



## PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

1000 San Pablo Avenue

Albany, CA 94706

Wednesday, September 13, 2023

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### MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2023

#### REGULAR MEETING: 7:00 PM

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner MacLeod called the regular meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission to order at 7:00 PM on Wednesday, September 13, 2023.

#### 2. ROLL CALL / LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Present: Hudson, MacLeod, Momin, Pilch (appearing remotely), Watty

Absent:

Staff Present: Community Development Director Jeff Bond

Planning Manager Leslie Mendez

Interim Associate Planner Sophie Gabel-Scheinbaum

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

#### 3. EX-PARTE COMMUNICATIONS

None.

#### 4. CONSENT CALENDAR

##### 4-1. Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes July 12, 2023

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

##### 4-4. Planning Application 23-035 Parcel Map application for a lot split at 710

**Hillside Avenue** – The applicant is requesting Parcel Map approval to subdivide an existing 11,025-square-foot lot (APN 066-2751-003-05) into two parcels, creating one 5,890-square-foot lot with an existing single-family home and one 5,135-square-foot lot.

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

**California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA):** The project is Categorically exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 15332 “In-Fill Development Projects” of the CEQA Guidelines.



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1 **Motion to approve** Items 4-1 and 4-4. Watty  
2 Seconded by Momin  
3 AYES: Hudson, MacLeod (Item 4-4), Momin, Pilch, Watty  
4 NOES:  
5 ABSTAIN: MacLeod (Item 4-1)  
6 ABSENT:  
7 **Motion passed**, 5-0-0-0/4-0-1-0

8  
9 Commissioner MacLeod noted the appeal period.

10  
11 **4-2. Planning Application 23-033 Design Review for an addition, deck, and**  
12 **remodel at 500 Key Route Boulevard** – The applicant is requesting Design  
13 Review approval for a 226-sq.-ft. ground-level addition, second-story deck, and  
14 remodel at an existing home at 500 Key Route Boulevard built in 1941. The  
15 addition would accommodate a new primary bedroom and bathroom resulting in a  
16 3-bedroom, 2-bathroom, 1,654-sq.-ft. home with a maximum height of 18'-8".

17  
18 **Recommendation:** Staff recommends that the Planning & Zoning Commission  
19 review and approve the proposed project subject to the findings and Conditions of  
20 Approval.

21  
22 **California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA):** The project is Categorically  
23 exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 15301 "Existing Facilities" of the CEQA  
24 Guidelines.

25  
26 Interim Associate Planner Sophie Gabel-Scheinbaum presented the staff report dated  
27 September 13, 2023.

28  
29 **Kasia Ekstrand**, project architect/applicant, reported the addition will be constructed 1  
30 foot below grade to accommodate the required minimum ceiling height of 7 feet 6 inches.  
31 Construction will include drainage around the foundation. When asked, Ms. Ekstrand  
32 advised that water from the drain in the concrete well will be pumped to the street. A pump  
33 with a battery backup will be specified.

34  
35 PUBLIC HEARING OPENED

36  
37 None.

38  
39 PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED

40  
41 Commissioner MacLeod recommended draining the roof deck to the rear and installing a  
42 secondary outlet for the roof deck. Assuming the top of the natural creek bed is the top of  
43 the concrete channel is appropriate for this project because the regulation language is  
44 ambiguous. Most of the Conditions of Approval do not apply to this project. In future,  
45 perhaps the Conditions of Approval can be appropriate to the project.

46



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1 Planning Manager Leslie Mendez related that plan checkers will address technical issues.

2  
3 **Motion to approve** Planning Application 23-033 for 500 Key Route Boulevard.

4 Watty

5 Seconded by Momin

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

7 NOES:

8 ABSTAIN:

9 ABSENT:

10 **Motion passed, 5-0-0-0**

11  
12 Commissioner MacLeod noted the appeal period.

13  
14 **4-3. Planning Application 23-034 Design Review for a second-story addition at**  
15 **1435 Thousand Oaks Boulevard** - The applicant is requesting Design Review  
16 approval for a 436-sq.-ft second-story addition to accommodate a new primary  
17 bedroom and bathroom suite for an existing McGregor-era style home built in  
18 1928. This would result in a 4-bedroom, 3-bathroom, 2,392-sq.-ft. home with a  
19 maximum height of 27'-8".

20  
21 **Recommendation:** Staff recommends that the Planning & Zoning Commission  
22 review and approve the proposed project subject to the findings and Conditions of  
23 Approval.

24  
25 **California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA):** The project is Categorically  
26 exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 15301 "Existing Facilities" of the CEQA  
27 Guidelines.

28  
29 Chair Pilch recused himself from this item as his residence is located within 500 feet of  
30 the subject property.

31  
32 Interim Associate Planner Gabel-Scheinbaum presented the staff report dated  
33 September 13, 2023.

34  
35 **Aaron Webber**, property owner, reported he considered a flat roof and a gabled roof  
36 running north/south for the addition but felt neither looked good. Because the addition is  
37 set back, the roof line will be less noticeable from the street. The plans echo some of the  
38 details of the existing home.

39  
40 PUBLIC HEARING OPENED

41  
42 None.

43  
44 PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED

45



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1 Commissioner Watty believed the addition as proposed is appropriate. The existing home  
2 has a half floor, and the placement of the addition is appropriate. The architectural details  
3 for the addition appear to be consistent with those on the existing house. The addition will  
4 be blocked from the view of those traveling westbound and partially visible to those  
5 traveling eastbound. The project adds space to the home while preserving the setbacks  
6 and style of the home.

7  
8 Commissioner MacLeod felt the addition does not work architecturally with the existing  
9 home and does not tie together the disparate elements of the existing home. The addition  
10 could be more integrated and refined. Review of the project would have benefited from  
11 perspective views.

12  
13 **Motion to approve** Planning Application 23-034 for 1435 Thousand Oaks  
14 Boulevard. Watty

15 Seconded by Momin

16 AYES: Hudson, Momin, Watty

17 NOES: MacLeod

18 RECUSED: Pilch

19 ABSENT:

20 **Motion passed, 3-1-1-0**

21  
22 Commissioner MacLeod noted the appeal period.

### 23 24 **5. ANNOUNCEMENTS / COMMUNICATIONS**

25  
26 Planning Manager Mendez shared the reasons for revisions to the staff report and  
27 Conditions of Approval. The California Department of Housing and Community  
28 Development (HCD) has approved the City's Housing Element. The City Council will  
29 review the Housing Element work plan on October 2, 2023 and discuss the Albany Twin  
30 at a special meeting on October 5, 2023.

31  
32 Chair Pilch noted the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) has not discussed its work  
33 plan and advised that he sent an email to staff suggesting some items.

34  
35 Community Development Director Jeff Bond related that none of the Advisory Bodies  
36 have prepared work plans for Council review. Many items from the Housing Element and  
37 City Council Strategic Plan will be presented to the PZC.

### 38 39 **6. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

40  
41 **Bryan Marten**, Adams Street, suggested the PZC delegate more matters to staff as a  
42 way to incentivize housing and reduce costs for applicants.

### 43 44 **7. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON MATTERS RELATED TO THE** 45 **FOLLOWING ITEMS:**



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1           **7-1. Planning Application 23-042 Study Session for Roof Deck and Atrium at 915**  
2           **Santa Fe Avenue** – An application has been submitted for Design Review  
3           approval to construct a 154-square-foot glass atrium, 7-foot, 10-inch (7'-10") tall  
4           trellis, and 665-square-foot roof deck off the existing second-story bedroom  
5           extending towards the front of the first-story roof on the existing 3-bedroom, 2-  
6           bathroom, 1,740-square-foot, two-story Mediterranean-style dwelling constructed  
7           in 1927.

8  
9           **Recommendation:** Staff recommends that the Planning & Zoning Commission  
10          review the project and provide feedback and guidance to the applicant. This is a  
11          study session and no action will be taken.

12  
13          **California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA):** The project is Categorically  
14          exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 15301 "Existing Facilities" of the CEQA  
15          Guidelines.

16  
17          Planning Manager Mendez presented the staff report dated September 13, 2023.

18  
19          **Scott Galka**, project architect/applicant, reported the property owners are passionate  
20          gardeners and want to incorporate gardening into their home. The roof deck is intended  
21          for family use rather than entertaining. A planter inside the deck railing will provide privacy,  
22          and the roof deck will be set back 4 feet from the edge of the roof. When asked, Mr. Galka  
23          related that a structural engineer believes the walking surface of the roof deck can be  
24          suspended above the existing roof without the need for a new foundation or changes to  
25          the existing roof. Composite soils will be used in planters to reduce the weight on the  
26          structure. The roof deck will have irrigation that is appropriately drained. An exterior  
27          staircase may be possible; the owners do not want an interior staircase. Structural  
28          calculations for the worst-case scenario will determine the weight limit and size of the roof  
29          deck.

30  
31          PUBLIC HEARING OPENED

32  
33          None.

34  
35          PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED

36  
37          Commissioner Watty expressed no concerns regarding the location of the deck. A  
38          powder-coated railing does not appear compatible with the existing architecture. A  
39          parapet-style extension of the stucco walls or a glass railing set back 5 feet on the sides  
40          and 10-15 feet on the front would be better. The materials for the sunroom should be  
41          light-weight and light colors. A wood trellis or arbor would be appropriate.

42  
43          Commissioner Momin concurred with Commissioner Watty's comments.

44  
45          Chair Pilch supported the project and agreed with Mr. Marten's suggestion to delegate  
46          objective decisions to staff.



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Commissioner Hudson expressed concern regarding privacy for the neighbors and retrofitting the house to support the weight of the roof deck. Compatibility with the existing architecture is important.

Commissioner MacLeod supported roof decks in general and the project in principle. Privacy is not a concern. Resolving the technical issues of the project will be challenging. A solid railing at the same height as the planters with a thinner railing above the planters makes more sense. The sunroom will not be visible from the street.

**8. NEW BUSINESS**

**9. NEXT MEETING: September 27, 2023 at 7:00 PM**

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 PM.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Submitted by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jeff Bond, Community Development Director