

**CITY OF BELMONT**  
**PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**SUMMARY MINUTES**

**TUESDAY, JULY 20, 2010, 7:00 PM**

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

**1. ROLL CALL**

Commissioners Present: Frautschi, Reed, Mercer, Parsons, Mathewson, Mayer, Horton  
Commissioners Absent: None

Staff Present: Community Development Director de Melo (CDD), Senior Planner DiDonato (SP), Associates Planner Gill (AP), City Attorney Zafferano (CA), Recording Secretary Turning (RS)

- 1. AGENDA AMENDMENTS - None**
- 3. COMMUNITY FORUM (Public Comments) – None**
- 4. CONSENT CALENDAR**
- 4A. Minutes of June 15, 2010**

**MOTION: By Commissioner Horton, seconded by Commissioner Mayer, to accept the Minutes of June 15, 2010 as presented.**

**Ayes: Horton, Mayer, Parsons, Mathewson, Mercer, Frautschi**  
**Noes: None**  
**Abstain: Reed**

**Motion passed 6/0/1**

**5. PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

**5A. PUBLIC HEARING – 921 Anita Drive**

**The applicant requests Single Family Design Review approval to construct a 923 square foot addition to the existing 2,417 square foot single family residence for a total of 3,440 square feet that is below the zoning district permitted 3,500 square feet for the site.**

**(Appl. No. 2010-22)**

**APN: 044-142-380; Zoned: R-1B (Single Family Residential)**

**CEQA Status: Categorical Exemption per Section 15303**

**Applicant: Topos Architects**

**Owner: Chris Dowd & Radha Nayak**

Vice Chair Reed recused himself from discussion of this item based on the proximity of the project to his home and his relationship with the applicant.

AP Gill summarized the Staff Report, recommending approval subject to the conditions attached.

Responding to Commissioner Mercer, AP Gill deferred her question regarding the possible change in elevation to the project manager, and stated that an arborist had not been engaged because there are no trees affected by the project, but that landscape damage caused by construction activities could be documented by additional photography.

Responding to Chair Frautschi, AP Gill stated that the project manager/architect indicated that the crawl space under the living room would be 5'7" and that, by the City's definition of bedrooms, there will be 8 bedrooms, including the media room, family room and office. Chair Frautschi also posed a question for the applicant regarding plans for soil removal.

Kelvin Chua, Project Manager with Topos Architects, responded to questions from the Commission. He stated that the excavation will be from the inside out and pulled through the garage, and that there are retaining walls surrounding the perimeter and between the existing garage space and the crawl space. The excavation will be done with a tractor and by hand. On the west side, the steps that are there will be on-grade, but on the east side the grade will be lower 4½ to 5' and 1½ feet from the fence, which is the reason for the retaining wall. The footing across the back of the property will extend about 3' and the grading will be dug from inside the garage.

Chair Frautschi opened the Public Hearing. No one came forward to speak.

**MOTION: By Commissioner Parsons, seconded by Commissioner Horton, to close the Public Hearing. Motion passed 6/0/1 by a show of hands, with Vice Chair Reed recused.**

Commissioner Mercer asked that mitigation include notification of neighbors of the days that hauling will take place, and asked that the Building Department be involved with the stability of the foundation and the relationship of the east retaining walls to the neighbor's grade in terms of possible water run-off. She also asked that the protected and unprotected trees be identified on the plans, and suggested a photo record so it can be returned to its present condition if there is construction damage.

Commissioner Mathewson concurred with Commissioner Mercer's comments.

Commissioner Parsons was concerned about the number of bedrooms but noted that it complies with the City's parking regulations. He asked that all issues associated with the neighbors be fully addressed and that they are completely satisfied. He concurred that neighbors need to be informed of dirt hauling schedules and that the allowed stop and start hours are adhered to.

Commissioner Horton had no issues with the project.

Commissioner Mayer concurred with previous comments and could make all the findings.

Chair Frautschi concurred that the standard condition regarding the excavation time line, staging area and contact information should be included. He also asked that Cotton and Shires review the excavation and drainage plans and that their conclusions be made a part of the record and the conditions of approval. As an aside, he made suggestions regarding changes that could be made to the window on the garage to distinguish the house from the neighboring houses.

For the record, Commissioner Parsons questioned if the media room would be counted as a bedroom since it does not have a window. CDD de Melo responded that the definition of a bedroom is for a 70 sq.ft. space that has an opportunity to have a closet added to it; it's a different matter if the Building Code does not allow it to be used as a bedroom.

**MOTION: By Commissioner Horton, seconded by Commissioner Mayer, to adopt the Resolution approving a Single-Family Design Review at 921 Anita Avenue (Appl. No. 2010-22), with the additional condition that the applicant send a letter to the neighbors within 300' detailing the staging, haul route, predicted time and contact information.**

Commissioner Horton declined to accept 1) Chair Frautschi's suggested amendment requiring a letter for the file from Cotton and Shires that the grading and drainage has been appropriately dealt with, and 2) Commissioner Mercer's suggested addition of a condition asking for identification of protected trees and a description of protection measures.

**Ayes: Horton, Mayer, Mercer, Mathewson, Parsons**  
**Noes: Frautschi**  
**Abstain: Reed**

**Motion passed 5/1/1**

Chair Frautschi announced that this decision can be appealed within 10 days.

## **6. STUDY SESSIONS:**

### **6A. STUDY SESSION – 600 Clipper Drive**

**Preliminary Design Review for Site Improvements for a Research and Development Use (Appl. No. PA2010-0026).**

**APN: 040-360-470; ZONING: PD (Planned Development)**

**Applicant: David Whitney**

**Owner: Hines Interest LP**

**Project Planner: Damon DiDonato, (650) 637-2908**

SP DiDonato summarized the staff Memorandum, asking that any comments from the Commission be directed only at the three issues raised in the memo.

Responding to questions from the Commission, SP DiDonato stated that:

- 1) A Preliminary Design Review and a Detailed Development Plan had been previously submitted for this property;

- 2) The project is for 40,000 sq.ft. occupancy and associated improvements – he had not been informed about occupancy of the rest of the building.
- 3) The applicant had been in contact with the Fire Department.
- 4) The applicant would not be the owner of the building, and he believed it is currently partially occupied.
- 5) The applicant is designated a certain percentage of parking based upon the square footage of space they are using, and he assumed the same formula would be applied for signage.
- 6) There is no proposal to reduce any parking.

David Whitney, project architect, stated that the building is empty and that Volkswagen intends to take the free-standing “west wing” and has an option to take an additional 20,000 square feet on the first floor if their growth is successful. Volkswagen has been given the signage rights to the building, the existing monument sign at the entry will include a Volkswagen line, and they plan to build a separate 4 x 6 sign at the entrance to the west building that probably will not be visible from the public right-of-way. He explained that the screening is designed to protect Volkswagen’s interests in prototype vehicles that will be delivered to the facility.

Commissioners commented on the following three questions posed in the staff memorandum:

1. Is the land use appropriate to the site?
2. Is the proposed intensity of land uses appropriate for the site?
3. Is the arrangement or distribution of proposed land uses appropriate to the site?

Commissioner Reed:

1. Absolutely. A perfect use for the site.
2. Yes.
3. He stressed that, since it abuts a nature trail, it would be important to him to have the large black steel fence well screened and the landscaping kept in good condition.

Commissioner Mayer:

1. Concurred with Commissioner Reed. Wonderful to see the site taken over by a progressive company for progressive purposes.
2. The intensity is appropriate since it is projected to be less intense in its use than it might have been with some other kinds of uses.
3. Previous plans included modification to the entrance areas to make them more logical – entrance to the “west wing” does not seem well organized. Possible modification of the entrance area could be considered.

Commissioner Horton:

Disclosed that she is professionally acquainted with the applicant. She could make all the findings and understood the need for security. Her only concern had been whether the Fire Department would approve blocking the access.

Commissioner Parsons:

Nothing more to add. Concurred with what had been said.

Commissioner Mercer:

Concurred on all three questions, and added that she felt that the applicants will find Belmont residents very supportive of their mission.

Commissioner Mathewson:

Concurred, and added that he is very much looking forward to the applicant arrival as soon as possible.

Chair Frautschi:

Concurred. Had been concerned about the loss of circulation around the building but was pleased when he was assured that everything could be cleared by the Police and Fire Departments. Liked the design of the fence and hoped that the materials and design of the carport structure reflect the current building. Suggested consideration of a condition that items added specifically for this business be removed if the structure is vacated. Supported investigation of addition of a solar array on the building. Hoped that staff will spell out exactly what the total parking cap is, and that they be clear on the signage and percentage of signage. Looks like a good fit and he was excited to think that they will have 65 employees and expect to double that.

## **7. REPORTS, STUDIES AND UPDATES:**

CDD de Melo reported as follows:

### **7A. Ralston/US-101 Landscape Project**

On hold until after bike bridge project is finished.

### **7B. San Mateo Development – North Road/43<sup>rd</sup> Avenue**

Code Enforcement will be sent to the site of the unsightly dumpsters on the north side of North Road. He has sent an email regarding an encroachment permit for Planet Granite to get their dumpsters off the street.

Commissioner Mercer noted that, in addition to the 4 dumpsters and unscreened trash, there is a white pvc pipe draining into the gutter on the City of San Mateo side, west of the recently remodeled building.

Commissioner Parsons added that there are packing boxes, the right-of-way is paved over, and a large dumpster is leaning against a City tree. He recommended that some kind of legal action be taken or that the City go out and rip up the asphalt, cut off the drain and put up a fence.

### **7C. Parking Study – Downtown Village Areas**

No update at this time.

### **7D. High Speed Train (HST) Project – San Francisco to San Jose**

His regular update at the next Council meeting will include a draft letter in response to the Alternatives Analysis and thanked Laticia Alvarez in Public Works and Commissioner Mercer for their extensive work and time spent on researching this project. Council will also be queried on the desired scope and structure of the ad hoc committee being formed to deal with issues related to HST.

### **7E. Emmett House**

Progress continuing on interior and exterior finishes. Waiting for final details on a landscape plan from the landscape contractor. Anticipated that the project might be completed sometime in September, after which they want to start on the street reconstruction project to be discussed under item 7G.

Leasing efforts will follow a ribbon cutting/grand opening ceremony and the street reconstruction project, probably not until the end of the year. Potentially will package with two other residential below market rate units that the City has acquired and will rehab.

**7F. US 101 Pedestrian/Bike Bridge Project**

Making great progress. PG&E expected to move the utility line by the end of the week.

**7G. Sixth and O'Neill Avenue – Street Reconstruction Project**

Distributed a “draft” set of plans and asked that Commissioners email their comments to him. Plans are to go to Council for feedback on how 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue can be realigned, keeping in mind that the goals are to promote traffic calming, improve crosswalk connections, create some additional rights of way along the west side of 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue in front of city hall, still maintain all the parking, and to further the share-the-road (with bicyclists) concept.

Responding to Chair Frautschi’s reference to previous iterations of the 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue section, CDD de Melo stated that they included specifically dedicated bike lanes that would have put the bicyclist back into the traffic area and without full protection. It was determined that it would be more beneficial to concentrate on improvements in front of City Hall. A landscaped median between the two travel lanes is not included because of the large number of driveway cuts on 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

**8. CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF TUESDAY, JULY 27, 2010**

Liaison: Commissioner Parsons

Alternate Liaison: Commissioner Mayer

**9. ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m. to a Regular Planning Commission Meeting on Tuesday, August 17, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. in Belmont City Hall. The regularly scheduled Planning Commission Meeting of August 3, 2010 is cancelled due to National Night Out.

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Carlos de Melo  
Planning Commission Secretary

*CD’s of Planning Commission Meetings are available in the  
Community Development Department.  
Please call (650) 595-7416 to schedule an appointment.*

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