

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

**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 2012, 7:00 PM**

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

**1. ROLL CALL**

Commissioners Present: Mercer, Parsons, Reed, Horton, Frautschi, Herbach  
Commissioners Absent: d'Souza

Staff Present: Community Development Director de Melo (CDD), Senior Planner DiDonato (SP), Associate Planner Gill (AP), Management Analyst Walker (MA), City Attorney Rennie (CA), Recording Secretary Turning (RS),

**2. AGENDA AMENDMENTS - None**

**3. COMMUNITY FORUM (Public Comments) - None**

**4. CONSENT CALENDAR**

**4A. Planning Commission Minutes of 7/3/2012**

Commissioner Herbach asked that the following corrections be made to the Minutes:

Page 4, last paragraph, 5<sup>th</sup> line, "when they ascertain" should be changed to read "to ascertain..."

Page 10, third line from the bottom, delete "Commissioner Herbach" and replace with "the Planning Department probably..." RS Turning will make the requested changes.

**MOTION: By Commissioner Horton, seconded by Commissioner Reed, to accept the Minutes of Tuesday, July 3, 2012 with corrections as noted.**

**Ayes: Horton, Reed, Herbach, Mercer**

**Noes: None**

**Abstain: Frautschi, Parsons**

**Absent: d'Souza**

**Motion passed 4/0/2/1**

**5. PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

**5A. PUBLIC HEARING – 49 Ralston Ranch Road** (Continued from 5/1/12 Commission meeting)

To consider a Single Family Design Review to construct a new 1,138 square foot single-family residence that is below the zoning district permitted 1,140 square feet for this site.

(Appl. No. 2011-55)

APN: 043-072-740; Zoned: HRO-2 (Hillside Residential & Open Space)

CEQA Status: Categorical Exemption per Section 15303

Applicant/Owner: Slim Lu

Project Planner: Rob Gill, (650) 598-4204

Chair Mercer determined that no Commissioners had any ex parte communications with anyone involved with this project.

AP Gill summarized the Staff Memorandum, recommending approval subject to the conditions attached. He noted that there is now a potential that protected tree #9 in the old plan can possibly be retained and will be reviewed with the arborist. Staff recommended approval of the attached resolution.

Slim Lu, applicant, addressed the Commission. Responding to Chair Mercer's question, he stated that it was his intention that by reducing the size of the deck the tree could be saved.

Chair Mercer opened the Public Hearing.

Carol Rossi, Belmont resident, expressed concern that the setback of the house from the street be done according to guidelines. She also noted that any stipulations about building a dog area to save the wood rat nests would affect the resale value of the house, noting that there are many wood rat nests in the area. She supported the recommendation to reduce the size of the deck.

AP Gill confirmed that the setbacks meet the guidelines and that there are protection measures required for the wood rat nests.

**MOTION: By Commissioner Frautschi, seconded by Vice Chair Parsons, to close the Public Hearing. Motion passed 6/0/ by a show of hands, with Commissioner d'Souza absent.**

Commissioners Horton, Herbach and Reed were pleased that the applicant made the changes as requested by the Planning Commission at the last hearing.

Vice Chair Parsons suggested that the driveway be narrowed to the width of the garage door, that a Eucalyptus tree in the front could possibly be saved and landscaping could be added to the corner to soften the corner of the house.

Commissioner Frautschi thanked Mr. Liu for responding to the Planning Commission's concerns and thanked AP Gill for guiding him through it. He commented that the existing driveway cut in the sidewalk is too wide and the sidewalk will probably have to be redone. It would be good to save tree #9 and would let staff make that determination.

Chair Mercer was also pleased that the changes had been made and wanted a condition of approval requiring preservation of the Oak tree that is under the corner of the deck. Discussion ensued.

**MOTION: By Commissioner Herbach, seconded by Commissioner Horton, to adopt the Resolution approving a Single-Family Design Review at 49 Ralston Ranch Road (Appl. No. 2011-0055) with the attached conditions.**

The application number referenced in Condition 1 of the Conditions Approval will be corrected to read 2011-0055.

**Ayes: Herbach, Horton, Reed, Frautschi, Parsons, Mercer**  
**Noes: None**  
**Absent: d'Souza**

**Motion passed 6/0/1**

Chair Mercer stated that this decision may be appealed to the City Council within 10 calendar days.

**5B. PUBLIC HEARING – 2724 Waltham Cross Drive**

To consider a Single Family Design Review to construct a 903 square foot addition to the existing 2,596 square foot single family residence for a total of 3,499 square feet that is below the zoning district permitted 3,500 square feet for the site.

(Appl. No. 2012-24)

APN: 045-110-090; Zoned: R-1A Single Family Residential

CEQA Status: Categorical Exemption per Section 15303

Applicant: Geurse Conceptual Design, Inc.

Owner(s): Blandon & Christy Luk

Project Planner: Rob Gill, (650) 598-4204

Vice Chair Parsons recused himself from this discussion as he lives within 500 feet of the property site.

Chair Mercer determined that no Commissioner had any ex parte communications with anyone involved with this project.

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

Responding to Commissioner Frautschi's question, AP Gill confirmed that the stone siding that is currently in place will be removed.

Responding to Commissioner Reed's comment regarding the FAR calculations on page 4, AP Gill agreed that the .533 should be corrected adding that 3500 is the maximum square feet for this zoning district. Chair Mercer added that the number should be .363 because they are building at the absolute maximum.

Chair Mercer noted that there is nothing in the landscape plan to document the existing landscaping. CDD de Melo stated that a condition could be added that photo documentation of the existing landscaping be required.

Blandon Luk, applicant, addressed the Commission.

Chair Mercer opened the Public Hearing.

Barbara Posch, Belmont resident, stated that she had expressed concern at the outreach meeting about privacy in her yard. She disagreed with the comment in the applicant's summary of the meeting that "...an agreement was reached for us (the applicant) to add tall hedges in a later phase and therefore not mandatory as a part of this project." She concluded that if nothing can be done about the size of the windows, whatever can be done to assure privacy in her back yard would be greatly appreciated.

**MOTION: By Commissioner Frautschi, seconded by Commissioner Reed, to close the Public Hearing. Motion passed 5/0/1/1 by a show of hands, with Vice Chair Parsons recused and Commissioner d'Souza absent.**

Commissioner Frautschi asked that staff read into the record the City's guidelines regarding privacy and sunlight and how the Commission is expected to deal with that. CDD de Melo stated that the 9 Single-Family Design Review findings do not speak to privacy impacts or sunlight or shading loss.

Commissioner Frautschi thanked the Luks for the design. He believed that a photographic recording of the existing landscaping should be required. He noted that the applicant is not required to put in additional screening but as a good neighbor was encouraged to do so. He recommended that the cedars along the sidewalk be removed as they are old and unattractive.

Commissioner Reed urged the applicant, from a good neighbor perspective, to install hedges to protect the privacy of the neighbor.

Commissioner Herbach concurred with the comments about a good neighbor policy. On the other side of the house frosted glazing at the stairs could be considered.

Commissioner Horton liked the design as presented. She did not believe they would sit on the stairs and look out the window but suggested that they might find that the windows will have to be made smaller as a result of Title 24 calculations.

Chair Mercer thought it was a "poster child" for the new Design Guidelines. She concurred with previous comments about the hedge. She would like to see a better landscape plan will all shrubs labeled and documented. She commented that she would like to see the evergreens destroyed so they would not have to be replaced and would like to see Condition 7 augmented with a requirement that the addition be measured once it is built.

**MOTION: By Commissioner Reed, seconded by Commissioner Herbach, to adopt the Resolution approving the Single-Family Design Review at 2727 Waltham Cross Drive (Appl. No. 2012-0024) with the attached conditions and the added conditions that the current landscape be photographed and labeled prior to construction, and that the square footage of the home be wet-stamped as part of the measuring process.**

**Ayes: Reed, Herbach, Horton, Frautschi, Mercer**  
**Noes: None**  
**Recused: Parsons**  
**Absent: d'Souza**

**Motion passed 5/0/1/1**

Chair Mercer stated that the public has 10 calendar days to appeal this project to the City Council.

Vice Chair Parsons returned to the podium.

**5C. PUBLIC HEARING – 1585 Molitor Road**

To consider a Single Family Design Review to construct a 656 square foot (net) second story addition to the existing 2,477 square-foot second story single family residence for a total of 3,133 square feet that is below the zoning district permitted maximum 3,181 square feet for the site.

(Appl. No. 2012-0022)

APN: 045-274-350; Zoned: R-1C (Single-Family Residential)

CEQA Status: Categorical Exemption per Section 15303

Applicant: James Valenti

Owner(s): Mike and Makiko Huber

Project Planner: Jennifer Walker, (650) 595-7453

Chair Mercer determined that no Commissioner had any ex parte communications with the applicant or anyone involved with this project.

MA Walker summarized the Staff Report, noting a correction that the house is a split-level which is a single-story in the front and two-story in the back. She discussed the changes that were made to address concerns about building bulk. Staff recommended approval with the conditions attached.

Responding to Chair Mercer's questions, MA Walker stated that the back setback is 25' to the home and 21 or 22' to the deck. She did not do a hardscape calculation.

Vice Chair Parsons' and Commissioner Herbach's questions regarding the material to be used for the exterior of the house were deferred to the architect.

Responding to Commissioner Frautschi's question regarding how the perceived height of the building was calculated, MA Walker stated that the finished grade is the patio level and from there it steps up to the front of the house. A condition requiring wet stamping would confirm whether or not they had gone beyond the invisible line.

Commissioner Frautschi asked staff to confirm what the findings are regarding shadowing on adjoining properties and maintaining private residential views. CDD de Melo responded that there are 9 findings and that Single Family Design Review does not take into account privacy impacts, shading, loss of light, shading or private views but the Commission does have the opportunity to determine if the applicant has done a good job of minimizing public view loss.

Jim Valenti, project architect, addressed the Commission, noting that the Building Code definition of the existing structure is a Single-Family Over Basement. He added that the hardscape is being reduced by about 16 sq.ft. by rearranging the front courtyard and that the new slanted wall in the front will have white cedar siding and everything else will remain stucco.

Responding to Commissioner Horton, Mr. Valenti explained his rationale for having 4-5 different roof forms on one house and added that the owner felt strongly about having solar collectors along the south side and a small storage area over the garage that can be accessed from the new deck and the garage. Commissioner Horton stated that she had a hard time understanding what he is trying to do from a design standpoint, and questioned the formal portico. Mr. Valenti stated that he was considering changing the columns to something less formal. Commissioner Horton stated that she liked the back of the house better than the front.

Vice Chair Parsons questioned whether they would legally be able to have what seemed like to him an excessive number of windows in the back. Mr. Valenti responded that he had not yet run the Title 24 calculations.

Chair Mercer asked staff at what point in a plan check the Title 24 calculations get done. CDD de Melo responded that it is part of the plan check submittals. Minor changes could be approved at the staff level but if there are significant changes they would bring it back to the Planning Commission.

Mr. Valenti added that Title 24 is usually the last thing they do just before getting a building permit and typically they wait until after planning approvals to do the engineering.

Chair Mercer opened the Public Hearing.

Joe Ruk, Belmont resident, gave background about his home and the neighboring houses and expressed concern about the height of the houses being built behind his house.

Ken Boyer, Belmont resident, supported the project on the principal that the plans are within the zoning and design guidelines and felt that the regulations should apply equally to everyone, and that it will enhance the neighborhood.

**MOTION: By Vice Chair Frautschi, seconded by Commissioner Reed, to close the Public Hearing. Motion passed 6/0/1 by a show of hands with Commissioner d'Souza absent.**

Commissioner Herbach, referring to Sheet 4, commented that the stepped window following the staircase looks out of place and would look better if it followed the roof line.

Vice Chair Parsons stated that he did not have a problem with the project per se but did have a problem with the architecture. The house looks very contemporary in places but and has a colonial/traditional front porch that looks like it belongs on a different house and a colonial hip roof on top of the house. The one place that probably should have a window is the existing bedroom and the windows on the stairway are too high. He would like to see the project returned with a reduction in bulk and architecture that fits with the houses in the neighborhood. He added that the hardscape was not addressed, noting that the whole front area between the street and the front is paved and parked on. CDD de Melo confirmed that if it is public right-of-way it is allowed to be parked on but paving on private property is limited to enough paving to allow for a 2-car wide driveway and a 2-car garage. If you have confirmation that the pad is private property and it is not permitted the Commission could take steps to remedy that area. Vice Chair Parsons would like to see the hardscape reduced, noting that there is also a lot of hardscape in the back relative to the overall house. He did not believe the trees on the property matched the landscape plan,

which needs to be documented and brought back to the Commission. The landscaping all the way around the house will be torn up when they stucco the whole house. His main concern is that it is a mishmash of architecture and he would not want to live across the street from the house. He further encouraged the architect to reconsider the front façade.

Commissioner Reed could not make Finding I, Substantial Compliance with the Residential Design Guidelines, and concurred with other Commissioners that there is a mixing of different styles. He disagreed with staff's conclusion that this does comply with the Residential Design Guidelines.

Commissioner Frautschi agreed that the design has a number of problems and that the back is a more balanced reflection of what you want to achieve. He stated that he does not like to legislate how an applicant builds his house but the Commission has to look at Findings, and he could not find for Finding I. He would like to have a clear estimate of what the hardscape numbers are. The blanket statement in the Staff Report about additional ground cover and shrubs to match the existing landscaping is not sufficient to make the landscape finding. He believes there are larger issues with bulk that a landscape plan might help mitigate; it might soften the front vantage point of the property. He did not believe the plan is successful at reducing the visual bigness of the house. Therefore, for hardscape reasons, bulk reasons and needing a final landscape plan he would continue the project for a redesign.

Commissioner Horton could not make Finding I; there are too many kinds of windows and styles and the hip roof and shed roof do not go together. It looks too bulky and does not fit in with anything anywhere in Belmont. She could not approve the project and believed it could be redesigned if they would pick a style in the front and stick with it.

Chair Mercer conceptually had no problem with adding a second floor and appreciated that it is centered well on the property. She could not make Finding I because of the conflict of styles. She likes contemporary homes and traditional homes but does not like conditional homes and believed the design ended up increasing the bulk. She could not make the hardscape Finding and believed it would calculate out to be 80% or more and should be somewhere in the 50% to 60% range. She noted that the water has to run off somewhere and that there is less opportunity to plant some good significant tall trees, which would help buffer the height into the landscape. She could not make the Findings for landscape because there is no attempt to augment the landscape to mitigate the bulk. She believed the house would be perceived by neighbors as an unfriendly house as they would see only asphalt and a 4' fence. It needs to be opened up and greened up. She gave the applicant an opportunity to comment on what has been said by the Commission.

Mr. Valenti returned to the podium. He stated that he was shocked by the Commissioners' comments but will discuss it with his clients. He will be happy to redo what he can and saw no choice but to continue the project. Chair Mercer noted that staff could show them a recent project where a 2<sup>nd</sup> story was added but they were able to maintain the existing hip roof. Mr. Valenti added that their initial problem was putting this small upper story on the existing house without it looking like a bunk, and that they wanted to maximize the south-facing solar collectors and add a little storage area over the garage.

CDD de Melo summarized the discussion by noting that the applicant heard the Commission's concerns about bulk, hardscape, consistency relative to architectural design, window treatment and landscape designs and is amenable to a continuance to allow staff to work with them to address these issues.

Vice Chair Parsons reiterated that Commissioners had a consensus that they do not have objection to a second-story addition; it's the other issues that need to be addressed.

**MOTION: By Vice Chair Parsons, seconded by Commissioner Frautschi, to continue Application 2012-0022 to a date uncertain.**

Chair Mercer pointed out that the application number in Exhibit A, under Planning Division 1. is incorrect. Staff will make that correction.

Ayes: Parsons, Frautschi, Herbach, Horton, Reed, Mercer  
Noes: None  
Absent: d'Souza

Motion passed 6/0/1

**5D. PUBLIC HEARING – 1512 Harbor Boulevard**

To consider a Single Family Design Review to construct a 771 square foot addition to the existing 2,631 square foot single family residence for a total of 3,402 square feet that is below the zoning district permitted 3,500 square feet for the site.

(Appl. No. 2012-12)

APN: 045-281-020; Zoned: R-1A Single Family Residential

CEQA Status: Categorical Exemption per Section 15303

Applicant: Geoffrey Campen – Klop Architecture

Owner(s): Matthias Hausner & Davina Hurt

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

Chair Mercer determined that Commissioner Frautschi had spoken with Davina Hurt during their tenure on the High-Speed Rail Subcommittee for about 6 months, and he had said hello to her and her husband in the parking lot. Chair Mercer also worked with Mrs. Hurt on the High-Speed Rail Subcommittee but did not discuss the proposed addition. No other Commissioners had ex parte communications with anyone involved with the project.

SP DiDonato summarized the Staff Report, recommending approval subject to the conditions attached to the draft resolution.

Responding to Chair Mercer's questions, SP DiDonato clarified several items on landscape plan A0.1.

Vice Chair Parsons questioned if an existing basement is included in the square footage for the project and wanted to clarify if a hall from the garage goes down to another level. His questions were deferred to the project architect.

Commissioner Frautschi asked for clarification of a statement in the geological report regarding a discharge of the site drainage in the exiting storm drain line. SP DiDonato responded that Public Works had determined that they were draining into a detention area which slowed down the water that then went off into an adjacent site, and that they would need an easement for this to occur. Public Works will not allow them to propose the condition if they do not get the easement.

Matthias Hausner, property owner, presented background about the home and gave a detailed description via Power Point of the project. He stated that there is a partial basement underneath one of the bedrooms that is not recorded anywhere and that it is not usable because of water damage and other issues. There is also a 500 sq.ft. garage that is a separate building connected to the current house with a breezeway and some accessory buildings, which will be an integral part of the house. He thanked neighbors for their support, noting that there were no objections to the project.

Responding to Chair Mercer's question regarding elevations on the north side of the property, Mr. Hausner explained that this is not a two-story design and that it will be much lower than the current bedroom.

Responding to Vice Chair Parsons' question regarding a hallway shown on the drawings coming from the garage, Mr. Hausner stated that the line at the end of the hallway should not be there – the hallway will go through the den and into the kitchen. The architect will be asked to correct this on the drawings.

Responding to Chair Mercer, it was clarified that the blacktop across the entire length of the front of the house is a public-right-way. SP DiDonato was not sure who maintains it.

Chair Mercer opened the Public Hearing.

Mike Davidson, Belmont resident, asked that the Commission approve the plans, expressing his esteem for the "amazing transformation" of the property since the Hausners moved in.

**MOTION: By Vice Chair Parsons, seconded by Commissioner Frautschi, to close the Public Hearing. Motion passed 6/0/1 by a show of hands, with Commissioner d'Souza absent.**

Commissioner Reed stated that in his entire time as a Commissioner this is the single best project he has ever seen; he had no reservations about making the findings.

Commissioner Frautschi felt that the final hardscape and landscape plans should return to the Commission for final approval, as well as clarification of the site water retention drainage plans. He congratulated the applicant on their outreach letter, the design and their successful collaboration with the architect and was prepared to approve the actual house design as presented.

Commissioner Horton concurred that this is a wonderful application and a beautiful home. She did not have an issue with the hardscape balance and believed the water regulation could be left to the purview of the Public Works Department.

Commissioner Herbach agreed with Commissioner Horton on the hardscape issue considering the size of the lot and the permeable surfaces. He believed he could make all the findings.

Vice Chair Parsons agreed that it is a wonderful plan and wanted to trade homes when they are finished building. He thought there was room for compromise on the landscape plan and which could be worked on with staff, and he agreed to leave approval of the holding ponds up to Public Works. He did want to see a reduction in the amount of hardscape behind the garage, which should be part of the hardscape analysis. He could go along with bringing the hardscape and landscape plans back to the Commission.

Chair Mercer loved the project and believed it could be an award winner. She was not so concerned about the percentage of hardscape but did not feel like she fully understood the landscaping. She did not believe it was clear what is replacing the building and would like to see a landscape plan brought back to the Commission that would indicate what is still going to be paved and what is being replaced, and what is coming out. She actually thought there might be too many trees for a California contemporary design. She did not understand exactly how the house sits on the land and asked the architect for help.

John Klopff, architect, thanked the Commission for the compliments about the design and clarified sheet A0.2, the grading and landscape plan, which shows the grade levels in detail. He confirmed that the fill will be used at the upper left-and corner of the house.

**MOTION: By Vice Chair Parsons, seconded by Commissioner Reed, to adopt the Resolution approving a Single-Family Design Review at 1512 Harbor Boulevard (Appl. No. 2012-0012) with the attached Conditions of Approval and the additional condition that the landscape/hardscape plan be returned for Commission approval prior to issuance of building permits.**

**Ayes: Parsons, Reed, Herbach, Horton, Frautschi, Mercer**  
**Noes: None**  
**Absent: d'Souza**

**Motion passed 6/0/1**

Chair Mercer stated that this item may be appealed to the City Council within 10 calendar days.

Chair Mercer called for a short break at 9:26 p.m.

Meeting resumed at 9:31 p.m.

**5E. PUBLIC HEARING – Zone Text Amendments – Section 23 (Sign Ordinance)**

To consider Zone Text Amendments to Section 23.09.04(c) (Sign Ordinance – Temporary Signs – Real Estate Signs) of the City of Belmont Zoning Code. The purpose of these amendments is to modify the allowed number and size of *Directional and Open House Signs*.

(Appl. No. 2012-0043); CEQA Status: Categorical Exemption per Section 15308 - Actions of Regulatory Agencies for the Protection of the Environment

Applicant: City of Belmont

Project Planner: Carlos de Melo, (650) 595-7440

CDD de Melo summarized the Staff Memorandum, providing background about the proposed zone text amendment and recommending that the Commission forward it to the City Council for adoption.

Responding to Chair Mercer's question as to what the Council's thought process was with respect to increasing the number of signs from 3 to 4, CDD de Melo stated that it was not a monumental change, as long as the signs are within the private right-of-way, and they had no concern with making the minor change in response to the request from the real estate community.

Responding to Commissioner Reed, CDD de Melo stated that the proposed amendment would bring Belmont more in line with standard practice in the real estate community.

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

**MOTION: By Commissioner Frautschi, seconded by Commissioner Reed, to close the Public Hearing. Motion passed 6/0/1 by a show of hands, with Commissioner d'Souza absent.**

Vice Chair Parsons pointed out that there is already an enforcement problem and he did not see the necessity for allowing one more sign. Unless we can enforce the regulations, he could not vote to allow four signs. He asked CDD de Melo if there is a map that shows the right-of-way where signs are permitted in order to determine if it is a public or private right-of-way. If the amendment is approved, he believes the public announcement needs to include language that there is a map available for review at the front desk. CDD de Melo replied that in March of 2011 the City did a lot of outreach to SAMCAR members and that at a recent Council meeting Police Chief DeSmidt reported that there is a more concerted effort relative to addressing code enforcement issues.

Chair Mercer asked if there is one master map or would realtors have to come in to the office to look at individual properties. CDD de Melo responded that there are aerial photographs where they can zoom in and determine within a foot or two where the property line is located. They would have to come to City Hall to receive clearance before their open house.

Commissioner Reed had no problem with allowing the fourth sign but he did not believe it would make any difference because it would not be enforced.

Commissioner Frautschi opposed the proposed increase in size and the addition of a fourth sign. He suggested that if people are going to use the public right-of-way to make a living the City should be able to make some kind of money from it.

Commissioner Herbach agreed with Commissioner Reed about passing laws or zoning ordinances and then not enforcing them. He would like to hold it in abeyance to see if we are getting enforcement.

Commissioner Horton felt that the size of temporary signs on sidewalks is a safety issue, and concurred with Commissioner Reed that it would not make any difference, believing that realtors will do what they want to do and it will not be enforced.

CA Rennie commented on increased enforcement efforts that are in effect.

Chair Mercer could approve increasing the size of the signs but questioned the need for 4 signs. She noted that it is difficult to find places to legally place 3 signs, and questioned the necessity of any signs considering the modern method of house hunting via the internet and GPS.

Chair Mercer conducted a poll of the Commissioners, resulting in the following tally:

4 Commissioners out of 6 did not approve the addition of a fourth sign.

5 Commissioners out of 6 approved increasing the size of the signs as detailed in the proposed Resolution.

**MOTION:** By Commissioner Horton, seconded by Commissioner Reed, to adopt the Resolution recommending to the City Council amendments for Section 23.09.04(C) – Sign Ordinance – Temporary Signs – Real Estate Signs of Belmont Zoning Ordinance Number 360, with the exception that the text in Item (C) under 23.09.04 Real Estate Signs would not change but would continue to read “(C), Directional Signs and Open House Signs. During an open house event, up to three signs giving direction....” Items C.1 and C.2 are recommended as written in the proposed Resolution.

**Ayes:** Horton, Reed, Herbach, Parsons, Mercer  
**Noes:** Frautschi  
**Absent:** d’Souza

**Motion passed 5/1/1**

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

CDD de Melo reported as follows:

### **6A. North Road Right-of-Way**

No report at this time.

### **6B. Caltrain Modernization Program/High-Speed Rail (HSR)**

There is a technical advisory committee meeting coming up later in the month. The Northern San Mateo Rail Partnership group has been disbanded. Caltrain will be providing another forum for northern cities to comment on the project. The PCC continues to meet and staff continues to provide feedback to Caltrain making it clear that Council does not support passing tracks.

### **6C. Ralston/US-101 Landscape Project**

No report at this time.

### **Other Items**

**Crystal Springs Uplands** will be on the City Council agenda for September 11.

Responding to Chair Mercer’s question, CDD de Melo reported that Parks and Recreation has cleaned up the area on **North Road Right of Way** and he believed there are plans to get additional plantings in the area. Commissioner Reed added that it is cleaned up but it is not aesthetically pleasing. Commissioner Frautschi added that a councilmember referred to it as “meager”.

Chair Mercer raised the issue of the **Ralston/101 Landscape** project and asked if any progress has been made in obtaining the funds from the City of Redwood City. Commissioner Reed believed that a volunteer effort could make the area look better and that there are people out there who would take that on. Chair Mercer asked what needs to be done to get the City of Redwood City to hand over the money designated for this landscape project. CDD de Melo agreed to talk to the City Manager to see what higher level effort it would take to get the project moving.

Vice Chair Parsons and Chair Mercer found that **20 redwood trees have been topped at a site along Ralston Ranch Road abutting Ralston Avenue.** Commissioner Frautschi will talk to the citizen he believes has taken on responsibility for beautifying this area.

Commissioner Frautschi had called Daniel Ourtiague about the **redwood trees near I Hop** that appear to be distressed.

Commissioner Frautschi discovered that **Sunnyslope street signs** had disappeared. These will be replaced by Public Works.

Commissioner Frautschi asked who he could talk to in the City about the possibility of approaching Caltrans about **developing a piece of property owned by Caltrans on El Camino Real near the pizza place at the south end of the City.** He would like to see it developed with benches and more trees and asked staff to let him know how he should proceed.

CDD de Melo stated that the first **Tree Board meeting** is scheduled for Wednesday, October 3rd just prior to the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting. Chair Parsons and Commissioner Mercer called attention to the fact that their one-year assignment will soon expire. CDD de Melo will put **appointments to the Tree Board** on the next Planning Commission agenda.

CDD de Melo stated that there will be no meeting on November 20<sup>th</sup> due to three or four Commissioners not being available due to the Thanksgiving holiday.

## **7. CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2012 7:30 P.M.**

Liaison: Chair Mercer  
Alternate Liaison: Commissioner Herbach

## **8. ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 p.m. to a Regular Planning Commission Meeting on Tuesday, September 18, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. in Belmont City Hall.

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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.*

I:/Planning Com/Min09042012