

City of Albany

Planning & Zoning Commission Minutes of October 26, 2016 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 regular meeting of the Planning & Zoning Commission was called to order by Vice Chair Donaldson in the City Council Chambers at 7:00 P.M. on Wednesday, October 26, 2016.

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

3. **ROLL CALL**

Present: Friedland, Kent, Menotti, Donaldson
Absent: Giesen-Fields
Staff Present: City Planner Anne Hersch
Associate Planner Christopher Tan

4. **CONSENT CALENDAR**

Commissioner Kent requested the removal of Item B from the Consent Calendar for discussion.

A. **Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes from September 28, 2016**

Motion to approve Consent Item 4A, Minutes from the September 28, 2016 meeting, as submitted. Friedland

Seconded by: Menotti

AYES: Friedland, Kent, Menotti, Donaldson

NAYES: None

ABSENT: Giesen-Fields

Motion passed, 4-0-1

The following item was removed from the Consent Calendar for discussion.

B. **PA 16-072 Design Review for Roof Pitch Modification at 945 Key Route Boulevard.** The applicant is seeking Design Review approval for roof pitch alterations at the front and rear porches at 945 Key Route Boulevard.

1 The subject site is a 7,485 square foot lot with a four bedroom, three
2 bathroom house built in 1950. The applicant is proposing to alter the roof
3 pitches on the front and rear porches to new gable roofs. The front porch
4 is proposed to be reconfigured and expanded. This will result in a four
5 bedroom, three bathroom 2,070 square foot home with a maximum height
6 of 18 feet. The existing Traditional style of the home is proposed to remain.
7 Two off-street parking spaces are provided in the detached garage and
8 existing driveway. **Recommendation: Review and approve subject to the
9 findings and Conditions of Approval attached to the staff report dated
10 October 26, 2016.**

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

14
15 Mr. Tan presented the staff report dated October 26, 2016.

16
17 Commissioner Kent noted that work had been done without a permit; the submitted
18 drawings were not accurate with respect to the roof pitch, the size of the chimney, the
19 placement and type of the existing windows, the size of the living room window, and other
20 inaccuracies, and he requested an elevation that accurately reflected the field
21 conditions. A photo of the existing conditions was also acceptable as a plan revision.

22
23 **Ken Farley**, DJB Property Solutions, agreed with the need to present accurate plans and
24 requested clarification of exactly what the Commission required to be able to submit the
25 plans in time for the next Commission meeting.

26
27 **Motion to continue PA 16-072 for 945 Key Route Boulevard to a date certain
28 of November 9, 2016 to allow the submittal of drawings that accurately
29 reflected field conditions.** Friedland

30 Seconded by: Kent

31 AYES: Friedland, Kent, Menotti, Donaldson

32 NAYES: None

33 ABSENT: Giesen-Fields

34 **Motion passed, 4-0-1**

35
36 **5. PUBLIC COMMENT**

37
38 **Alexa Hauser**, Albany, a Member of the Diverse Housing Working Group, informed the
39 Commission that the Group was involved in Yes on N1, the transfer of the decision making
40 authority around parking regulations for new construction to the regular City processes;
41 supported Measure A1, the Alameda County Housing Bond that would bring \$2.6 million
42 into Albany in seed money for affordable housing; and advised that on November 16 there
43 would be a Public Workshop in which the Rent Review Feasibility Study Draft Elements
44 would be presented to the public for feedback; and on November 17 the Albany Vice
45 Mayor would host a Shared Housing Panel related to increasing the housing stock in
46 Albany.

1
2 **6. DISCUSSIONS AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON MATTERS RELATED TO THE FOLLOWING**
3 **ITEMS:**
4

5 **A. PA 16-076 Variance and Design Review for an Addition at 1267 Washington**
6 **Avenue.** The applicant is seeking Variance and Design Review approval
7 for a single-story rear addition at 1267 Washington Avenue. The subject site
8 is a 3,575 square foot corner lot with an existing 1,581 square foot three
9 bedroom, two bathroom house built in 1936. The lot is 55 feet wide by 65
10 feet deep. Due to the lot depth, it is difficult to expand the home and
11 achieve a compliant rear setback. The applicant is proposing to build a
12 195 square foot addition at the rear of the home to accommodate a new
13 bedroom. A variance is required to allow a rear yard setback of 5 feet. This
14 will result in a four bedroom, two bathroom 1,776 square foot home with a
15 maximum height of 8 feet 9 inches. Parking is provided in the attached
16 single-car garage. The home will maintain its existing
17 Mediterranean/Spanish Revival appearance. **Recommendation: Review**
18 **and approve subject to the findings and Conditions of Approval attached**
19 **to the staff report dated October 26, 2016.**
20

21 *CEQA: The project is Categorically exempt pursuant to Section 15303 "New*
22 *Construction or Conversion of Small Structures."*
23

24 Mr. Tan presented the staff report dated October 26, 2016.
25

26 **Jason Kaldis**, the Project Architect, explained that the project was for a bedroom on the
27 ground floor; the bathroom behind the garage would also be improved and a building
28 permit had already been issued for that work. He noted that the variance was justified
29 due to the configuration and size of the lot; identified the reason for the placement of the
30 addition on the ground floor; described the mature landscaping on the property and
31 identified what would be retained and what would be eliminated; and given the corner
32 lot explained that a fence could be located on the property line although it would be
33 moved further back to compensate for the footprint of the addition. When asked, he
34 explained that not all of the neighbors had been approached about the project at this
35 time but those who had supported the project.
36

37 PUBLIC COMMENTS OPENED
38

39 There were no comments from the public.
40

41 PUBLIC COMMENTS CLOSED
42

43 Commissioner Friedland commended the design, the presentation, the proposal that
44 appeared to meet the family's needs and the neighborhood characteristics, and
45 supported the project. She also noted that having housing with an accessible bedroom
46 would be a good thing for the diverse housing stock in Albany.

1
2 Vice Chair Donaldson suggested it would be difficult to make the findings for a variance
3 given the small backyard that would result from the proposal and the fact that the addition
4 could be placed up.

5
6 Ms. Hersch advised for the benefit of the discussion that this was not the first property where
7 a rear yard setback had to be accommodated due to a substandard lot depth. She noted
8 that floor area ratio (FAR) and lot coverage were below the maximum thresholds. On the
9 questions related to the justification for a variance, she explained that by code, the
10 applicant would be allowed an accessory structure in the backyard up to 330 square feet
11 without a variance while the addition would be half of that size and there would be a fair
12 amount of space left over. If building up, there was a nonconforming east wall in this case
13 which could create privacy concerns for adjacent neighbors.

14
15 Commissioner Menotti noted that his concerns with respect to the variance had been
16 satisfied with the discussion of the proposal and the reasons for its placement.

17
18 Commissioner Kent supported the design, the rationale, did not see any disturbance to the
19 neighbors, but expressed concern with the precedent that could be set, although staff
20 noted that the precedent had already been set.

21
22 **Motion to approve PA 16-076 for 1267 Washington Boulevard, pursuant to**
23 **the staff report dated October 26, 2016.** Friedland

24 Seconded by: Menotti

25 AYES: Friedland, Kent, Menotti, Donaldson

26 NAYES: None

27 ABSENT: Giesen-Fields

28 **Motion passed, 4-0-1**

29
30 Vice Chair Donaldson identified the 14-day appeal period.

31
32 **B. PA 16-071 Design Review for a Second Story Addition at 1010 Ramona**
33 **Avenue.** The applicant is seeking Design Review approval for a second
34 story addition at 1010 Ramona Avenue. The subject site is a 4,800 square
35 foot lot with a 1,387 square foot three bedroom, two bathroom house built
36 in 1922. The applicant is proposing a 1,127 square foot second story
37 addition and remodel of the home. This project scope includes 387 square
38 feet of below grade basement storage in the existing crawl space. The first
39 floor will be reconfigured to include a new open floor plan with a new rear
40 wooden deck off the dining room. The second story addition includes a
41 new master suite, two bedrooms, bathroom, living room, laundry room, and
42 exterior upper level decks. A new roof deck is also proposed. This will result
43 in a four bedroom, three bathroom 2,492 square foot home with a
44 maximum height of 28 feet. The existing Traditional style home will be
45 modified with a Modern architectural appearance. Parking is provided in
46 the existing detached single-car garage and driveway. **Recommendation:**

1 **Review and approve subject to the findings and Conditions of Approval**
2 **attached to the staff report dated October 26, 2016.**

3
4 ***CEQA: The project is Categorically exempt pursuant to Section 15303 "New***
5 ***Construction or Conversion of Small Structures."***
6

7 Mr. Tan presented the staff report dated October 26, 2016, and advised that an email from
8 a neighbor had been submitted to express concern for the privacy of the decks.
9

10 **Dan Paris**, the Project Architect, presented the design and noted that the property owners
11 were moving back into the home; explained that the story poles had been installed
12 incorrectly and did not represent the setback in front of the home; stated the windows had
13 been designed for privacy to the family as well as to the neighbors; highlighted the
14 drainage for the roof decks; described the stairs to the decks; and explained how the
15 decks had been designed to avoid impacts to the neighbors, noting that the master deck
16 and the deck to the rear yard would be the decks primarily used, with a desire at some
17 point to cover most of the roof deck with solar panels.
18

19 PUBLIC COMMENTS OPENED
20

21 **Louise Neal**, 1008 Ramona Avenue, Albany, supported the proposal but expressed some
22 concern for how much light the addition would block.
23

24 PUBLIC COMMENTS CLOSED
25

26 Commissioner Kent supported the purity of the design but suggested it could cause privacy
27 impacts to the neighbors north and south in the rear yard and suggested that the roof deck
28 be pulled back from the far north end. He commended the landscape design, stated the
29 project was beautiful, and reiterated that the design was so pure it could be pulled back
30 a bit to help the neighbors.
31

32 Commissioner Menotti appreciated the design and the work that had gone into it, and
33 concurred with the recommendation to bring the deck in a bit.
34

35 Vice Chair Donaldson agreed, and with respect to the front façade and the east elevation
36 suggested the parapet added too much height and the large amount of blank wall space
37 above the second level deck on the front was excessive. He suggested it should be pulled
38 back which would still allow a roof deck, although the house would not look as tall from
39 the street. With respect to the architect's comment related to solar, he suggested the roof
40 deck would preclude solar.
41

42 Ms. Hersch noted that the roof decking height was 24 feet 6 inches, and it was the parapet
43 extension that accounted for the 28 foot height.
44

45 **Motion to approve PA 16-071 for 1010 Ramona Avenue, subject to:**

- 1) Pulling back the parapet from the east facing (street side) 1.5 feet to create more articulation;
- 2) Pulling back the parapet on the north side (back) to the clerestory line;
- 3) Pulling back the decking on the west side 4 feet; and
- 4) Pursuant to the staff report dated October 26, 2016. Menotti

Seconded by: Kent

AYES: Kent, Menotti, Donaldson

NAYES: None

ABSENT: Friedland, Giesen-Fields

Motion passed, 3-0-2

Vice Chair Donaldson identified the 14-day appeal period.

7. NEW BUSINESS

There was no New Business.

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS/DISCUSSION

Ms. Hersch referred to the November 16 Public Workshop in which the Rent Review Feasibility Study Draft Elements would be presented to the public for feedback, and the November 17 Shared Housing Panel that staff would attend. She also advised Commissioners that applications for another term on the Planning & Zoning Commission were due by December 2016.

Vice Chair Donaldson recommended a social event for the Commission prior to a change in membership.

Commissioner Menotti recommended revisiting the parking regulations as a future agenda item and noted the need for a wholesale revisit if the measure passed for both residential and commercial on Solano Avenue.

9. NEXT MEETING: November 9, 2016

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:40 P.M.

Next regular meeting: Wednesday, November 9, 2016 at 7:00 P.M. at Albany City Hall.

Submitted by: Anne Hersch, City Planner

Jeff Bond, Community Development Director