



City of Santa Barbara

Planning Division

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

July 11, 2013

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Jordan called the meeting to order at 1:05 P.M.

I. ROLL CALL

Chair Mike Jordan, Vice Chair Deborah L. Schwartz, Commissioners Bruce Bartlett, John P. Campanella, Sheila Lodge, June Pujo, and Addison Thompson.

STAFF PRESENT:

Bettie Weiss, City Planner
Renee Brooke, Senior Planner
N. Scott Vincent, Assistant City Attorney
Stacey Wilson, Associate Transportation Planner
Peter Lawson, Associate Planner
Julie Rodriguez, Planning Commission Secretary

II. PRELIMINARY MATTERS:

A. Action on the review of the following Draft Minutes and Resolutions:

1. Draft Minutes of June 13, 2013
2. Resolution 010-13
448 Alan Road

MOTION: Lodge/Schwartz

Approve the minutes and resolutions as corrected.

This motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: 7 Noes: 0 Abstain: 0 Absent: 0

B. Requests for continuances, withdrawals, postponements, or addition of ex-agenda items.

Senior Planner Renee Brooke announced that Item III.A., the Highway 101 HOV Project Update, has been postponed indefinitely.

- C. Announcements and appeals.

None.

- D. Comments from members of the public pertaining to items not on this agenda.

Chair Jordan opened the public hearing at 1:08 P.M. and, with no one wishing to speak, closed public comment.

III. NEW ITEMS:

- A. **HIGHWAY 101 HOV PROJECT UPDATE AND DISCUSSION.** Postponed Indefinitely.

The purpose of this hearing is to update the Planning Commission on the status of the South Coast Highway 101 HOV Lanes Project; allow for Planning Commission discussion of approval considerations, environmental review, and the project scope; and to forward the Planning Commission's input in these areas to the Caltrans District 5 Director with the intention of increasing Caltrans' responsiveness to City-related issues.

Case Planner: Dan Gullett, Associate Planner

Email: DGullett@SantaBarbaraCA.gov

Phone: (805) 564-5470, ext. 4550.

ACTUAL TIME: 1:09 P.M.

RECUSALS: To avoid any actual or perceived conflict of interest, Commissioner Campanella recused himself due to past involvement with the project and left the dais at 1:09 P.M.

- B. **APPLICATION OF PEIKERT GROUP ARCHITECTS FOR HILLSIDE HOUSE, 1235 VERONICA SPRINGS ROAD, APN 047-010-039, DR 4.6 (COUNTY), GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION: RESIDENTIAL 4.6 (COUNTY) (MST2003-00793)**

Note: This hearing was to review revisions to the project, which included providing all rental units instead of a mix of condominiums and rental units, reducing the total square footage of development and providing a surface parking lot for the dwelling units instead of garages. The project description below reflects these revisions.

Project Description

The proposed project involves the annexation of the approximately 24 acre legal lot to the City of Santa Barbara, the removal of all existing structures on the site, except the structure known as Harmony House (a single family residence), and the phased development of 120 residential units in 17 buildings. With the conversion of Harmony House to a manager's unit, there would be a total of 121 residential units. The new buildings would be two to three stories tall and contain rental units with a mix of market rate and affordable units. A proposed non-

residential building would include an administration building for Hillside House clients. Other uses would include a pool, a club house within the Harmony House, and a laundry facility for all residents.

The General Plan pre-annexation designation of the site is Residential (5 units/acre) and a Zoning Map Amendment to SP-10 (Specific Plan) is proposed. Two conservation easements are proposed on the project site; one would encompass Arroyo Burro Creek, located within the project site boundaries, including approximately 100 feet on either side of the creek for its entire length on the project site. The second conservation easement would encompass the hillside on the northern side of the project site.

Access to the site would be provided by a new 36-foot wide public road that would end at a cul-de-sac. Parking for both residents and their guests would be provided in a 246 space surface parking lot adjacent to the development. Immediately off site, within an undeveloped right-of-way, a combined bike path and emergency access road would be constructed, connecting Palermo Road to the new cul-de-sac. In addition to the public road, there would be public drainage improvements both on- and off-site. Finally, Arroyo Burro Creek, located along the southern portion of the lot, would be restored, including an approximate 100-foot wide area along the top-of-bank.

The purpose of the concept review was to allow the Planning Commission and the public an opportunity to review the revised project design at a conceptual level and provide the Applicant and Staff with feedback and direction regarding the proposed land use and design. The opinions of the Planning Commission may change or there may be ordinance or policy changes that could result in requests for future project design changes.

No formal action on the development proposal was taken at the concept review hearing, nor was any determination made regarding environmental review of the proposed project.

A Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) has been prepared and prior to any future action on the project, the Planning Commission will consider certification of the EIR, and must make findings pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines Section 15091.

Case Planner: Peter Lawson, Associate Planner

Email: PLawson@SantaBarbaraCA.gov

Phone: (805) 564-5470, ext. 4565.

Renee Brooke, Senior Planner, gave the Staff presentation. Peter Lawson, Associate Planner; Stacey Wilson, Associate Transportation Planner; and Bettie Weiss, City Planner were available to respond to questions.

Craig Olson, Hillside House Executive Director, provided an introduction. The applicant presentation was given by Detlev Peikert and Lisa Plowman, both with

Peikert Group Architects, along with John Polanskey, Director of Housing Development, Housing Authority of the County of Santa Barbara. Scott Schell, Associated Transportation Engineers (ATE), was available to answer any questions.

The applicants concluded their presentation with a video of Hillside House residents, Joanne Polaco and Patricia Guevara, who were unable to attend and desired to make some comments about the proposed project.

Chair Jordan called for a recess at 2:34 P.M. and reconvened the meeting at 2:49 P.M.

Chair Jordan opened the public hearing at 2:49 P.M.

The following people spoke in support of the concept:

1. Ron Perry
2. Susan Chapman, Hillside House Board Member, submitted written comments.
3. Nicole Ramirez, Hillside House employee
4. Rob Fredericks, Deputy Director, Housing Authority of the City of Santa Barbara
5. Earl Armstrong, Hillside House Board Member
6. Richard Monk, Hillside House Board Member
7. Mickey Flacks, County Housing Authority Board Commissioner
8. Ken Hough, Santa Barbara County Action Network (SBCAN)
9. Paul Hernadi
10. Linda Barrett

The following people spoke in opposition to the concept or with concerns:

1. Pauline Beck, neighbor, is concerned with increase in number of bedrooms than previously proposed, large outdoor parking lot not in character with neighborhood, and increase in traffic count.
2. Jo-Ann Shelton, neighbor, restated her submitted written comments.
3. Dan Higgins, submitted a map of housing density along Veronica Springs Road and expressed concern with the project density and traffic.
4. John Beck, neighbor, was concerned with lack of neighborhood amenities for Section 8 families who would live in the project units, and traffic safety.
5. Dan McCarter, agreed with Mrs. Beck that Las Positas Road is unsafe for pedestrians. He was also concerned with safety and creek restoration. Would like to see a greater creek setback and additional restoration. Concerned with alignment of fire access/pedestrian road being so close to the creek.
6. David Lane submitted written comments and would like to save the 75 year old eucalyptus forest and wildlife corridor across the project site, which he believes is threatened by this project.

7. Shannon O'Brien submitted written comments, did not feel the project is compatible with the neighborhood and was concerned with safety of the natural gas line.
8. Eddie Harris, Santa Barbara Urban Creeks Council, concerned with safety and enhancement of the riparian area as an important natural resource for the community. Would like to see the project moved farther away from creek and adjust the alignment of the City road right-of-way on the adjacent property to provide a greater setback from the creek.
9. Nick Sebastian, Veronica Springs Homeowners, voiced traffic concerns. Elings Park development also impacts traffic.
10. Rudolf Hernandez, neighbor, showed a map of the area and expressed concern with traffic safety because many of the roads are curved, and cars are parked along the road, which creates a poor line of sight.
11. Elizabeth Phillips is concerned with the projects density, traffic impacts, and incompatibility with the neighborhood.
12. Ryan Phelan feels the project is too dense and would have impacts to the neighborhood.
13. Gail Kennedy, submitted written comments, and felt that the Applicant's use of Harbor Village in Costa Mesa as a comparison to the project was inappropriate and that the project is inconsistent with the City's adopted General Plan.
14. William Kennedy submitted written comments and was concerned with planning decisions based on zoning needs and not social justice framework.
15. Frank Arredondo, was not present, submitted a letter that was read into the record by Gail Kennedy, expressing concern about a potential Native American burial area nearby and if the local Native American tribes were notified about the annexation, consistent with State requirements.
16. Mariah Moon, submitted written comments, and was concerned with neighborhood compatibility.
17. James Childress was not able to stay, but submitted written comments.
18. Arthur Quiroz was opposed to extra smog, noise and traffic. Would like consideration given to preserving the owls and coyotes.
19. John Caulfield was concerned with increased traffic and density, small neighborhood roads not being adequate to handle the project, and the potential for greater fire hazards.
20. DeEtt Thompson reminded people of a recent bicycle death on Las Positas Road and emphasized the traffic/pedestrian safety is dangerous now and was concerned with the impact to safety by the project.
21. Susie Kircos, Assistance League of Santa Barbara, was concerned with the annexation and, if their property was included in the annexation, would the existing Assistance League development become a violation under the City's Zoning Ordinance.
22. Dennis Gagnon feels the cost-benefit analysis for this project is minimal so far.

23. Peter Sturman submitted written comment and presented a PowerPoint presentation focusing on surrounding intersections and level of service.
24. Bret Bollman was concerned with traffic issues and the possibility that Palermo Road would be opened up in the future as a through road.

With no one else wishing to speak, the public hearing was closed at 4:28 P.M.

Chair Jordan called for a recess at 4:28 P.M. and reconvened the meeting at 4:40 P.M.

Lisa Plowman, Project Manager, Peikert Group Architects addressed the public's concerns on Palermo Drive, the gas line, and Veronica Springs Road traffic. The Applicant has been and remains interested in meeting with the neighbors to resolve any concerns.

Renee Brooke affirmed that the Native American Heritage Commission was contacted, as required.

Commissioner's Comments:

Many Commissioners felt that the project was well-designed, but felt it was not in an appropriate location and needs to be in the urban corridor near transit roads and service amenities. The Commission also acknowledged the quandary of not being able to relocate this project to the downtown area because the city is mostly built-out. Some Commissioner acknowledged the positive community work done by Hillside House, but felt that social considerations should not influence land use decisions.

The Commission was in agreement on the need for affordable housing, but, similar to the overall concerns for the project. Some commissioners were concerned about placing affordable housing in a location without adequate transit service or basic services found in the downtown corridor.

Some Commissioners felt the applicant's comparison to Harbor Village in Costa Mesa was not comparable for it was located near transit and community services, while Hillside House is not. Chair Jordan added that online reviews of Harbor Village revealed that the community shared concerns over the same issues voiced by Hillside House neighbors and there were many negative comments about the lack of parking. Some of the Commission felt that the proposed project was too aggressive for the neighborhood.

Some Commissioners expressed concern over traffic and safety and asked that the traffic study and analysis in the EIR be updated.

Specific Concept Review Comments:

- Commissioner Thompson stated that it was an excellent and well-designed project but that it was in the wrong place. Reasons given included density, lack of services and transit and the non-compatibility with the neighborhood. Noted that the number of neighbors present in opposition indicated that more community outreach was needed and urged the applicant to host several workshop-style community meetings to refine their concept.
- Commissioner Lodge said that the project does not conform to the General Plan. Landscaping looks minimal and should include many more trees.
- Commissioner Bartlett was overall supportive of the project and liked the reduced building footprint, open parking, gardens, and reduced building mass. Would like to see more trees and more shading over the parking area. Likes the permeable paving that reduces water runoff. Cautioned on increased bedroom count and agrees that the EIR has to be updated to include this revised proposal and ensure that the impact analysis remains the same.
- Commissioner Bartlett asked that the portion of Veronica Springs Road that abuts the property be included in the annexation and requested that street improvements, such as widening the road, be included as part of this application.
- Commissioner Schwartz stated that this is not an ideal property for a development of this size and that community engagement is necessary. She expressed concern with the methodology of the traffic impact analysis in the EIR and neighborhood compatibility of the four buildings proposed along Veronica Springs Road especially with regard to accessibility and safety issues brought by increased usage on Veronica Springs Road. Understood the City's current policy for Transfer of Existing Development Rights (TEDR), but requested that if the possible implementation action in the General Plan for a residential TEDR program was developed, it should be explored for the project.
- Commissioner Pujo said some of the changes in the recently adopted General Plan may impact the analysis in the EIR and would like to see how those play out in the EIR. Agrees with Staff that the long distance between parking spaces and some of the units is a concern and would like to see additional information in the EIR. Uncovered parking spaces are not the best solution for parking and gives an institutionalized feel. Would also like to know how much of the reduced square footage includes habitable space and how much includes the previous garages.
- Commissioner Pujo has serious concerns with the density of the project and how it fits with the neighborhood. Would like to see more information about the density that would result from the rezoning of the site as part of the annexation to the City and determine if it is most appropriate for this site.

- Commissioner Jordan expressed concern that the revised project appears to present the same overall issues as the prior project. Explore use of public road as private road for additional parking options.

The Commission strongly encouraged the applicant to work with the neighborhood and hold more community meetings to address the issues expressed, and possibly include Staff, in any meetings. Based upon on all of the letters received, Commissioner Schwartz felt the level of dissatisfaction from the neighbors was untenable for the Commission.

ACTUAL TIME: 7:11 P.M.

E. Committee and Liaison Reports.

1. Staff Hearing Officer Liaison Report

Commissioner Lodge reported on the Staff Hearing Officer meetings held on June 27, 2013, and July 10, 2013.

2. Other Committee and Liaison Reports

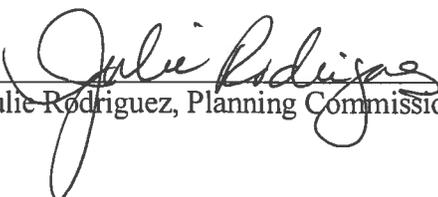
a. Commissioner Thompson reported on Single Family Design Board meeting of July 1, 2013.

b. Commissioner Thompson reported on the Architectural Board of Review meeting of July 8, 2013.

IV. **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Jordan adjourned the meeting at 7:14 P.M.

Submitted by,



Julie Rodriguez, Planning Commission Secretary