

CITY OF BELMONT
PLANNING COMMISSION
SUMMARY MINUTES

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 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), Associate Planner Gill (AP), City Attorney Zafferano, (CA), Recording Secretary Turning (RS), Parks and Recreation Administrative Assistant Saggau (PRAA), Parks and Recreation Director Gervais (PRD)

2. AGENDA AMENDMENTS - None

3. COMMUNITY FORUM (Public Comments) – None

4. CONSENT CALENDAR

4A. Minutes of October 5, 2010

Motion: By Commissioner Horton, seconded by Commissioner Parsons, to accept the Minutes of Tuesday, October 5, 2010, as presented.

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

Motion passed 5/0/2

5. STUDY SESSION

5A. Cipriani Dog Park – Improvements and Renovation

PRD Gervais gave an overview of the Staff Report, and PRAA Saggau described the proposed improvements and renovations in detail. She added that the option of leaving the Deodar Cedar trees where they are should have been listed as an option, but was not included in the proposal because users of the park have commented that the trees create a visual barrier that makes it difficult to watch their dogs

and the balls ricochet off the trees when playing fetch. PRD Gervais answered questions from the Commission, and added that staff is seeking comments from the Commission that can be considered by the Parks and Recreation Commission at its next meeting.

Responding to Commissioner Parsons questions, PRD Gervais stated that the Deodar Cedar trees are 12-15' high, he estimated that they would have a 60% chance of surviving a move, and if they do die they would be replaced with a different tree on the edge. Commissioner Parsons suggested that if they pruned the lower branches to no lower than 6-8' people sitting on the benches could see their dogs. He did not believe it made sense to try to move expensive, beautiful trees if pruning them would solve the problem. He also suggested that if there was some lawn area, dogs would be less likely to relieve themselves on the nearby ball fields.

Commissioner Mayer questioned the ownership and signage of the parking area, noting that it is not clear where dog park users are allowed to park. PRD Gervais gave the background of the dog park, noting that the school allows dog owners to park there and suggested that the site is better accessed through the Buena Vista gate. Commissioner Mayer indicated that he would like to see signage that makes it clear where dog park users are allowed to park.

Commissioner Mercer suggested that if the trees just outside of the fence on the southern perimeter of the property do not belong to the City, it would be a good plan to install some City-owned trees along the fence line on the inside, in order to maintain a tree barrier if the current trees should become diseased or cut down. She also questioned the need for trash bins equally placed around the lot, suggesting that there might be one more trash bin than needed.

Responding to Commissioner Horton, PRD Gervais stated that staff is recommending that the height of the fence be raised because dogs are jumping over the existing fence, and that the main purpose of the shade structure is for protection from the sun rather than rain.

Responding to Chair Frautschi, PRD Gervais stated that the cost of the fence is estimated at \$17,000, and that irrigation will be provided to the trees if they are relocated. Chair Frautschi noted that there is no indication in the budget to cover the cost of irrigation. Regarding the two recommended shade structures, staff estimated the life expectancy of the fabric material at 10 years and the wood structure at 20 years. The cost estimates for each is \$10,000.

Commissioner Horton believed the wood structure is more attractive, and, due to the bleakness of the area, she was not in favor of moving the trees.

Vice Chair Reed stated that he would vote to keep the trees since they are established and the area is a bleak, dusty and barren environment. He concurred that the cloth roof on the shelter would not last as long as the wood and would end up costing the City more money in the long run. Because it is not a level surface, he was concerned that the crushed granite surface will wash away over the years. He added that he checked the AKC website about dog parks, and determined that it would be worth considering a grassy area to deter dogs from relieving themselves on the playing field.

Commissioner Parsons preferred the wood structure as it is more in keeping with the rest of the City's parks and favored keeping the trees where they are with 2-3' removed at the bottom. He estimated that the trees should grow to 60' tall very quickly at which time they could take 5-6' off the bottom; people will be

able to see through them and they will provide shade. He recommended using the money saved to put new trees along the fence.

Commissioner Mathewson concurred that they should keep the trees, plant additional trees where they are proposing to move the Deodar Cedars, and opt for the structure that will save money and will look better in the end.

Commissioner Mercer concurred that the trees should be saved, and recommended that approximately 10% of the area be replaced with a heavy-duty grass that might help to mitigate the mid-day heat and deter erosion of the crushed granite. She preferred the wood shade structure but suggested that they consider adding deciduous Maples at each end of the structure so that they would provide the desired shade in 20 years when the wooden structure has exhausted its lifetime.

Commissioner Mayer was in favor of leaving the trees where they are to help improve the bleakness. He felt that the separation between the dog park and the playing fields is very harsh and unwelcoming and that something should be done to soften the border to make the place more inviting. He also favored the wood structure, recommended that signs be placed at the entrances to indicate that there is a dog run there and to make it more inviting to the public, and agreed that some lawn area would soften the harsh image that the park now has.

Chair Frautschi thanked the P&R staff for bringing the project to the Commission and agreed that the park is in need of renovation. He concurred with the other Commissioners' comments regarding the Deodar Cedars and suggested that the shade structure be located within the Cedars. He suggested that the whole area east of the Cedars would be a good place for a totally separate grass area that might have a tendency to hold down the erosion. Three people he talked to at the park told him that replacing the fence is a waste of \$17,000 since there is only one dog that has been able to jump the fence. The fence is in good shape, except that the gates need to be straightened out. He recommended keeping the Deodar Cedars and adding a line of trees next to the fence between it and the park, and mentioned that there is money in the City's tree budget. He liked the community billboard but questioned its location and suggested the addition of directional signs. He preferred the wood structure but thought that more trees would eliminate the need for a structure at all. He supported staff's recommendation for moving the benches and suggested that even additional benches would be useful when the park is busy. He added that the four light poles need to be revamped.

Commissioner Parsons added that he supported some kind of lawn area and additional landscaping.

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

6A. PUBLIC HEARING – 860 South Road

To consider a Single Family Design Review to construct a 532 square foot addition to the existing 2,042 square foot single family residence for a total of 2,574 square feet that is below the zoning district permitted 3,500 square feet for the site. (Appl. No. 2010-0041)

APN: 045-151-040; Zoned: R-1B (Single Family Residential)

CEQA Status: Categorical Exemption per Section 15303

APPLICANT/OWNER: Frank Kopas

PROJECT PLANNER: Rob Gill (650) 598-4204

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

Responding to Chair Frautschi's questions, Applicant/Owner Kopas stated that it was done last year with permits, and stated that the reason for the project is to increase the safety in the garage area and to beautify the home.

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

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

Chair Frautschi commented that this is a very clean project, thanked the applicant for enclosing the garage and complimented him on the landscaping. He suggested that there are other plants that could replace the Mexican Sage next to the railroad ties that would be deer resistant and give more of a lush look.

It was noted that the Resolution included in the Staff Report needs to be changed to show the correct address and application number.

MOTION: By Vice Chair Reed, seconded by Commissioner Parsons, to adopt the Resolution approving a Single-Family Design Review at 860 South Road (Appl. 2010—0041).

Ayes: Reed, Parsons, Mercer, Mathewson, Horton, Mayer, Frautschi

Noes: None

Motion passed 7/0

Chair Frautschi stated that this decision is appealable within ten calendar days.

6B. PUBLIC HEARING – 3328 Adelaide Way

To consider a Single Family Design Review to construct a 1,048 square foot addition to the existing 1,409 square foot single-family residence for a total of 2,457 square feet that is below the zoning district permitted 3,195 square feet for the site. (Appl. No. 2010-0044)

APN: 043-332-250; Zoned: R-1B (Single Family Residential)

CEQA Status: Categorical Exemption per Section 15303

APPLICANT: Wilson Chan

OWNERS: Yim Wai Lee and Sau Fong Lee

PROJECT PLANNER: Damon DiDonato, (650) 637-2908

SP DiDonato summarized the Staff Report, recommending approval subject to the Resolution with the conditions attached.

Vice Chair Reed confirmed with SP DiDonato that the entirety of this project is going to be within the current footprint of the home except for a 45 sq.ft. foyer.

Responding to Commissioner Mayer, Applicant Chan stated that he did not believe there is existing irrigation in the front yard but that it could be added to the landscape plan.

Mr. Chan responded to questions from Chair Frautschi as follows: 1) The washer and dryer are in the garage and will remain there. 2) The front and right-hand side fence will be repaired or replaced with a matching 6' fence. 3) The existing concrete patio slab in the back yard will remain for now but in the future could be replaced with pavers. 4) Removal of the dirt against the house in the back yard would involve minimal grading. 5) The tv antennae and satellite disc will be removed.

Commissioner Frautschi opened the Public Hearing. There were no requests to speak.

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

Commissioner Mercer commented that she appreciated that the applicant is keeping the addition on the same footprint and that it will be a great improvement to the neighborhood. She questioned the need for the fence that juts out close to the street, and would want to see a landscape plan that screens the fence and has irrigation at least in the front yard.

Sau Fong, owner, stated that the addition is designed so that they could age in place, but they would like help with the landscaping.

Chair Frautschi offered the following suggestions for a landscape plan to be brought back to the Commission: 1) A "good neighbor" fence would be more attractive. 2) An irrigation scheme. 3) More plants added in the front yard area. 4) Reduction of the lawn area in front – a curved area where the Manzanita tree is currently proposed could be replaced with low-water plants and an Oak tree. 5) The architect's view on the dirt that is against the foundation. 6) The Manzanita would work on the left side but a Liquid Amber tree like the neighbor's would be perfect and would screen the telephone pole. 7) They should think about replacing the driveway with pavers over time because it is cracking. He added that he was glad that the brick is being removed from the façade and that the planter box is being replaced with a bay window.

MOTION: By Commissioner Mercer, seconded by Commissioner Mayer, adopting the Resolution approving a Single-Family Design Review at 3328 Adelaide Way (Appl. No. 2010-0044) with the additional condition that the applicant return a landscape plan indicating improvements to the fence, irrigation, additional plantings and low-water, deer-resistant, drought-tolerant landscaping, and reconsideration of possibly more effective selection of tree species.

Ayes: Mercer, Mayer, Mathewson, Parsons, Horton, Reed, Frautschi

Noes: None

Motion passed 7/0

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

7. REPORTS, STUDIES AND UPDATES:

CDD de Melo reported as follows:

7A. Ralston/US-101 Landscape Project

No update at this time.

7B. San Mateo Development – North Road/43rd Avenue

No update at this time.

7C. Parking Study – Downtown Village Areas

No update at this time.

7D. Emmett House

Final landscape plans will come to the Public Works Department and referred to Commissioners Parsons and Horton for confirmation that everything is consistent with the recent walk-throughs.

7E. US-101 Pedestrian/Bike Bridge Project

Project continues to move along – no significant delays of any kind. Cages are up, columns are being formed and the ramp is being built on the west side of the freeway.

7F. High-Speed Rail (HSR)

At Council's request, Staff is studying options for defining the height of a potential aerial structure along the Belmont CalTrain tracks. Commissioner Parsons suggested a configuration of helium balloons. CDD de Melo added that and discussions are taking place with the Fire Department to use a ladder truck with flags or balloons.

A list of names for the HSR ad-hoc committee will be presented at the November 9th Council meeting, with the intention of calling the first meeting of the committee within the next few weeks.

Commissioner Mercer and CDD de Melo announced that a grass roots rally will be held at 11:00 on Sunday, November 7th at the Burlingame train station.

Other Items

A second business outreach meeting was held the previous week to review the **draft Belmont Sign Ordinance amendments**. Tentatively scheduled to bring to Commission at the November 16th meeting and Council's December 14th meeting.

Responding to Commissioner Mayer's request, CDD de Melo reported that Council did not make a decision at their last meeting regarding **NDNU Koret Field**; the item was continued to their meeting of November 9th.

Commissioner Mayer mentioned that there is activity at **1000 South Road**. CDD de Melo reported that the property has been purchased and is being rehabbed – building permits have been secured.

Chair Frautschi suggested that people go by Casa Bona and Semeria; work has begun on the new park.

8. CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2010

Liaison: Commissioner Mathewson
Alternate Liaison: Vice Chair Reed

9. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m. to a Regular Planning Commission Meeting on Tuesday, November 16, 2010 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) 595-7416 to schedule an appointment.*

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