dusty and dirty. Janet Tam expressed the potential need for future maintenance.

### PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED

Commissioner Friedland expressed support of the design, especially the green features and a cost effective public building.

Commissioner Kent liked the design as well and clarified specific design details.

Commissioner Menotti expressed support of the design and the sustainability aspects.

Commissioner Giesen-Fields appreciated the design given the restrictions. Expressed the need for more accent details that could allow the building not to fade into the industrial setting.

Jeff Bond clarified that the commission is being asked to make a decision on this project in order to move forward to the council.

Chair Donaldson expressed disappointment with the newly proposed design. However, he appreciated all the work the design team had committed to keeping the design interesting considering the decrease in budget. Chair Donaldson expressed concerns with a few of the conditions listed in the staff

report. Reviewed the conditions with staff to clarify what was needed and what should be left out.

Commissioner Kent clarified if the commission would see this project again. Chair Donaldson explained they would not, with the exception of specific design elements such as the fencing and potential signage.

Jeff Bond reminded the commission they can add conditions of approval for the project.

Commissioner Friedland commented that she thinks the design of the building is appropriate given the usage: Public works.

# Motion to approve PA 15-014 540 Cleveland: Friedland

Seconded by: Kent

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

**NAYES: None** 

Motion passed, 5-0

The Motion was amended by Commissioner Giesen-Fields to ensure that the applicant works with city staff to view options for material treatments for the base of the building as well as the capital of the building.

Commissioner Giesen-Fields asked the applicant if they had considered any kind of treatment to the top of the building to add detail. Janet Tam explained that they receive a kit of parts they are trying to use creatively.

Anne Hersch requested a few minute recess in order for staff to set up and allow members of the public to fill out speaker cards.

B. PA15-013 Design Review & Parking Reduction for 1211-1215 Solano Ave. - The applicant is seeking Design Review and Parking Exception approval to add 842 sq. ft. to an existing commercial mixed use building at 1215 Solano Ave. The subject site is 2,969 sq. ft. with an existing 2,873 sq. ft. mixed use office building with two apartments. The applicant is proposing to add 842 sq. ft. to the second story and consolidate two apartments into one. The overall height of the building will increase by 6 ft. from 19'1" to 25'1" and the appearance will change from mid-century modern to Craftsman style. One off-street parking space is provided in the attached garage. The overall building area will increase to 3,654 sq. ft. A Parking Reduction is required as a second off street parking space cannot be provided on-site.

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

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

Anne Hersch presented the staff report.

 Chair Donaldson asked if there was any information from earlier records about parking for this property. Anne Hersch commented that the apartments were added on before the current parking requirements were put in place and that the original building had changed in usage over the past years.

Commissioner Giesen-Fields asked about the new parking requirements. Anne Hersch explained the various parking requirements for residential and commercial use.

Rudy Widmann architect for project.

Sunny Kim, office manager and friend of building owner. Moved to Albany for schools and discussed the contributions the building owner has made for the city and the schools specifically. Discussed the general proposed design.

Rudy Widmann discussed the design details more specifically and how the design will interact with the streetscape on Solano Ave. He also discussed the current conditions and building materials of the existing residential units.

Chair Donaldson asked about the two different phases of construction. The architect explained that the time-gap between the two phases has to do with financial reasons.

Chair Donaldson expressed concern about the time-gap because of the potential for someone to rent out the existing ground floor unit without the city's consent or notice. Chair Donaldson also asked about the potential mechanical room and what would be held within. Rudy Widmann explained it would be used for the water heaters and mechanical equipment for both the residential and commercial areas.

Chair Donaldson asked about a letter they received about a neighbor who was concerned about shading existing solar panels.

Sunny Kim explained that Daniel Winkler talked to the neighbor and agreed to pay for the movement of those existing solar panels in the case that this building disrupts business by shading the panels.

Commissioner Giesen-Fields asked if the applicant had considered changes to the public façade (ground floor) of the building.

Rudy Widmann explained that they are going to upgrade the CMU and carport area.

Commissioner Giesen-Fields asked about the choice of the specific roofline design.

3 4 Chair Donaldson asked if they had considered tandem parking on the side. 5 6 Rudy Widmann explained there was simply not enough space and they are 7 close to maxing out their FAR. 8 9 Commissioner Kent asked about how many people work in the office. 10 11 Sunny Kim explained that there are many employees but the amount of agents 12 in the office fluctuates greatly on a day to day basis and many agents work at 13 home. 14 15 Commissioner Friedland asked if the applicant communicated with neighbors or 16 addressed the issues they were most concerned about. 17 18 Sunny Kim explained that was mainly Daniel Winkler and she wasn't sure if the 19 project had been fully communicated to each neighbor. 20 21 PUBLIC HEARING OPEN 22 23 Jenny Saledra- Albany Resident. concerned with parking resulting from the 24 business and the impact of shade from the potential new addition. 25 26 Massud Hussein- Albany Resident. Concerned with parking in the neighborhood 27 and on side-streets. 28 29 Glen Wilmoth- concerned with parking and confused about the municipal code 30 parking requirements. 31 32 David Krebs- concerned about parking and suggested an option for the business 33 as to not crowd existing spaces on Solano Ave. 34 35 Rita Norbee- concerned with the addition shading current solar panels on the 36 Laundromat business. Also concerned with parking. 37 38 Francesco Pappalia- Albany resident and employee of Daniel Winkler. Spoke in 39 support of the project and expressed concern that people were so quick to 40 blame Daniel Winkler for an issue that is the responsibility of all the businesses. 41 42 Brian Parker- concerned with parking on Solano. 43 44 Robert Cheasty- concerned with parking and expressed the need for the city to 45 address the bigger issue for all of Solano Ave. 46 47 Alice Sevedra- concerned with parking. 48

Rudy Widmann explained they were trying to keep the new design in the

contemporary style to match the current building style.

1

1 Chair Donaldson explained that the city is currently undergoing a parking study. 2 3 Rudy Widmann addressed some of the parking concerns as well as the shading 4 issue. 5 6 Sunny Kim explained that the business is planning on requesting their employees 7 to park away from the Solano Ave, short term parking. She also addressed issues 8 of shading. 9 10 Commissioner Friedland asked about the current tenant of the ground floor 11 residential unit. 12 13 Sunny Kim explained that he is planning on moving regardless of the addition 14 due to his job moving elsewhere. 15 16 PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED 17 18 Commissioner Giesen-Fields clarified the details of the project and the parking 19 exception. He expressed hesitation because the project proposes to reduce a 20 residential unit when Albany has a goal of increasing residential units. 21 22 Commissioner Menotti appreciated the public comment and discussion and 23 asked if they have requirements or strategies for bicycle parking. 24 25 Anne Hersch explained they have had conditional agreements in the past, but 26 there were recently two bicycle racks installed at the site of the application. 27 28 Chair Donaldson commented that more people should bike in Albany due to its 29 convenience. 30 31 Commissioner Menotti asked about new policies regarding loss of residential 32 units. Anne Hersch explained that as of now, there is not a specific policy. 33 34 Commissioner Kent commented that people need to park in driveways in order 35 to save on-street parking for patrons of businesses. Urged the businesses to have 36 employees park off Solano Ave. 37 38 Commissioner Friedland was disappointed by the reduction of housing units and 39 the poor relation and communication with neighbors on this project. 40 41 Chair Donaldson disappointed by the loss of housing unit and had concerns 42 about the design. Would like to see the design more in line with the existing 43 ground floor structure. 44 45 Commissioner Giesen-Fields asked if the commission would feel differently if the 46 applicant agreed to maintain the residential unit on the ground floor. 47

1 Chair Donaldson expressed support for that idea and commented that he didn't 2 have an issue with the parking exception given the restraints of the lot space. 3 4 Commissioner Kent asked about solar rights and expressed having an issue with making the solar panel agreement part of the condition. 5 6 7 Commissioner Giesen-Fields expressed concern with details of the design in 8 regards to the surrounding buildings. 9 10 Motion to approve PA 15-013 with Parking Exception: Kent 11 Motion failed. 12 13 Motion to continue the item PA 15-013 for applicant to review the design and 14 potential of saving residential unit: Friedland 15 Seconded by: Menotti 16 AYES: Friedland, Giesen-Fields, Donaldson, Menotti 17 NAYES: Kent 18 Motion passed, 4-1 19 20 C. Study Session on General Plan Draft Waterfront Element Goals & Policies - This is 21 the 19th Planning and Zoning Commission Study Session on the Albany 2035 22 General Plan Update. This Study Session will focus on an initial draft of the 23 proposed goals and policies associated with the Waterfront Element of the General Plan. An opportunity for public comment will be provided. 24 Recommendation: The Planning & Zoning Commission review and provide 25 26 feedback on the proposed goals and policies. This item is a study session and no formal Commission action is required. 27 28 29 CEQA: An Environmental Impact Report is being prepared and will be released 30 for public review in summer 2015. 31 32 Barry Miller, General Plan Consultant gave presentation on Waterfront element 33 of the General Plan. 34 35 Commissioner asked about the wording of one of the policy goals. Barry 36 explained they can alter the wording of the specific goals. 37 38 Commissioner Friedland asked about the openness of the policy about dogs and 39 whether that was purposeful. Barry explained they are letting another more specific group deal with the dog issue, as this general plan is more of a 40 41 transitional policy package. 42 43 Commissioner Kent asked about the future of plants on Albany Bulb. Barry Miller 44 explained that the focus is on native plants. 45 46 Commissioner Friedland asked about the status of the plateau and the separate 47 parcels of land. Barry Miller further explained the land differentiation and the

 goals the plan lays out to more clearly change the map and designation of land.

Commissioner Giesen-Fields asked about the commission potentially limiting certain areas of land-use. Barry Miller explained that is part of the goal in order to best use the land.

Commissioner Giesen-Fields asked about the language on policy 6.4 and the limiting nature of a specific phrase.

Chair Donaldson asked about how they filtered the information into six cohesive goals and clarified the document formatting. Barry Miller explained the process of consolidating goals.

Chair Donaldson asked about the format of organization for this facet of the plan due to the separate ownership of land in the waterfront area. He also asked about a specific part of Measure C as it pertained to the waterfront plan.

Jeff Bond explained the current state of the Waterfront Master Plan as being confusing due to the many documents with that name from decades ago.

## PUBLIC HEARING OEPN

**Robert Cheasty**, President of Citizens for East Shore State Park. Commended Barry Miller for an excellent plan. Wanted to clarify the goal for the commission as a way to make the bulb a part of regional state parks.

**Brian Parker**, Albany Resident. Discussed future possibilities of the waterfront and urged the commission to not allow language that limits the future uses of the space.

Patricia Jones, Executive Director of Citizens for Eastshore Parks. Appreciated the language of the plan and supports the framework of the goal presented for the future of the waterfront.

Carol O'Keefe- Albany resident. Spoke in support of several parts of the goals and also expressed concern about certain details of proposed policies.

Edward Moore- Cultural Landscape Proponent for the Waterfront. Confused about zoning placements on historic land in regards to the commercial idea. Expressed concern about certain policies disregarding a study performed and environmental impact analysis.

Chair Donaldson asked Edward Moore about why he believes the waterfront is a place for a cultural landscape. Edward Moore discussed the university but was kindly asked by Commissioner Friedland to keep it brief considering that it didn't directly pertain to the document up for discussion.

Commissioner Kent expressed concern about wiping out existing plants and trees 5 in the process of making the area native vegetation. 6 7 Chair Donaldson commented that this part of the general plan should be land-8 ownership driven due to the different existing conditions. He discussed his analysis 9 of the policy organization and offered a different option. 10 11 Barry Miller suggested that the concern be aimed more specifically at one or 12 two goals as appose to the entire grouping of goals. 13 14 Commissioner Menotti expressed support of the goal framework laid out by Barry 15 Miller. 16 17 Commissioner Friedland expressed support of the goal framework as well. 18 Commented that some of the language should be broadened in order to 19 accommodate future development and growth. 20 21 Commissioner Giesen-Fields agreed with Commissioner Friedland. 22 23 Commissioner Menotti asked about economic sustainability in regards to the 24 general plan. Barry Miller explained it is usually not addressed by cities in a 25 General Plan. 26 27 Commissioner Menotti asked about specific sub-goals and how they would 28 affect land-use. Barry Miller clarified the question and explained the details of 29 the policy suggested. 30 31 Chair Donaldson asked about Albany beach parking and suggested that the 32 general plan needs to address parking. He also commented on a few other 33 policies that he suggested by re-worded for clarification. 34 35 Commissioner Menotti expressed the importance of access to the waterfront 36 and commented that it should be a main priority fleshed out in the plan more 37 specifically. 38 39 Commissioner Kent clarified the plan for part of the waterfront. Barry Miller 40 clarified that the proposed plan is in addition to past plans for improvement. 41 42 Jeff Bond reminded the commission that the bulb is ultimately a landfill and so 43 the plan attempts to address this issue in regards to wave action. 44 45 Commissioner Giesen-Fields commented on some of the language on a specific 46 policy to make it more inclusive. 47 48 Motion to move remaining items to next meeting: Friedland Page | 12

Barry Miller urged the commission to submit any more in depth comments via

email in order to maximize efficiency at the time.

1

2

	Seconded by: Menotti
D.	Election of Planning and Zoning Commission Officers for 2015 Recommendation: make nomination(s) and vote first for members to serve as Chair and second for member to serve as Vice Chair.
	Moved to next meeting.
7.	ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS/DISCUSSION (Staff discussion and Commission member announcement of status of previous agenda items and requests for future agenda items. No public comment will be taken on requests for future agenda items).
	None.
9.	NEXT MEETING: March 25, 2015
The	ADJOURNMENT meeting was adjourned at 11:00 p.m. kt regular meeting: Wednesday, March 25, 2015, 7:00 p.m. at Albany City Hall
Sub	omitted by: Anne Hersch, City Planner