



**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 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, November 13, 2019.

2. ROLL CALL

Present: Donaldson, Kent, MacLeod, Jennings, Watty
Absent: None
Staff Present: Associate Planner Christopher Tan
Planning Manager Anne Hersch

3. EX PARTE COMMUNICATION DISCLOSURES

None

4. CONSENT CALENDAR

4-1. Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes October 23, 2019

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

4-2. PA 19-053 Design Review for a Single-Story Rear Addition and Facade Modification at 1049-51 Solano Ave. – The applicant is seeking Design Review approval for a single-story rear addition and front façade modification at 1049-51 Solano Avenue. The subject property is a 2,500-sq.-ft. lot with an existing 1,250-sq.-ft. commercial building built in 1949. The applicant is proposing to consolidate the existing tenant spaces into one space, build a 400-sq.-ft. addition at the rear of the building and create a new eye care facility. The project scope includes modifications to the front façade and interior tenant improvements. The façade is proposed to be clad in porcelain tiles and cement plaster panels. The business received parking reduction approval on October 25, 2017.

Recommendation: Staff recommends that the Planning & Zoning Commission review and approve the project request 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.

Motion to approve the consent calendar. Donaldson
Seconded by Jennings

AYES: Donaldson, Kent, MacLeod, Jennings, Watty (Item 4-2)
NAYES: None
ABSTAIN: Watty (Item 4-1)
ABSENT: None



1 **Motion passed, 5-0-0-0**

2
3 Chair Watty noted the 14-day appeal period.

4
5 **5. PUBLIC COMMENT**

6
7 None

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9 **6. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON MATTERS RELATED TO THE FOLLOWING**
10 **ITEMS:**

11
12 **6-1. **Contd. From October 23, 2019** Amendment to Chapter 20.24 “Development**
13 **Standards” of the Albany Municipal Code establishing All Electric Development**
14 **Standards for New Construction** – The City of Albany Planning & Zoning Commission
15 will hold a public hearing to consider proposed amendments to Chapter 20.24
16 “Development Standards” of the Albany Municipal Code establishing development
17 standards for all-electric construction and forward a recommendation to the Albany City
18 Council.

19
20 **Recommendation:** Staff recommends that the Planning & Zoning Commission review
21 the proposed Ordinance and adopt Resolution 2019-10 forwarding a recommendation to
22 the City Council to adopt All Electric Development Standards.

23
24 **CEQA:** The project is exempt pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3).

25
26 Community Development Director Jeff Bond presented the staff report dated November 13, 2019.

27
28 PUBLIC HEARING OPENED

29
30 **Matthew Gough**, Sierra Club, supported adoption of the proposed ordinance because of the
31 health, financial, and climate benefits of electric appliances.

32
33 **Cate Leger**, Berkeley Energy Commission Chairperson, supported adoption of the proposed
34 ordinance as all-electric construction is cost-effective and reduces greenhouse gas emissions
35 and health risks.

36
37 **Eric Arens**, League of Women Voters, supported electrification of buildings as a means to reduce
38 the excess supply of electricity produced during the day.

39
40 **Candace Hyde Wang**, League of Women Voters, encouraged the Commission to recommend
41 adoption of the proposed ordinance in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from natural
42 gas production and transmission leakage.

43
44 **Preston Jordan** encouraged the Commission to recommend the Council adopt the proposed
45 ordinance. He proposed amending Section 20.24.190.A.3 to include "and reduces the risk of
46 post-earthquake fires." He shared information from a *Forbes* article about an energy storage
47 project.



PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

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1 **Lucinda Young** urged the Commission to recommend adoption of the proposed ordinance. The
2 City cannot wait ten years to take this action.

3
4 **David Wemmer** concurred with prior comments and suggested the City lead the effort to reduce
5 natural gas consumption.

6
7 PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED

8
9 Commissioner Jennings supported the City's efforts to move in this direction. The health and
10 climate benefits provided by all-electric construction should be sufficient reason for the Council to
11 adopt the proposed ordinance. She encouraged staff to continue searching for incentives for
12 electrification of other types of development projects.

13
14 Commissioner Donaldson expressed concern that the proposed ordinance would add a new
15 regulatory requirement to housing in the midst of a housing crisis. The City should increase
16 flexibility rather than requirements for builders so that they can build more housing. He was
17 unsure whether the regulation would be effective given the small amount of development
18 anticipated in Albany. During peak periods of the day, all-electric homes may use electricity
19 produced with natural gas. In addition, the reliability of electricity is questionable. Public
20 education and incentives may be more effective than the proposed ordinance. The Climate Action
21 Committee should propose more effective projects to reduce the consumption of natural gas in
22 Albany.

23
24 Commissioner Kent noted all-electric construction is one of many steps that will lead to the
25 reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

26
27 Commissioner MacLeod believed the use of natural gas should be eliminated because burning
28 natural gas and releasing methane into the atmosphere create global warming. The technology
29 for electric appliances and their efficiency have improved tremendously in the past ten years.
30 Incentives for retrofits and fuel-switching are the next phase. Resilience may be achieved through
31 renewable energy with battery backup.

32
33 Chair Watty supported the proposed ordinance because of the health and safety risks resulting
34 from the use of natural gas. Requiring only electric appliances in new construction is a pragmatic
35 first step. The reliability of electricity is a concern given the recent power outages. Incentives are
36 a great idea, but the City has to fund the incentives. The proposed ordinance is a policy
37 statement. Chair Watty requested staff provide the Commission with an informal status report of
38 applicants' reaction to the all-electric requirement. If the proposed ordinance is not successful, it
39 can be amended in the future.

40
41 **Motion to adopt Resolution 2019-10** forwarding a recommendation to the City Council
42 to adopt All Electric Development Standards. Jennings

43 Seconded by MacLeod

44 AYES: Kent, MacLeod, Jennings, Watty

45 NAYES: Donaldson

46 ABSTAIN: None

47 ABSENT: None

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



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1
2 **6-2. **Contd. From October 23, 2019** Amendment to Chapter 20.32 “Signs” of the**
3 **Albany Municipal Code** – The City of Albany Planning & Zoning Commission will hold a
4 public hearing to consider proposed amendments to Chapter 20.32 “Signs” of the Albany
5 Municipal Code and forward a recommendation to the Albany City Council.
6

7 **Recommendation:** Staff recommends that the Planning & Zoning Commission review
8 and the proposed Ordinance and adopt Resolution 2019-11 forwarding a recommendation
9 to amend Chapter 20.32 “Signs” of the Albany Municipal Code.
10

11 **CEQA:** The project is exempt pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3).
12

13 Planning Manager Anne Hersch presented the staff report dated November 13, 2019. In Table 1.
14 20.32.090, the in-window sign—temporary in R Districts will be amended to reflect "for the
15 purposes of home-based businesses."
16

17 PUBLIC HEARING OPENED
18

19 None
20

21 PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED
22

23 Commissioner Donaldson noted typographical errors of 90 days in Section 20.32.030.M and
24 signage in Section 20.32.015.
25

26 Commissioner Kent expressed concern about signs advertising office space or apartments for
27 lease becoming permanent.
28

29 Chair Watty suggested prohibiting roof signs as a means to limiting the impact of "for lease" signs.
30

31 Commissioner Jennings recommended Section 20.32.030.A indicate a permit is not transferable
32 to a different location or property and changing "shall" in Sections 20.32.040.A and 20.32.045.A
33 to "may." Section 20.32.050 could be eliminated by incorporating Section 20.32.050.A into
34 Section 20.32.045.A and deleting Sections 20.32.050.B, C, and D. The heading of Table 1.
35 Section 20.32.050 does not refer to the election period, but the body of the table does. Perhaps
36 Table 1 could incorporate a section, if any, pertaining to temporary non-commercial signs. The
37 second sentence of Section 20.32.050.C needs clarification.
38

39 Planning Manager Hersch explained that the City Clerk requested a separate table she could
40 provide to the public inquiring about elections. "During election periods" can be added to the table
41 heading. Section 20.32.050.C allows a person to place signs only on real property for which he
42 holds title or a leasehold interest.
43

44 Chair Watty suggested deleting the second sentence as Section 20.32.050.B provides the same
45 intent.
46

47 When asked, Planning Manager Hersch related that a business owner is usually informed that he
48 has 30 days to remove signs when he notifies the Finance Department of the business' closure.



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1 The same notice can be provided to a business owner when a business license is issued. The
2 provisions do not require the City to maintain unobstructed views of signs when making
3 improvements or planting trees.
4

5 **Motion to adopt Resolution 2019-11** forwarding a recommendation to the City Council
6 to amend Chapter 20.32 "Signs" of the Albany Municipal Code with the corrections noted
7 above. Donaldson

8 Seconded by Kent

9 AYES: Donaldson, Kent, MacLeod, Jennings, Watty

10 NAYES: None

11 ABSTAIN: None

12 ABSENT: None

13 **Motion passed, 5-0-0-0**
14

15 **7. NEW BUSINESS**

16
17 **8. ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS/DISCUSSION**

18 **8-1. November 27, 2019 Meeting Cancelled**

19
20
21 **9. NEXT MEETING** – Wednesday, December 11, 2019, 7:00 p.m., City Hall Council Chambers,
22 1000 San Pablo Avenue

23
24 **10. ADJOURNMENT**

25
26 The meeting was adjourned at 8:38 p.m.
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30 _____
Submitted by: Anne Hersch, Planning Manager

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32
33 _____
Jeff Bond, Community Development Director
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