

CITY OF BELMONT
PLANNING COMMISSION
SUMMARY MINUTES

TUESDAY, JULY 7, 2011, 7:00 PM

Chair Reed called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. at One Twin Pines Lane, City Hall Council Chambers.

1. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Reed, Mercer, d'Souza, Wheeler, Mayer, Horton, Parsons
Commissioners Absent: None

Staff Present: Community Development Director de Melo (CDD), Senior Planner DiDonato (SP), Assistant Planner Gill (AP), Interim City Attorney Kane (ICA), Recording Secretary Turning (RS)

2. AGENDA AMENDMENTS - None

3. COMMUNITY FORUM (Public Comments) - None

4. CONSENT CALENDAR

4A. Minutes of June 8, 2011

MOTION: By Commissioner Horton, seconded by Commissioner Parsons, to accept the Minutes of Tuesday, June 8, 2011, as presented.

Ayes: Horton, Parsons, d'Souza, Wheeler, Mayer, Mercer, Reed
Noes: None

Motion passed 7/0

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

5A. PUBLIC HEARING - 1822 Bayview Avenue

To consider a Single Family Design Review to construct a new 3,500 square foot single-family residence for the site (3,500 sq. ft. maximum building size permitted).

(Appl. No. 2011-0007)

APN: 044-051-420; Zoned: R-1B (Single Family Residential)

CEQA Status: Categorical Exemption per Section 15303

OWNER: Fuad Mansour

PROJECT PLANNER: Rob Gill (650) 598-4204

Chair Reed determined that no one on the Commission had any ex parte communications with anyone involved with this project.

AP Gill summarized the Staff Report, recommending adoption of the Resolution subject to the conditions attached.

AP Gill responded to Vice Chair Mercer's questions as follows:

- He believed the floor level is not changing, but deferred the question to the applicant for confirmation.
- The 100 cubic yards of fill will mostly go into the front yard to even it out.
- Conditions mentioned in the Staff Report regarding: 1) certification by an engineer that the 28' height limit is not exceeded; 2) mention of a wall; and 3) the fence and wall on the side will be added to the Conditions of Approval.
- A condition can be added requiring certification that the building is no more than the maximum allowed 3500 square feet.
- Public Works has not included any sidewalk, curb or gutter requirements. They look at each project and determine what is required.

AP Gill clarified for Commissioner d'Souza the location of the front and family room doors.

Commissioner Mayer questioned the reason for the easement shown at the bottom of the landscape plan. AP Gill stated that he believed it was created by a power pole in the 1970's and that, based on the title report, it is the responsibility of the subject property owner to maintain it.

Robert Hayes, project architect, gave a brief presentation regarding the proposed project. Responding to Commissioner Mercer's questions, he stated that the existing finished floor will be the same level as the proposed finished floor on the first floor, the foundation will have to be redone to bring it up to code but the first floor level will remain the same. The grading slopes from the front yard down as it progresses towards the back yard so the fill is needed in the front yard to level it out. The easement was a conversation pit – apparently that area was a use easement granted to 1822 Bayview with a maintenance agreement. The owner will maintain it and plans to put a semi-pervious surface in the area.

Chair Reed opened the Public Hearing. There were no requests to speak.

MOTION: By Commissioner Parsons, seconded by Commissioner Mayer, to close the Public Hearing. Motioned passed 7/0 by a show of hands.

Commissioner d'Souza found the design "provocative." He discussed his belief that the street has a dual character and this design brings a third element, largely walled off from the street. He clarified for Chair Reed that he was struggling with building bulk.

Commissioner Mayer commented that he liked the design, adding that it is a great improvement over the existing home. He noted that the issue of bulk is primarily from the back, and recommended that trees be

planted to screen the lower yard from the down-slope neighbor. He did not intend to add this as a condition, and could make the findings.

Commissioner Parsons liked the idea of having private space in front of property, but cautioned about the necessity for keeping the pool gated and locked at all times. He also liked the drainage in front, the fact that they are using solar, and the colors. He would have preferred to see a more vertical window in the front and a couple larger trees in front to frame the property from the driveway side. He felt that the cut and fill being used to build up the front porch and put around the pool is good and not excessive. He could find for the project.

Commissioner Horton stated that she believed it is a wonderful, well-designed project. The mass in the back is broken up by all kinds of things; she especially liked the stone in the foundation, and believed the house is complimentary to the house to the right. She assumed that the neighbors are delighted.

Vice Chair Mercer stated that, since the applicants are working with an existing foundation, they have done a really good job of making the most of what they have. The design detail is outstanding and will blend nicely with the neighborhood. With the addition of the items that were noted as missing from the conditions, she could make all of the findings. She concurred with Commissioner Mayer that, since the back yard is not going to be a heavily used space, some heavy 8-10' full shrubs that would not block the view but would conceal the bottom story would be a good addition to the landscaping. She did not require that this be added as a condition of approval.

Chair Reed could make all the findings and had nothing to add. Great project.

MOTION: By Commissioner Wheeler, seconded by Commissioner Mayer, to adopt the Resolution approving a Single-Family Design Review at 1822 Bayview Avenue (Appl. No. 2011-0007), with the addition of the conditions regarding the 28' height check, the 3500 sq.ft. check, inclusion of 6' wall structure in the plans, and the clarification of the fence and wall heights.

Ayes: Wheeler, Mayer, d'Souza, Horton, Parsons, Mercer, Reed

Noes: None

Motion passed 7/0

Chair Reed noted that this can be appealed to the City Council within 10 calendar days.

Mrs. Mansour asked where she should go to seek help from the City of Belmont for street improvements and the addition of a sidewalk. CDD de Melo agreed to forward her concerns to the City Engineers and will discuss it further with her.

At 7:30 p.m. Chair Reed called for a 2-minute break.

6. STUDY SESSION

6A. Residential Design Guidelines

Chair Reed thanked SP DiDonato for putting together the great draft Residential Design Guidelines and turned the discussion over to him.

SP DiDonato recommended staff begin with the general layout of the document, moving to text changes and edits, ending with the review and or replacement of graphics. The Commission agreed with the structure, discussion ensued.

Chair Reed summarized their discussion noting that the Commission as a body has updated the text and made recommendations for the graphics. Commissioner Mayer had concerns about the process in which changes to the document would be made in the future.

Chair Reed confirmed with staff that this is a living document and changes can be made with a Resolution from the City Council.

SP DiDonato and ICA Kane will review the language, terms and definitions. The Design Guidelines will return to the Commission for a final review.

7. REPORTS, STUDIES AND UPDATES:

CDD de Melo reported as follows:

7A. North Road Right-of-Way

Thanked Building Official Nolfi and Associate Planner Walker for their participation in putting the staff memorandum together, as well as letters that have been sent to the parties involved demanding that the listed issues be addressed. The Parks and Recreation Department had agreed to remove the weeds and clean up the area along the unpaved portion of the right-of-way. At Chair Reed's suggestion, CDD de Melo agreed to ask the Parks & Recreation Department to plant trees or more permanent landscaping in that area. Chair Reed agreed that he could ask the local 4-H to do some tree plantings. CDD de Melo will bring the Commission up to date on the results of the demand letters at their next meeting.

7B. Ralston/US-101 Landscape Project

CDD de Melo has discussed this project with the City Manager and Mayor, and is proposing that Belmont take over management of the project since it is not high on Redwood City's priority list. Staffing and budget commitments would be needed from the Public Works and Community Development Departments to augment the funds that Redwood City would need to contribute. He has requested a line-by-line budget from Redwood City to determine exactly how the budgeted \$800,000 was earmarked. He explained that when the US 101/Ralston Avenue/Marine World Parkway interchange was set up years ago, the project was placed under Redwood City's management and members of the Commission believed that they received funds that were designated by Caltrans to manage this project. CDD de Melo intends to propose that Belmont work with Redwood City to craft an agreement for Belmont to manage the project, utilizing the designated funds and making up the differences if necessary. Vice Chair Mercer suggested that a 5-year plan for progressive landscaping might be appropriate.

7C. Sixth & O'Neill – Street Reconstruction Project

Work is progressing on the streets and will continue at least through August; hoping for a fall completion date.

7D. US-101 Pedestrian/Bike Bridge Project

A ribbon-cutting event is scheduled for Wednesday, September 28th in the afternoon. A change order has been approved by Council that included bicycle and pedestrian improvements at the Ralston/Hiller/Masonic intersection that included the removal of one parking space on Masonic. It allowed a better connection and improved the safety of folks coming off the bike bridge going westbound.

7E. High-Speed Rail (HSR)

City Council has a comprehensive report in their packets for the July 12th meeting that details the actions, activities and efforts of the HSR Committee. He thanked Vice Chair Mercer and the other committee members for their work on the report.

He had received a letter that day from the City of Burlingame written in response to the press release made by three State representatives about their position on HSR. Several Belmont officials have asked that Belmont respond with a similar letter. The topic will be reviewed at the next HSR Committee meeting, which was scheduled for the following Thursday.

Vice Chair Mercer pointed out that ICA Kane had submitted a very effective amicus brief in support of the Atherton vs. California HSR Authority's case, which is attached to the Council packet for their next meeting. ICA Kane brought the Commission up to date on the status of the filing and explained the process in detail.

Other Items

CDD de Melo announced that the **NDNU request for a Conditional Use Permit amendment** will be on the Commission's July 19th agenda. There will be only one other item on the agenda. Responding to Commissioner Mayer's question, he stated that he believes there are two members of the Commission who will be recused from that discussion.

The first reading of the proposed **Tree Ordinance** will be on the July 12th Council agenda.

Regarding **picking up Planning Commission packets from the Police Department**, CDD de Melo asked that Commissioners be prepared to provide an ID.

Following up on an earlier email, ICA Kane confirmed that **500' is the radius** Commissioners need to adhere to for the purposes of recusal.

8. CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF TUESDAY, JULY 12, 2011 – 7:30 P.M.

Liaison: Commissioner Horton stated that it is her turn and she will go to the meeting.

Vice Chair Mercer will be there because of the HSR discussion.

Alternate Liaison: Commissioner Mayer

9. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 p.m. to a Regular Planning Commission Meeting on Tuesday July 19, 2011, at 7:00 p.m. in Belmont City Hall.

Carlos de Melo

Planning Commission Secretary

*CD's of Planning Commission Meetings are available in the
Community Development Department
Please call (650) 595-7417 to schedule an appointment.*