MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2019, 7:00 P.M.

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Watty called the regular meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission to order in the City Council Chambers at 7:00 P.M. on Wednesday, February 13, 2019.

#### 2. ROLL CALL

Present: Donaldson, MacLeod, Jennings, Watty

Absent: Kent

Staff Present: Planning Manager Anne Hersch

Associate Planner Christopher Tan

#### 3. EX PARTE COMMUNICATION DISCLOSURES

None

#### 4. CONSENT CALENDAR

Chair Watty recused herself from Items 4-2 and 4-3 as she lives within 500 feet of the two properties.

#### 4-1. Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes of January 23, 2019

**Recommendation**: Staff recommends that the Planning & Zoning Commission review and approve the meeting minutes.

4-2. PA 19-004 Design Review for a Second-Story Addition at 1012 Cornell Avenue – The applicant is seeking Design Review approval for a second-story addition at 1012 Cornell Avenue. The subject site is 2,500-sq.-ft. lot with a 2-bedroom, 2-bathroom 893-sq.-ft. house built in 1925. The applicant is proposing a 336-sq.-ft. second-story addition to accommodate a new master suite. The exterior of the addition is proposed to be clad in 6-inch hardie planks with a gable roof to match the existing home. The existing architecture is proposed to remain. This will result in a 3-bedroom, 3-bathroom 1,209-sq.-ft. home with a maximum height of 21'-2". Parking is provided in the rear yard.

**Recommendation:** Staff recommends that the Planning & Zoning Commission review and approve the proposed project subject to the findings and Conditions of Approval.

**CEQA:** The project is Categorically exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 15303 "New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures" of the CEQA Guidelines.

**4-3.** PA 19-005 Design Review and Parking Exception for a Single-Story Rear Addition at 960 Talbot Avenue – The applicant is seeking Design Review and Parking Exception approval for a single-story rear addition at 960 Talbot Avenue. The subject property is a 5,000-sq.-ft. lot with a 2-bedroom, 1.5-bathroom, 1,160-sq.-ft. home built in 1937. The

applicant is proposing a 491-sq.-ft. single-story rear addition to accommodate a new master suite. The exterior of the addition is proposed to be painted stucco with a clay tile gable roof to match the existing home. The existing architecture of the home is proposed to remain. A Parking Exception is required to locate one off-street parking space in the front yard setback. This will result in a 3-bedroom, 2.5-bathroom 1,772-sq.-ft. home with a maximum height of 20 feet.

**Recommendation:** Staff recommends that the Planning & Zoning Commission review and approve the proposed project subject to the findings and Conditions of Approval.

**CEQA:** The project is Categorically Exempt pursuant to Section 15303 "New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures" of the California Environmental Quality Act.

Motion to approve the Consent Calendar. Donaldson

Seconded by: MacLeod

AYES: Donaldson, MacLeod, Jennings

NAYES: None RECUSED: Watty ABSENT: Kent

Motion passed, 3-0-1-1

Vice Chair Jennings noted the 14-day appeal period.

#### 5. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

#### 6. NEW BUSINESS

6-1. Presentation of Draft Concept for Solano Avenue Complete Streets Plan – Consultants for the City will present the draft plan for the Solano Complete Streets project. The study area is along Solano Avenue from the Masonic Avenue intersection east to the City limit line beyond Ventura Avenue. Consideration will be given to street lighting, intersection alignments, signal modernization, bike facilities, sidewalk improvements, streetscape landscaping, street parking, bus stops, public art, directional signage, and gateway improvements.

**Recommendation:** Staff recommends that the Planning & Zoning Commission receive the presentation and provide feedback to the consultant.

CEQA: N/A

Planning Manager Anne Hersch presented the staff report dated February 13, 2019.

Megan Wooley-Ousdahl, Toole Design, reported the project began in February 2018. A draft Solano Avenue Complete Streets Plan (Plan) is available for public review and comment. The Council may adopt the Plan at its April 15 meeting. Elements of the draft Plan include an executive summary, an introduction, corridor conditions and design recommendations, a

streetscape design palette, and an implementation strategy. The study area is Upper Solano Avenue, which is defined as Solano Avenue between Masonic and Tulare. The Plan was developed through multiple community outreach efforts; interaction with the Community Advisory Group, City Commissions, and staff from the Cities of Albany and Berkeley; and innovative planning, engineering, and urban design practices. Plan goals are to improve safety for all users, enhance access, promote a cohesive streetscape, and support local economic activity. Existing conditions include sidewalk widths varying between 6 and 10 feet, pull-in angle parking at 15 feet deep, and two 15-foot-wide travel lanes. The main theme of the corridor design is to enhance pedestrian safety, mobility and accessibility, and streetscape elements. At intersections, travel lanes will narrow to a width of 11 feet; curb extension widths will vary; and sidewalks will have a minimum width of 10 feet. At mid-block, travel lanes will be 15 feet wide; pull-in angle parking will be 15 feet deep; and sidewalks will be 10 feet wide. Rerouting Key Route Boulevard will create space for a park or a gathering place. Blank walls could be enlivened with murals and green walls. Spaces allocated for vehicle parking could also be used as flexible spaces for parklets, outdoor dining, or amenities. Sidewalk improvements include repairing sidewalks, planting new trees, removing existing trees, and alleviating pinch points. The Plan focuses on providing bicycle amenities across Solano Avenue. The proposed design will add 12 regular vehicle parking spaces, four accessible vehicle parking spaces, and 13 flex spaces. The City Council directed staff to explore back-in angle parking in the next phase of design. The streetscape design palette focuses on creating a sense of place through branding, public art, signage, landscaping or rain gardens, and roadway design. The implementation strategy proposes phasing improvements over the short, medium and long term. The public comment period for the draft Plan will close on March 11. Once the Plan is adopted, the corridor design will move to engineering design, and staff will develop funding sources for engineering design work.

PUBLIC HEARING OPENED

None

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#### PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED

Commissioner Donaldson liked the proposal to reroute Key Route Boulevard, but integrating the memorial may be difficult. He questioned whether Masonic should be a bike route because it is only 30 feet away from the Ohlone Greenway. Parking on Masonic should be reviewed. He was pleased the draft Plan includes loading zones. Solano Avenue is not a bicycle route, and backin angle parking may not be appropriate on Solano. He appreciated the draft Plan's emphasis on pedestrian-oriented features and social-aesthetic opportunities.

Commissioner MacLeod felt the draft Plan does not achieve the goal of making streets safe for bicyclists of all ages and abilities. Solano Avenue should be one of the main bicycle corridors and have protected bike lanes. The draft Plan does not discourage automobile use, encourage actives modes of transportation, or address reducing greenhouse gas emissions. He asked how rideshare programs would impact the proposed Plan because automobile use dominates travel in the proposed Plan. Replacing angle parking with parallel parking and installing a protected bike lane next to the sidewalk would provide a path for all residents to travel and increase safety for bicyclists and children. Pedestrian islands are dangerous for bicyclists.

Commissioner Jennings felt the pedestrian islands warrant additional consideration or an explanation of how they would work with multiple users in the intersections. Any proposal to reduce the number of parking spaces would lead to a revolt by business owners and residents. The Council's direction for the project is to make incremental changes that will improve the streetscape for a number of users. She liked the concept of flex spaces within parking areas. As rideshare programs gain popularity, there could be a desire to convert parking to flex space. The draft Plan should include electric vehicle charging stations. Perhaps AC Transit would be agreeable to realigning bus stops located on the far side of intersections if the bus stops create traffic delays. In reducing crossing distances for pedestrians, some crossings appear to route pedestrians in unusual patterns.

Chair Watty remarked that from a place-making perspective, Solano is Albany's Main Street where people want to linger. The draft Plan is compatible with that perspective and incorporates many of the best practices for streetscape design. Raised or differentiated paving of crosswalks should be done strategically. Some proposals, such as back-in parking, may be best practices but may not be pragmatic. Bike and scooter corrals and electric vehicle charging stations are good ideas, but they should be located strategically. Rerouting Key Route Boulevard will create a nice space, but the park needs an activation partner. Using the new parking spaces for parklets or other amenities is a great idea.

# 7. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON MATTERS RELATED TO THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:

7-1. Proposed Code Amendments to Table 20.24.020 2.A Site Regulations by District – Residential: Table 2. A and Site Regulations by District – Nonresidential: Table 2. B – the City of Albany Planning & Zoning Commission will hold a public hearing to consider a Resolution of Intention and future recommendation to the Albany City Council for proposed Zoning Code Amendments to Table 20.24.020 2.A Site Regulations by District – Residential: Table 2. A and Site Regulations by District – Nonresidential: Table 2. B.

**Recommendation:** Staff recommends that the Planning & Zoning Commission review the draft changes and adopt Resolution 2019-03 forwarding a recommendation to City Council amending Table 20.24.020 2.A Site Regulations by District – Residential: Table 2. A and Site Regulations by District – Nonresidential: Table 2. B of the Albany Municipal Code.

**CEQA:** The project is exempt pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3).

Planning Manager Hersch presented the staff report dated February 13, 2019.

PUBLIC HEARING OPENED

None

PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED

Commissioner Donaldson felt the minimum lot area per dwelling for R-3 should state a number rather than "N/A." "N/A" could be interpreted as a minimum lot area per dwelling is not required

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in R-3. He suggested 770 or 690 for the number. The footnotes subsequent to number 9 should be renumbered to reflect the deletion of number 9.

Commissioner Jennings proposed staff insert "intentionally omitted" or "reserved" for footnote 9 rather than deleting number 9 and renumbering the subsequent footnotes. The third paragraph of the draft resolution could be revised as "... revealed an inconsistency regarding maximum allowable density for residential development applications, which has required clarification and review of Code intent .... " She recommended deleting the row of Table 2.A 20.24.020 related to minimum lot area per dwelling unit because independent controls on density already apply throughout residential districts.

Commissioner MacLeod did not object to Commissioner Jennings' proposals.

Chair Watty concurred with deleting the row for minimum lot area per dwelling unit and revising the third paragraph of the proposed resolution.

Motion to adopt Resolution 2019-03 forwarding a recommendation to City Council amending Table 20.24.020 2.A Site Regulations by District - Residential: Table 2. A and Site Regulations by District – Nonresidential: Table 2. B of the Albany Municipal Code, with additional amendments to:

- 1. remove the minimum lot area per dwelling unit row from Table 2.A;
- 2. revise the third paragraph of the proposed resolution to read "... revealed an inconsistency regarding maximum allowable density for residential development applications, which has required clarification ...;" and,
- 3. replace the text of footnote 9 with "reserved." Jennings

Seconded by: Donaldson

AYES: Donaldson, MacLeod, Jennings, Watty

NAYES: None **ABSTAIN: None** ABSENT: Kent

Motion passed, 4-0-0-1

7-2. PA 18-090 Design Review and Conditional Use Permit for a New Mixed-Use Residential Building at 904 Masonic Avenue – The applicant is seeking Design Review and Conditional Use Permit approval for a new mixed-use building at 904 Masonic Avenue. The subject site is 3,751-sq.-ft. lot with an existing 980-sq.-ft. single-story structure built in 1924. The applicant is proposing to demolish the existing structure and construct a new mixed-use building with a commercial ground level and three residential units above. The building is proposed to be contemporary in design with exterior balconies and a rooftop deck resulting in a maximum height of 35 ft. Three off-street parking spaces are provided at the rear. A Conditional Use Permit is required to allow for a staircase projection to exceed the height limit.

**Recommendation:** Staff recommends that the Planning & Zoning Commission review and approve the project subject to the findings and Conditions of Approval.

The project is Categorically Exempt pursuant to Section 15332 "In-Fill Development Projects" of the California Environmental Quality Act.

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Associate Planner Christopher Tan presented the staff report dated February 13, 2019.

Richard Tapp, project architect, reported the building envelope has not changed, but the number of residential units has decreased from four to three. If the zoning amendment is adopted, the applicant will amend the application to propose four residential units. He modified the project in slope. The railing encroaches at the rear of the building. By moving the building forward, a blank wall came be brought down to provide seismic stability to the rear of the building. Parking will be

response to some of the Commission's comments at the prior hearing. Commission comments about bike parking by moving the building forward on the lot. He raised the ceiling height of the commercial space to 10 feet, which resulted in a slightly taller building. A structural engineer reviewed the floor assemblies and recommended a 13-inch floor structure rather than the proposed 12-inch floor structure. The change in floor structure added 3 inches to the total building height. Vehicle parking spaces have not changed from the prior hearing. Four bicycle parking spaces are located at the rear of the building, and one bicycle parking space is located in the front sidewalk. From a great distance, one can see the sloping roof along one side of the building. The roof is sloped in respect for the 10-foot setback, and the stair follows a similar

10 11 12 13 14 15 16 unbundled; therefore, parking will not be designated to any unit. Potted plants rather than fixed planters will be used on the roof deck. The roof deck will have movable furniture and a propane-

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47 48 PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED

before applications for two multiunit projects are submitted.

the loss of on-street parking will affect parking drastically.

modulation and shades.

PUBLIC HEARING OPENED

Mr. Tapp advised that the rendering is meant to show the approximate location of bike parking and that bike parking is a part of the project. The location of bike parking shown in the plan is

powered barbecue. Water and electricity will be available on the roof deck. Trees around the

parking lot will provide a vertical element. Window details and the depth of the windows will be

part of the building permit submittal. A civil engineer will prepare a drainage plan and propose details for permeable paving. The roof deck will be accessible to residential tenants only. The

commercial space may be appropriate for a personal service or professional business use. The

number of proposed parking spaces complies with Code requirements. Each residential unit will

have the right to use one parking space. If a space is vacant, any of the three units may use the

space. The spaces should not be vacant for longer than a day. He replaced the mural with

**Preston Jordan** noted the rendering of the rear of the building shows the bike parking but not the trash enclosure, which is shown next to bike parking in the plan. The bicycle parking as shown

does not comply with Code requirements for protection, individual enclosures, and security,

Perhaps the applicant could provide a rendering of bicycle parking that complies with the Code.

A reasonable tradeoff for requiring less parking is requiring an all-electric building. He hoped the

Commission would amend requirements for new construction to prohibit the use of natural gas

Richard Pipkin, 900 block of Masonic Avenue, indicated six on-street parking spaces located in

front of the building were recently lost. He encouraged the Commission to require four parking

spaces for the building. The change in nonresidential use, the increased number of tenants, and

 correct. The bike parking will meet all the requirements. The issue of gas versus electric is a Title 24 issue. Typical electric heat is more difficult to calculate and to satisfy Title 24 requirements than gas heat. Solar panels are a possibility, but it has not been considered as a specific program item.

Commissioner Jennings acknowledged that the application is a bit unusual given the project the applicant wants is not the project before the Commission. She preferred the project provide four residential units rather than three. Four units fit better with the vision discussed at the prior hearing. She was a bit disappointed that the rendering did not show compliant bike parking, but renderings did not need to show all the details. She understood unbundled parking meant the tenant paid one rent for the dwelling unit and a separate rent for the parking space. The tenant can choose whether to pay for and use the parking space. Mr. Tapp described unbundled parking as each unit gets a space. The terms of parking need to be defined before the applicant requests a parking exception because the Commission needs to make findings that a plan is in place to manage potential conflicts. She liked the design overall, and the refinements to design were positive.

Commissioner Donaldson commented that the project is well designed and proposes three residential units and compliant parking. Mr. Rapp's description of unbundled parking is a concern. The applicant could provide the required safe and secure bike parking.

Commissioner MacLeod liked the facades, the variation in materials, the breaking up of the masses. The balconies provide some texture, depth, and shading. Two-bedroom units would be more fitting for the location and would fill a need for smaller housing. Natural gas emissions could impact or render useless the roof deck. He encouraged the applicant to use electric appliances and place solar panels on the roof to offset some of the electrical use. Reviewing the project is a little awkward given the applicant's plans to return with a four-unit project. Showing the eight bicycle parking spaces in the elevations would be helpful. Perhaps, the elevations should include a large space to accommodate a cargo bike. Mr. Tapp may be underestimating the size of the trash area. He wanted the entire parking and drive areas to be permeable pavers because the vast majority of the parcel is covered with paving. A restaurant use in the commercial space could be problematic, especially for the roof deck. The project is a good example of desirable urban infill.

Chair Watty agreed that a higher-density project would be better and would fill a gap in the housing market. The recessed residential entry highlights the commercial area more prominently, and the combination works better. The northern wall, which is visible from Solano, still feels like a big, blank wall with banding tacked on it. The other three sides of the building have been designed well and have a nice balance of material composition and different palettes. If the materials and windows are high quality and executed well, the building will be beautiful. She was conflicted over the proposed use of hardie board. The bike parking and the trash area should be enclosed. To offset the small amount of landscape, the driveway and rear parking area should be permeable pavers. The vehicles in the parking area should be screened from view with fencing.

Commissioner MacLeod concurred with the use of smooth hardie board and solid corners and screening the parking area. The northern wall needs more finesse.

## PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

### City Hall Council Chambers 1000 San Pablo Avenue, Albany, CA

**Mr. Tapp** disclosed that the adjacent building extends halfway up the side of the northern facade at a zero lot line. Hardie board could be used on the wall. He would ensure the north facade looks good from Solano Avenue. The banding with color on color would create more of a shadow look. He had considered paving for three-quarters of the driveway and permeable paving or concrete for the parking area. Permeable pavers for the entire parking area create maintenance and cost issues. The third story of the building could be a green wall with irrigation from the roof.

**Adham Nasser**, applicant, stated he wanted the Commission's comments in order to make the building beautiful. He will do as much as he can afford.

Commissioner Jennings proposed the applicant work with staff to refine the north wall. Other options are to impose a specific condition of approval or to continue the item.

Chair Watty agreed with deferring to staff to work through design solutions other than what has been proposed. The design could be a variety of material articulations or a green wall.

Commissioner Jennings concurred with encouraging the applicant to explore solar panels, alternatives to natural gas, permeable paving to the extent feasible, and an enclosure for bike storage and trash.

**Motion to approve PA 18-090**, 904 Masonic Avenue, with the recommendations provided during the hearing and pursuant to the staff report dated February 13, 2019. Jennings Seconded by: Donaldson

AYES: Donaldson, MacLeod, Jennings, Watty

NAYES: None ABSTAIN: None ABSENT: Kent

Motion passed, 4-0-0-1

Chair Watty noted the 14-day appeal period.

7-3. \*\* Study Session\*\* PA 19-002 Design Review for New Pylon Sign for Target at 1057 Eastshore Highway — The applicant is seeking Design Review approval for a new freestanding pylon sign for Target at 1057 Eastshore Highway. The subject site is 9 acres with an existing 173,362-sq.-ft. building. The applicant is proposing a new 50-foot tall freestanding sign with a width spanning 12'-9". The new sign is proposed to be located approximately in the same location as the existing Target sign located along Eastshore Highway. The materials for the new sign are proposed to be corrugated aluminum with an illuminated acrylic Target logo. Additionally, the proposed sign will include two signage slots for future tenants on the parcel. The project scope is limited to the proposed sign. This is a study session and no action will be taken on this date.

**Recommendation:** Staff recommends that the Planning & Zoning Commission review the proposed project request and provide feedback to the applicant and staff. This is a study session and no action will be taken.

**CEQA:** The project is Categorically exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 15332 "In-Fill Development Projects" of the CEQA Guidelines.

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Chair Watty could not support the project based on the applicant's desire to increase visibility of the sign. When a development proposal is submitted for the out parcel, the Commission can consider a signage proposal tied to the development to ensure the sign is visible.

Commissioner Donaldson questioned how the sign might affect the residents of Albany, the height of the sign in comparison to nearby power poles and streetlight standards, and the locations from which the sign would be visible. The applicant should provide photo simulations of the sign from key viewpoints. The existing sign is modest in comparison to the size of the store. The Golden Gate Fields sign is a precedent for this project. He understood the applicant's point about visual access for the Target store and any new store. The sign on the Target building is extremely large.

Commissioner Jennings recognized that signage for the out parcel would be important. Photo simulations would help the Commission understand the height and view of the sign. A 50-foot sign just seems too tall for Albany.

Commissioner MacLeod commented that the existing monument sign seems miniscule compared to the size of the development and is not easily visible from the freeway. A photo study showing the scale of the sign relative to other buildings and how it would be perceived from the freeway would be helpful. Shrinking the block proportionally could help. The question is how tall the sign needs to be in order for it to be effective.

Greg Friel, applicant representative, remarked that Target recognizes the corridor is changing and wishes to be proactive. The store is not highly visible when traveling north on the freeway because the Public Storage building blocks the view of the building. The shops between Eastshore Highway and Target could be developed at any time into taller buildings, which would further isolate Target. In marketing the out parcel, Target would like to offer signage in order to attract top-tier tenants. Traveling north on the freeway, the existing sign is not visible prior to the exit for Buchanan Avenue. Traveling north on Eastshore, the sign is not visible outside a distance of approximately 150 feet. Along Eastshore, buildings along the street frontage block visibility of the existing sign. Streetlights near the entry are probably 25-35 feet tall.

Commissioner Jennings believed a proposal to develop the buildings between Target and Eastshore or approval of the Gilman interchange project would be compelling arguments to allow Target to increase its signage. She preferred to consider the smallest sign that would provide visibility.

Chair Watty requested a freeway view with a rendering of the signage. The rendering proposal should provide some options.

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8. ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS/DISCUSSION 1 2 8-1. **Correspondence Received** 3 4 5 8-2. Advisory Body & Brown Act Training: Monday, February 25, 2019, 6:30-8:00 p.m., City Hall 6 7 8 Planning Manager Hersch acknowledged correspondence sent to Commissioners independent of the meeting packet. Commissioners should plan to attend the training. 9 10 9. NEXT MEETING - Wednesday, February 27, 2019, 7:00 p.m., City Hall Council Chambers, 1000 11 San Pablo Avenue 12 13 **ADJOURNMENT** 14 10. 15 16 The meeting was adjourned at 9:53 p.m. 17 18 19 Submitted by: Anne Hersch, Planning Manager 20 21 22 23 24 Jeff Bond, Community Development Director 25