



## City of Santa Barbara Planning Division

### PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

May 21, 2015

#### **CALL TO ORDER:**

Chair Thompson called the meeting to order at 1:03 P.M.

#### **I. ROLL CALL**

Chair Addison Thompson, Commissioners Jay D. Higgins, Mike Jordan, Sheila Lodge, June Pujo, and Deborah L. Schwartz.

**Absent: Commissioner John Campanella**

#### **STAFF PRESENT:**

Beatriz Gularte, Senior Planner  
N. Scott Vincent, Assistant City Attorney  
Suzanne Riegle, Associate Planner  
Julie Rodriguez, Planning Commission Secretary

#### **II. PRELIMINARY MATTERS:**

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

None.

B. Announcements and appeals.

Ms. Gularte made the following announcements:

1. Project Planner Marck Aguilar will continue the work on the New Zoning Ordinance, initially started by Beatriz Gularte.

2. Former City Employee Deborah Andaloro has been hired as the City's Principal Planner.

C. Review, consideration and action on the following draft Planning Commission Minutes and Resolutions:

1. Minutes of May 7, 2015

2. Resolution No. 007-15

102 La Marina Drive

3. Resolution No. 008-15  
340 W. Carrillo Street

**MOTION: Lodge/Schwartz**

Approve the minutes and resolutions as corrected.

This motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: 6 Noes: 0 Abstain: 0 Absent: 1 (Campanella)

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

Chair Thompson opened the public hearing at 1:07 P.M. and, with no one wishing to speak, closed the hearing.

**III. CONCEPT REVIEW:**

**ACTUAL TIME: 1:07 P.M.**

**APPLICATION OF JAN HOCHHAUSER, HOCHHAUSER BLATTER ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING FOR 800 SANTA BARBARA STREET LLC, 800 SANTA BARBARA STREET, APN 031-012-028, C-2 COMMERCIAL ZONE, GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION: COMMERCIAL/ HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL/ PRIORITY HOUSING 37-63 DU/AC (MST2015-00023)**

Proposal to demolish an existing 1,965 net square-foot, one-story non-residential building and construct a new 26,059 square-foot, four-story mixed-use building on an 18,568 square-foot lot. The project consists of 1,500 square feet of non-residential floor area and 26 residential units (comprised of 8 studio units, 14 one-bedroom units, and 4 two-bedroom units) above a 12,682 square foot subterranean parking garage containing 30 parking spaces, storage, and service areas. This is an Average Unit-Size Density (AUD) Incentive Program Priority Housing development with a proposed density of 63 dwelling units per acre and with an average unit size of 789 square feet.

The subject property is located at the corner of De La Guerra and Santa Barbara Streets within El Pueblo Viejo District and immediately adjacent to El Presidio de Santa Barbara State Historic Park.

This project requires Planning Commission Conceptual Review because the lot size is more than 15,000 square feet and the project is being proposed under the AUD Incentive Program Priority Housing Overlay (SBMC §28.20.080).

The purpose of the concept review is to allow the Planning Commission and the public an opportunity to review the proposed project design at a conceptual level and provide the applicant, staff, and the Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) with feedback and direction regarding the proposed land use, design and General Plan consistency. **The project is being presented to the Planning Commission for concept review and**

**comments only.** No formal action will be taken on the project. The HLC will be the decision-making body for this project.

The project requires an environmental finding pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines Section 15183.

Contact: Suzanne Riegle, Associate Planner

Email: [SRiegle@SantaBarbaraCA.gov](mailto:SRiegle@SantaBarbaraCA.gov)

Phone: (805) 564-5470, ext. 2687

Suzanne Riegle, Associate Planner, gave the Staff presentation.

Jan Hochhauser, Architect, gave the Applicant presentation, joined by John Donaldson, Owner.

Bill Mahan, Historic Landmarks Commissioner (HLC), summarized the approved minutes of the HLC stating that the project as proposed was not found to be acceptable. The final minutes were distributed to the Planning Commission with summarized comments made on the proposal; setbacks; size, bulk and scale; architecture and design; landscaping; and mixed use.

Commissioner Schwartz left the dais at 2:21 P.M. and returned at 2:24 P.M.

Chair Thompson opened the public hearing at 2:28 P.M.

The following people commented on the proposed project:

1. Kellam de Forest submitted written comments and asked that the Commission find that the proposed project is not consistent with the General Plan and asked that other design ideas be presented.
2. Elena Alcerro, Anacapa School Sophomore, enjoys present use of the school courtyard during lunch and breaks and feels that the proposed project would overshadow the courtyard and cast too much shade and darkness during the winter.
3. Gordon Sichi, Anacapa School Founder and Headmaster, submitted written comments expressing concern with the close proximity of the project to the school's property line; the increased height of the proposed building in comparison to the prior approved project ; the shadow that will be cast on the courtyard in winter, and the privacy impact with direct view from the proposed buildings. He requested that the setbacks be increased from the northerly property; that the developer screen liberally with landscaping to minimized impact to the school; and lastly, that the school be protected during construction with respect to school hours.
4. Mary Louise Days, former City Historian, Trust for Historic Preservation Board Member and Citizens Planning Association Board Member, commented that this project site is in the heart of the original El Pueblo Viejo and abuts to the El Presidio de Santa Barbara State Historic Park operated by the Trust for Historic Preservation. The 5' proposed setback would create an inconsistency with the city's General Plan Historic Resources Element. A four story building is not appropriate as there are no four story buildings close by. The height can jeopardize views due to the height and

narrow setbacks. The Historical Museum and Presidio Park have historically used on street parking that could be impacted by the minimal parking provided on-site for the proposed project. In addition, noise and traffic conditions created by the project could be impacted. Finds that the Historic Resources Element provisions, especially Policy 5 that requires neighborhoods close to downtown and commercial corridors be protected by development that would transform their historic character, would not be met.

With no one else wishing to speak, the public hearing was closed at 2:40 P.M.

**General Plan Consideration:**

**Straw Poll No.1:**

Is the proposed plan consistent with the General Plan goals and policies for new rental housing projects?

Ayes: 6 Noes: 0 Abstain: 0

**Straw Poll No. 2:**

Does the proposed project preserve public view of the mountains from public view points?

Ayes: 0 Noes: 3 Abstain: 3

**Straw Poll No.3:**

Is the project with the residential uses as proposed, located in a non-residential zone, compatible with the adjacent land uses?

Ayes: 6 Noes: 0 Abstain: 0

**Straw Poll No.4:**

Does the site plan prevent noise conflicts between adjacent land uses?

Ayes: 2 Noes: 1 Abstain: 3

**Straw Poll No.5:**

Does the proposed project preserve the historical character of the surrounding neighborhood?

Ayes: 0 Noes: 6 Abstain: 0

**Straw Poll No. 6:**

Is the proposed project appropriate in mass, bulk, scale, setbacks and height of structures in the surrounding neighborhood?

Ayes: 0 Noes: 5 Abstain: 1

**Straw Poll No. 7:**

Is the proposed project sensitive to the adjacent federal, state, and local historic resources?

Ayes: 0 Noes: 5 Abstain: 1

**Straw Poll No. 8:**

Is the proposed project sensitive to the adjacent El Presidio de Santa Barbara State Historic Park?.

Ayes: 0 Noes: 5 Abstain: 1

**Straw Poll No. 9:**

Does the proposed project preserve mature landscaping and trees?

Ayes: 4 Noes: 2 Abstain: 0

Commissioner's Comments:

**Historic Resources Element:**

- Commissioner Jordan agreed with Historic Landmarks Commissioner Bill LaVoie that the project needs to be designed "really old" and the focus has to be on the architecture. It needs to be designed to fit in with adjacent historic properties.
- Commissioner Higgins cannot get around historic resources policies about the project needing to respect rather than detract from historic resources.
- Commissioner Higgins thought that the project could be appropriate for AUD if the project density was cut in half and other standards could be met for historic resources.
- Commissioner Pujo agrees with Commissioners Jordan and Higgins. She does not see this in terms of changing a setback or a height, because the massing and the bulk is not about whether there is another interior floor, but has to do with how it fits on the site and in this location. There is too much massing, it is too bulky, and it does not respect El Pueblo Viejo to the extent and standards that it needs to. She agrees with Commissioner Jordan that it needs to be very authentic and have high standards.
- Commissioner Schwartz has greatest concern with the preservation of historic character and thinks more work needs to be done to develop the architecture, the terracing, tiering, and stepping back. She suggested looking at other architectural styles referenced in the samples provided by the Applicant.
- Commissioner Schwartz does not have enough detail to know whether the mass, bulk and scale is appropriate.
- Commissioner Thompson gave credit for bringing a proposed affordable project to the downtown corridor and commended the underground parking. This is a great project, but best for another location. It needs to be sensitive to the historical context that is immediately adjacent to the project. Even though Average Unit Density (AUD) housing policies would allow a maximum, it does not require a maximum. We need to cut down the maximum and give consideration to the adjoining historical area.
- Commissioner Higgins does not think the site plan works, but thinks there are residential uses on the property.

- Commissioner Thompson believes that a residential project is approvable but needs to be sensitive to the historic area and is confident that the Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) will work with Applicant.
- Commissioners Schwartz and Lodge asked that the HLC consider as many General Plan policies as Staff can assist the HLC to consider because of the important aspect of rental housing.

**Environmental Resources Element:**

- Commissioner Pujo would like to preserve the public views of the mountain. The project requires additional work. The bigger issue is a sense of place with this key downtown area. Consideration is needed regarding the intersections and people walking from east side to west side, the nature of historic structures that attract tours, and the views from open space areas. This would include not only the protection of mountain views but public views from place to place in this particular area. The scale of this project does not allow for protection of these views.
- Commissioner Pujo does think that the commercial and public aspect of the proposal does not go far enough. The commercial space is less than appropriate for this important corner. The project is designed for the internal experience for residents and not outward to this important area and does not protect the sense of place that policy statements strive to protect.
- Commissioner Schwartz stated that with the limited information presented, she can't say that it preserves public views of the mountains without seeing an artistic rendering or visual simulation.
- Commissioner Thompson stated that the step back approach to the architecture is an attempt to meet requirements for views.

**Conservation Element:**

- Commissioner Schwartz requested that as much as possible be done to maintain mature trees and landscaping

**Noise Element:**

- Commissioner Schwartz commented that the site planning of the project, or any other residential project, needs additional work with the Historic Landmarks Commission and staff. She noted that there are other residential structures in the area. There is a need for a definition of neighborhood and context, and firm definitions for contextual analysis of project compatibility are needed.

**IV. ADMINISTRATIVE AGENDA**

**ACTUAL TIME: 3:43 P.M.**

- E. Committee and Liaison Reports
  - 1. Staff Hearing Officer Liaison Report

- a. Commissioner Jordan reported on the Staff Hearing Officer Meeting of May 13, 2015.
2. Other Committee and Liaison Reports
  - a. Commissioner Lodge reported on the Historic Landmarks Commission meeting of May 20, 2015.

**V. ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Thompson adjourned the meeting at 3:46 P.M.

Submitted by,

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Julie Rodriguez, Planning Commission Secretary

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