



## PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

1000 San Pablo Avenue

Albany, CA 94706

Wednesday, May 10, 2023

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### MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING WEDNESDAY, MAY 10, 2023

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6

#### REGULAR MEETING: 7:00 PM

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8

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER

9 Commissioner Pilch called the regular meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission  
10 to order at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 10, 2023.

11  
12

#### 2. ROLL CALL / LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

13 Present: Hudson, MacLeod, Momin, Pilch, Watty

14 Absent: None

15 Staff Present: Community Development Director Jeff Bond

16  
17 The Albany Land Acknowledgement Statement as adopted by the City Council per City  
18 of Albany Minute Action, November 15, 2021, was read.

19  
20

#### 3. EX-PARTE COMMUNICATIONS

21  
22 None.

23  
24

#### 4. CONSENT CALENDAR

25  
26

##### 4-1. Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes April 26, 2023

27  
28 **Recommendation:** Staff recommends that the Planning & Zoning Commission  
29 review and approve the meeting minutes.

30  
31 **4-2. Planning Application PA23-018 Design Review and Conditional Use Permit**  
32 **for First- and Second-Story Addition at 626 Curtis Ave.** – The applicant is  
33 seeking Design Review and Conditional Use Permit approval for a first- and  
34 second-story addition and remodel at 626 Curtis Street. The subject property is a  
35 5,000-sq.-ft. lot with an existing 4-bedroom, 2-bathroom, 1,619-sq.-ft. home built  
36 in 1923. The scope of work includes a 509-sq.-ft. addition between the first and  
37 second floors to accommodate larger living, dining, and kitchen areas as well as  
38 an additional bathroom, laundry room, and study. The existing architectural style  
39 is proposed to remain as Craftsman. A conditional use permit is requested to  
40 extend an existing nonconforming building setback along the northern property  
41 line. This will result in a 4-bedroom, 3-bathroom, 2,128-sq.-ft. home with a  
42 maximum height of 21 feet.

43  
44 **Recommendation:** Staff recommends that the Planning & Zoning Commission  
45 review and approve the proposed project subject to the attached findings and  
46 conditions of approval.



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1  
2 **CEQA:** The project is Categorically exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 15303  
3 "New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures" of the CEQA Guidelines.  
4

5 Commissioner Pilch noted the floor area ratio (FAR) for the project requires the  
6 application of exceptional design standards. The peak of the roof in the proposed front  
7 elevation appears a little odd as it will not be centered over the bay window.  
8

9 Commissioner Watty found the proposed roof line acceptable. Exceptional design  
10 standards do not encourage the use of vinyl windows, and the Planning & Zoning  
11 Commission (Commission) may wish to add a condition of approval for wood or  
12 aluminum-clad wood windows.  
13

14 Commissioner MacLeod believed the proposed roof line would be balanced with the  
15 window and entry.  
16

17 PUBLIC HEARING OPENED  
18

19 **Judith Carey**, 624 Curtis Avenue, encouraged the Commission to require testing for  
20 asbestos and lead paint and the installation of a dust and debris barrier during  
21 construction, and to prohibit attaching or leaning tools against the fence between the two  
22 properties.  
23

24 PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED  
25

26 Commissioner Pilch advised that the Building Department would enforce City standards  
27 pertaining to asbestos and lead paint.  
28

29 Commissioner MacLeod encouraged Ms. Carey to communicate her concerns to the  
30 property owners and their contractor. Regulations require contractors to address  
31 asbestos, lead paint, dust, and debris.  
32

33 Commissioner Watty related that staff included a special condition of approval regarding  
34 vinyl windows.  
35

36 **Motion to approve** the consent calendar as proposed. Watty

37 Seconded by MacLeod

38 AYES: Hudson, MacLeod, Momin, Pilch, Watty

39 NOES: None

40 ABSTAIN: None

41 ABSENT: None

42 **Motion passed**, 5-0-0-0  
43

44 Commissioner Pilch noted the appeal period.  
45



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1 **5. ANNOUNCEMENTS / COMMUNICATIONS**

2  
3 None.

4  
5 **6. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

6  
7 None.

8  
9 **7. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON MATTERS RELATED TO THE**  
10 **FOLLOWING ITEMS:**

11  
12 **7-1. Planning Application PA23-009 Design Review for First-Floor Addition and**  
13 **Major Remodel at 520 Pomona Avenue** – The applicant is seeking Design  
14 Review approval for an addition and remodel at 520 Pomona Avenue. The subject  
15 property is a 3,300-sq.-ft. lot with an existing 3-bedroom, 2-bathroom, 1,857-sq.-ft.  
16 home built in 1929. The scope of work includes a 214-sq.-ft. first-floor enclosed  
17 addition to accommodate expanded living, dining, and kitchen areas, a new  
18 enclosed garage, and reorientation of the front entry. The second story will be  
19 reconfigured to accommodate three bedrooms and 2 bathrooms as well as an  
20 office. An attached accessory dwelling unit is being processed concurrently with  
21 the minor addition and is not subject to public review per California law. The  
22 proposed scope of work would change the existing Mediterranean style to modern  
23 farmhouse with cement board and batten siding and asphalt roofing. This will result  
24 in a 4-bedroom, 3-bathroom, 1,812-sq.-ft. home with a maximum height of 23'-7".  
25 Off-street parking is not required per California AB 2097.

26  
27 **Recommendation:** Staff recommends that the Planning & Zoning Commission  
28 review and approve the proposed project subject to the attached findings and  
29 conditions of approval.

30  
31 **CEQA:** The project is Categorically exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 15303  
32 "New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures" of the CEQA Guidelines.

33  
34 Community Development Director Bond presented the staff report dated May 10, 2023.

35  
36 **Scott Galka**, project architect/applicant, clarified that the addition will replace the existing  
37 deck, and the house will be raised 9 inches to make the lower floor usable. The home's  
38 layout will be modified. Changes from the previous hearing include recessing the front  
39 entry, material changes on the front entry, and a window box on the second floor.  
40 Regarding the neighbor's concern about the home's compatibility with the neighborhood,  
41 there is not a unifying theme in the neighborhood. When asked, he reported the windows  
42 will be fiberglass clad and be recessed approximately 2 inches with the trim.

43  
44 PUBLIC HEARING OPENED

45  
46 None.



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1  
2 PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED  
3

4 Commissioner Hudson did not believe the proposed house would blend into the  
5 neighborhood, but it is rather interesting.  
6

7 Commissioner Momin related that the design is authentically contemporary modern with  
8 the changes, particularly the reduction in the projection of the eaves. The new fenestration  
9 style is a good improvement. The neighborhood does not have a unifying character in  
10 terms of architecture. The proposed house will be a unique improvement to the  
11 neighborhood. Changes to the front entry and the window on the second level create a  
12 nice character for the home.  
13

14 Commissioner Watty indicated the revisions hit the mark for the home's style to read as  
15 contemporary. The block has a mixed character with respect to architecture. The addition  
16 respects the proportions and massing of the neighborhood.  
17

18 Commissioner MacLeod agreed that the changes to the house and plan set are good.  
19 The mix of traditional and modern details are fine. The contemporary look on the front  
20 facade is good. Albany does not have a dominant style of architecture. The window recess  
21 will be addressed during the permit stage of the project.  
22

23 Commissioner Pilch stated the design is fine and supported a diversity of architectural  
24 styles in the City.  
25

26 **Motion to approve PA23-009** for 520 Pomona Avenue as proposed. Watty

27 Seconded by Momin

28 AYES: MacLeod, Momin, Pilch, Watty

29 NOES: None

30 ABSTAIN: Hudson

31 ABSENT: None

32 **Motion passed, 4-0-1-0**  
33

34 Commissioner Pilch noted the appeal period.  
35

36 **7-2. Study Session on Amendments to the Transportation Element of the General**  
37 **Plan and Amendments to Chapters 20.20 and 20.28 of the Zoning Ordinance**  
38 **to Modify Off-Street Parking Requirements** – Based on feedback from the  
39 Planning & Zoning Commission at its March 8, 2023 meeting and April 26, 2023  
40 meeting, City staff and consultants are editing drafts of General Plan and Zoning  
41 Ordinance amendments for the Commission's review at a future meeting. This  
42 agenda item is intended to provide the Commission an opportunity to confirm  
43 consensus on items discussed at previous meetings.  
44

45 **Recommendation:** Staff recommends that the Planning & Zoning Commission  
46 conduct an informal non-binding straw poll on key elements of the draft ordinance



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1 to assist staff on drafting changes to off-street parking regulations in Chapters  
2 20.20 and 20.28 of the Zoning Ordinance.

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

6  
7 Community Development Director Bond presented the staff report dated May 10, 2023.

8  
9 **PUBLIC HEARING OPENED**

10  
11 **Peter Campbell** indicated requirements for off-street parking need to work with  
12 requirements for electric vehicle (EV) charging spaces.

13  
14 **PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED**

15  
16 Community Development Director Bond explained that the required number of EV  
17 charging spaces would be included in the total number of parking spaces required for a  
18 project.

19  
20 Commissioner Hudson expressed concerns regarding off-street parking for disabled and  
21 aged people and families, flexibility in policies, and public transportation schedules not  
22 meeting needs. She questioned whether data for the Transportation Element has been  
23 updated and projected into the future.

24  
25 Commissioner Pilch noted that the direction of urban planning is to encourage mode shift.  
26 The proposed changes to parking requirements align with those in the region.

27  
28 Commissioner MacLeod advised that requirements for accessible parking will continue.  
29 Mode shift is a response to climate change, congested cities, long commute times, and  
30 housing needs. A zero minimum parking requirement does not mean zero parking. An  
31 update of the Active Transportation Plan (ATP) would update the Transportation Element.  
32 Reducing parking requirements helps create a better urban environment and a better  
33 transit, pedestrian, and bicycle environment.

34  
35 Commissioner Momin stated parking requirements are becoming more strategic in  
36 directing housing development toward transit-rich areas.

37  
38 Single-family amendments

39  
40 Commissioner MacLeod supported the proposed minimum and maximum but expressed  
41 concern that residents would park multiple cars on a long driveway.

42  
43 Community Development Director Bond clarified that the proposed maximum would  
44 preclude a long driveway that could accommodate more than two parking spaces.

45



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1 Commissioner Watty related that enforcement of uncovered parking requirements is very  
2 difficult because cars move. Garages at the rear of properties are more of a historic  
3 context than a new context.

4  
5 Commissioner Momin noted the trend of applicants requesting exceptions from the  
6 current parking requirement.

7  
8 Commissioner Pilch supported the proposed amendments. Residents recognize the  
9 value of land and will use it for housing rather than parking.

10  
11 Commissioner Hudson clarified that a project does not have to provide parking under the  
12 amendments. Residents should have the freedom to utilize their properties as they want.  
13 The proposed amendments are fine.

### 14 15 Duplex amendments

16  
17 Commissioners MacLeod, Momin, and Pilch supported a maximum of one space per unit.

18  
19 Commissioner Watty could support either one or two spaces. She proposed a  
20 discretionary process that allows applicants to seek an exception from parking  
21 requirements.

22  
23 Commissioner Hudson felt a maximum of one was almost a penalty for duplex residents.

24  
25 Commissioner Pilch noted consensus for staff to develop a process for exceptions.

### 26 27 Multifamily amendments

28  
29 Commissioner Pilch proposed a maximum of 0.5 for multifamily housing across the City.

30  
31 Commissioners Momin and Watty supported the amendments as proposed.

32  
33 Commissioner Hudson supported the amendments as proposed. Unbundling parking and  
34 parking maximums would be a good combination for encouraging mode shift.

35  
36 Commissioner MacLeod agreed with extending the 0.5 maximum citywide.

### 37 38 Transportation Demand Management (TDM) amendments

39  
40 Commissioner Hudson supported the amendments.

41  
42 Commissioner MacLeod supported the amendments and suggested the Commission  
43 review the TDM program at a future meeting.

### 44 45 Unbundling amendments

46



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Commissioners supported the proposed amendments.

**8. NEW BUSINESS**

**8-1. Community Development Director Report** – Verbal Report from Community Development Director on anticipated future noteworthy Commission meeting agenda items and Department activities.

**Recommendation:** For information only.

Community Development Director Bond reported a conditional offer of employment has been made for Planning Manager. Sofie Gable, who has been working part-time, will work full-time during the summer months. The agenda for the May 24, 2023 meeting will include items for two parklets on Solano Avenue. Staff is planning a study session regarding an application for a three-unit project on Adams Street. An update regarding revisions to the Housing Element may be ready for a June agenda. Staff is preparing edits to the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan after discussing it with the California Office of Emergency Services (OES). The project at 547 San Pablo Avenue will likely be postponed to the spring of 2024 due to the current economic and financial climate. A groundbreaking ceremony for the Satellite Affordable Housing Associates (SAHA) affordable housing project is scheduled for May 11, 2023 at 10:30 a.m. In the next few months, staff envisions preparing ordinance revisions, particularly for the accessory dwelling unit (ADU) ordinance.

PUBLIC HEARING OPENED

None.

PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED

**9. NEXT MEETING: May 24, 2023 at 7:00 PM**

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

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Submitted by:

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Jeff Bond, Community Development Director