



# City of Santa Barbara Planning Division

## PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

March 2, 2006

### **CALL TO ORDER:**

Chair John Jostes called the meeting to order at 1:04 P.M.

### **ROLL CALL:**

#### **Present:**

Chair John Jostes

Vice-Chair Charmaine Jacobs

Commissioners, Stella Larson, Bill Mahan, George C. Myers, Addison S. Thompson and Harwood A. White, Jr.

### **STAFF PRESENT:**

Paul Casey, Community Development Director

Bettie Weiss, City Planner

Jan Hubbell, Senior Planner

John Ledbetter, Principal Planner

Michael Berman, Environmental Analyst

Barbara Shelton, Environmental Analyst

Debra Andaloro, Environmental Analyst

Browning Allen, Transportation Manager

Rob Dayton, Supervising Transportation Planner

Irma Unzueta, Project Planner

Stacey Wilson, Associate Transportation Planner

N. Scott Vincent, Assistant City Attorney

Julie Rodriguez, Planning Commission Secretary

### **I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS:**

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

1. None were made.

B. Announcements and appeals.

Ms. Hubbell made the following announcements:

- The State Street Lofts appeal was upheld and the project denied. Initial discussion on the Outer State Street area will be held at the March 16<sup>th</sup> joint meeting with Council with a recommendation to follow.

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

Chair Jostes opened the public hearing at 1:05 P.M.

James Kahan referred to the appeal hearing before City Council on Tuesday, February 28<sup>th</sup> and his frustration with his inability to access architectural plans and pleasure at the change in policy.

In reference to the Council meeting held on February 28<sup>th</sup>, Commissioner Myers acknowledged the work of his peers, Commissioners White and Mahan, and also thanked Staff.

Commissioner Mahan announced that he will not be able to arrive at next week's meeting until 2:00 P.M.

With no one else wishing to speak, the public hearing was closed at 1:10 P.M.

## **II. CONSENT ITEMS:**

### **ACTUAL TIME: 1:10 P.M.**

#### **A. APPLICATION OF PETER HUNT, AGENT FOR ANNA KARZAG, 2531 MESA SCHOOL LANE, 041-311-017, E-3 SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL/SD-3 COASTAL ZONES, GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION: RESIDENTIAL 5 UNITS PER ACRE (MST2005-00349) CONTINUED FROM FEBRUARY 16, 2006.**

The project consists of a proposal to construct a 869 square foot, one- and two-story addition to an existing 1,520 square foot, single-story residence and the construction of an attached 410 square foot, two-car carport on a 6,013 square foot lot. There is an existing mature oak tree on the east property line. The applicant has incorporated tree protection measures into the project description.

The discretionary applications required for this project is a Coastal Development Permit (CDP2006-00001) to allow the proposed development in the Appealable Jurisdiction of the City's Coastal Zone (SBMC §28.45.009).

The Environmental Analyst has determined that the project is exempt from further environmental review pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Guidelines Section 15301 (addition to an existing single family residence).

Case Planner: Suzanne Johnston, Planning Technician

Email: [sjohnston@santabarbaraca.gov](mailto:sjohnston@santabarbaraca.gov)

Ms. Hubbell requested that the Planning Commission waive the Staff Report.

**MOTION: Mahan/Myers**

Waive the Staff Report

This motion carried by the following vote:

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

Karl Benkert, representative for Peter Walker Hunt, AIA, spoke for the applicant.

Chair Jostes opened the public hearing at 1:12 P.M.

With no one wishing to speak, the public hearing was closed at 1:13 P.M.

Commissioner's comments and questions:

1. Asked if it would it be possible to put garage doors on the carport; suggested incorporation of garage doors in project.
2. Reviewed the Arborist Report and inquired if intent is to repave area or if it will be permeable surface.
3. More than one commissioner supported the garage door suggestion given the amount of pedestrian traffic

Anna Karczag, owner, responded that the area will be a permeable surface. She also addressed the Commission on the garage door, and is open to the Commission's input.

**MOTION: Mahan/Myers**

**Assigned Resolution No. 011-06**

Approve the project, making the findings outlined in the Staff Report, and subject to the conditions of approval in Exhibit A with the recommendation that the carport have a garage door. If the carport dimensions must be increased to 20 feet wide, at the direction of the Transportation Division, resulting in the need for a modification, the carport can remain as designed.

Ms. Karzag commented that the addition of garage doors might be considered a garage and call for a setback modification.

Staff defined garage and added that the addition of garage doors to the carport might not constitute a garage.

This motion carried by the following vote:

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

Chair Jostes announced the ten calendar day appeal period.

**ACTUAL TIME: 1:19 P.M.**

Commissioner Larson stepped down at 1:19 P.M.

**B. APPLICATION OF SUZANNE ELLEDGE, AGENT FOR SANTA BARBARA COTTAGE HOSPITAL, 2402 BATH STREET, APN: 025-061-015, SP-8, HOSPITAL ZONE, GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION: MAJOR PUBLIC AND INSTITUTIONAL/MEDICAL CENTER (MST2003-00152)**

The proposal is a request for a modification to allow portions of the approved Knapp Parking Structure to be located within the required 10-foot interior yard setback of the property. The Knapp Parking Structure will be located at 2402 Bath Street, directly behind the Knapp College of Nursing building. The Knapp Parking Structure was approved on March 24, 2005 by the Planning Commission and on April 26, 2005 by the City Council as part of the Santa Barbara Cottage Hospital Seismic Compliance and Modernization Project.

The encroaching portions of the building are architectural projections and contain no useable parking areas. The first encroachment occurs at the southeast corner of the parking structure and encroaches approximately 1'-2". The second encroachment occurs approximately 28 feet to the north of the first encroachment and encroaches approximately 2'-7". The area of both encroaching segments total 45 feet of the eastern elevation, which is approximately 275 feet in length. This design is the same design that was reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission on March 24, 2005, however the modification was not part of the approval.

The discretionary application required for this project is approval of a Modification to permit portions of the structure to be located within the required 10 foot interior yard setback (SBMC §28.49.030)

The Environmental Analyst has determined that the previously Certified Santa Barbara Cottage Hospital Seismic Compliance and Modernization Plan EIR (MST2003-00152) has addressed the potential environmental impacts of the project, pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines §15162. Prior to action on the project, the Planning Commission must make findings pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines Section 15091.

Case Planner: Irma Unzueta, Project Planner

Email: iunzueta@santabarbaraca.gov

Ms. Hubbell requested that the Planning Commission waive the Staff Report.

**MOTION: Mahan/Thompson**

Waive the Staff Report

This motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: 5 Noes: 0 Abstain: 1 (Larson) Absent: 1 (White)

Commissioner White arrived at 1:20 P.M.

Chair Jostes opened the public hearing at 1:20 P.M.

With no one wishing to speak, the public hearing was closed at 1:20 P.M.

Commissioner's comments and questions:

1. Commissioners confirmed that the project footprint and design is the same as previously approved by the Planning Commission and the request is for a minor setback encroachment that was initially overlooked.

**MOTION: Mahan/Myers**

**Assigned Resolution No. 012-06**

Approve the project, making the findings outlined in Section VII of this report, and subject to the previously approved Conditions of Approval for the Santa Barbara Cottage Hospital Seismic Compliance and Modernization Project.

This motion carried by the following vote:

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

Chair Jostes announced the ten calendar day appeal period.

**III. DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

Commissioner Larson returned to the dais at 1:22 P.M.

**ACTUAL TIME: 1:22 P.M.**

**A. US 101 IMPROVEMENT PROJECT UPDATE**

As required by the Coastal Development Permit issued by the Planning Commission on December 13, 2004, City and California Department of Transportation Staff are providing an update on the status of the project, including design updates and condition compliance.

Case Planner: Michael Berman, Project Planner  
Email: mberman@santabarbaraca.gov

Michael Berman, Project Planner, gave the Staff presentation.

Scott Eades, Caltrans Project Manager, introduced his staff and acknowledged partnership with the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG) and the City of Santa Barbara.

Brandy Ryder, Caltrans Environmental Planner, gave an update on project progress, project feature updates and a traffic management plan update.

Chair Jostes opened the public hearing at 1:52 P.M.

With no one wishing to speak, the public hearing was closed at 1:52 P.M.

Commissioners' questions and comments:

1. Asked Caltrans staff if we are still on schedule with the construction plan.
2. Asked if the third lane for the Milpas Street Bridge is funded.
3. Asked if the railroad bridge at the Milpas off ramp is considered historic.
4. Asked if the railroad pedestrian intersection will be slowed down by funding issues, and if the project's schedule will be impacted.
5. Asked for the budget for the Milpas Street bridge overpass.
6. Asked SBCAG about the design considered for the bridge.
7. Asked SBCAG who sets the budget and if Union Pacific is giving financial participation toward the renovation.
8. Asked for the status of the tennis stadium sound wall and if it is moving forward.
9. Asked about the railroad bridge south of the Sycamore Creek bridge and the drain plan across the pedestrian right of way.
10. Suggested Caltrans communicate with First District Supervisor Carbajal's office to coordinate with the County Flood Control District regarding the railroad bridge over Sycamore Creek.
11. Asked for an update on the wood sound wall near the trailer park. Asked if some of the temporary structures found against the wood sound wall are on Caltrans property.
12. Asked Caltrans about the lessons learned in this review process.
13. Commented on the Highway 101 Guidelines that were crafted in 1995 and the evolution to the present project.
14. The Commission collectively thanked Caltrans for its work with the City and for a well-done update.

Mr. Eades stated that the construction plan has been moved back and will start in the fall or early winter 2007. The Milpas Street Bridge' third lane is fully funded and will take place when the railroad bridge is done. Mr. Eadess stated that the pedestrian project will be bid separately and will include bike paths. He disclosed that the Milpas Street bridge budget is approximately \$4.5 million.

Ms. Ryder gave an update on the wood sound wall and the cooperation needed for access from the trailer park.

Ms. Ryder acknowledged that the railroad bridge is not historic. She addressed the status of the tennis stadium sound wall and that it is moving forward. Ms. Ryder stated that conversations have taken place with the County Flood Control District, and the Master Plan for Sycamore Creek that is in place. She addressed the flood plan and how Sycamore Creek jumps channel north of the railroad bridge. It is the intent of the sound wall flood panels to relieve flooding in that area more than the actual replacement of the bridge.

Fred Leno, SBCAG, addressed the design alternatives being considered to replace the Union Pacific Bridge. He said the cost for the Union Pacific Bridge is estimated to be between \$4-5 million. At this time Union Pacific is not participating in the funding of the bridge replacement.

Mr. Eades stated that a number of residents are in mobile homes adjacent to the sound walls with some structures build up against the sound walls. Access is needed to replace the sounds walls. Sound wall replacement is not required, but Caltrans wants to provide uniformity. Mr. Eades added that some of these structures are on Caltrans property.

Mr. Eades stated that this project has taken longer, cost more, been more scrutinized, but in the end been worth it in getting to the end result. Ms. Ryder states that the communication and commitment from City Staff has been excellent and has contributed to the success of the project. Mr. Eades also thanked SBCAG for the extra measures contributed toward the project's success.

Rob Dayton, Supervising Transportation Planner, commented on the excellent work done by Caltrans and SBCAG, both now and in the success of the Coast Village Road pedestrian walkway.

**ACTUAL TIME: 6:06 P.M.**

**B. TRAFFIC ANALYSIS WORKSHOP**

The Planning Commission will hold a workshop to discuss how the City of Santa Barbara performs traffic analysis for proposed development projects.

Case Planner: Rob Dayton, Supervising Transportation Planner

Email: rdayton@santabarbaraca.gov

Paul Casey, Community Development Director, gave an introduction of the workshop, recapping the results of the State Street Lofts appeal before City Council on February 28, 2006.

Rob Dayton, Supervising Transportation Planner, gave the Staff presentation.

Commissioners' questions and comments:

1. Asked if the workshop with City Council will allow for discussion.
2. The Commissioners thanked Staff and City Council for having elevated the traffic issue; Rob Dayton and Staff were thanked for a very well done report. The public was thanked for its strong attendance and interest.
3. Asked for an update on Highway 101 and the forecast for congestion growth.
4. Noted that when everyone who worked here also lived here, the street system was used differently than is now the case. Asked if street impacts are analyzed for traffic that comes from north and south of Santa Barbara, such as Lompoc or Ventura. Asked how the analysis of these commuters is accomplished and their traffic impacts on new projects.

5. Asked how changes in demographic patterns, such as the increase in retirees, impact traffic.
6. Asked for a status of how effective mass transit is in reducing traffic impacts.
7. Since it was suggested that we have one of the most restrictive levels of service in the State, and use ITE, asked if a coefficient can be used to push it upwards and make it tougher.
8. Asked Staff for more information on the San Diego Association of Governments' (SANDAG) trip generation technique compared to the ITE numerical methods. Asked about other communities that are using SANDAG, and whether we would see a difference if it were used here.
9. Traffic analysis is part of a dynamic process. Right now congestion is going up. It does not seem likely to go down due to regional issues and increased commuting and freeway congestion. How can we look at alternate routes or one-way couplets or other improvements to create alternatives, especially Uptown?
10. Commented that if no development occurred, we still would have the traffic problems seen today.
11. Asked how often the ITE manual is updated to improve data. Asked if ITE ground-truths the data. Asked if real world traffic data is used for the ITE updates, and if it could Santa Barbara specific.
12. Asked about the 0.77 threshold. Asked if current traffic counts are used. Asked if there is a way to have an adjustment factor for various types of land use developments and trip generation.

Mr. Casey stated that the City Council/Planning Commission joint work session will allow for some discussion, but will mostly be a semi-annual update.

Mr. Dayton addressed the factors that contribute to traffic volumes on Highway 101, such as gas prices, housing costs, and other economic factors. Mr. Dayton states it is challenging to gauge demographic patterns; notes the freeway is the largest contributor to traffic impacts. Traffic volumes increase on US 101 by about one-half to one percent annually.

Mr. Dayton stated that trip generation analysis takes into account where people are coming from for their jobs, also factors into trip distribution. New projects include looking at where potential users of the project will be coming from. Mr. Dayton said that most of the traffic impacts come from the freeway because of people living outside of the City and commuting in for various reasons.

Mr. Dayton stated that mass transit does not have a direct correlation to new housing. Mass transit ridership is increasing and takes more cars off the road, but there is no correlation to the people that are coming into the City; there is more of a correlation from commuters from SBCAG, Clean-Air Express, and VISTA. Trip generation is always an apple to apples comparison; if we were to bump up ITE number, then the traffic number would increase with it. Ms Hubbell added that ITE is based on many growing communities, most of which are not pedestrian friendly; the ITE number is already a higher average than is typical for Santa Barbara. Mr. Dayton noted that, in Santa Barbara, there is 61% single occupancy vehicle rate.

Mr. Dayton stated that SANDAG's trip generation study was used to address uses that were not in ITE. Ms. Hubbell added that as land use studies have been updated, the ITE Manual began to include some of the same land uses that were included in the SANDAG manual.

Mr. Dayton stated that we will need alternative routes, which is challenging. We will need to consider options, such as: create more of a grid through La Cumbre Plaza, a roundabout at the Las Positas/Calle Real intersection, change Calle Real east of Las Positas Road to a two-way street and others. Widening roads to improve congestion is like loosening belts to reduce obesity. We need to change our culture and lifestyle.

Mr. Dayton stated the ITE manuals are updated regularly and use real world traffic data. He added that the variation provided in the manuals is radical. Mr. Dayton stated that there is room for variation when determining trip generation; cited St. Francis condominiums as an example.

Chair Jostes opened the public hearing at 7:15 P.M.

The following people spoke:

Catherine McCammon, League of Women Voters: read letter to Commission  
Connie Hannah, S.B. League of Women Voters: concerned analysis does not show real project impacts  
Paul Hernadi: structure of workshops  
Naomi Kovacs: methodology of traffic studies  
Brian Cearnal: traffic is caused by parents driving kids to school  
Scott Schell, ATE: general plan vision vs. trip generation  
Jim Kahan: ITE trip generation manual vs. real baseline  
Charlie Eckberg, Sandman Inn: ITE vs. pedestrian friendly development

With no one else wishing to speak, the public hearing was closed at 7:43 P.M.

Mr. Dayton stated that staff does not look at highest possible use of site, but at reasonable use of the site. Noted that ITE does not take into account pedestrian travel and that is good.

Commissioner's comments:

1. Would like to see future community workshops focus on traffic solutions, not so much on methodology.
2. Appreciates the community dialogue and seeking alternative methods toward solutions.
3. Commissioners support use of focus groups. Does not support throwing out the Master Environmental Assessment (MEA) policy; even though there are problems in specific situations, it generally works.
4. Wants to see an improved way to look at traffic information to make it more credible. Public mistrust stems from scientific baseline vs. reality; need to find a way to calibrate theoretical baseline with actual traffic counts.

5. As congestion increases, any little problem (construction, stalled car, emergency) causes a greater effect. Would like to see local coefficients applied to traffic evaluations. Wants to see car trips become more efficient. We need to look at ways to change trip patterns, such as school starting later.
6. With categorical exemption process, if it does not feel right, we should not do an exemption.
7. Understand staff's rational approach and support it. The difference between what is on the ground and the ITE average rates is the issue. Acknowledge that the ITE rates are conservative but may need to be more conservative.
8. Does not like the feeling of being 'snookered' when certain projects become different in reality vs. how they were proposed, such as Trader Joe's. Would like to see a land use permit or similar approach when change of use is considered to prevent inappropriate land use changes.
9. ITE is the best tool available and support its use.
10. Santa Barbara's history is as a refuge – a place people came to get away from bad development. Growth has been explosive since World War II. Montecito set aside areas for servant's homes in the past (that now sell for over \$2 million); we need to deal with quantum changes for Santa Barbara as part of SB 2030; need to have places for police, teachers, firefighters to live.
11. Believes that, even without additional development, there will be additional traffic.
12. Commissioner's collectively expressed an appreciation for gaining an improved insight into traffic impact assessment.
13. Asked if we are really looking at broader issues when looking at individual projects. We need major social change. Traffic increases when school lets out, when Friday comes.
14. Think the MEA and ITE are basically fair.
15. May need to focus on broader regional issues.
16. Workshop helped to clarify thinking and make the City process more transparent. This is a reasonable, realistic and practical approach to traffic review. When we use a theoretical baseline and compare that to existing trips on the street, that is where mistrust lies. Suggest using some City-based rate to complement ITE and SANDAG numbers.
17. The Santa Barbara community has yet to take ownership of the traffic problem. Most people in the room came in their own cars.
18. The problem with categorical exemptions is the inability to look more broadly at the issue. Need to focus on cumulative impacts and cumulative mitigation strategies and solutions. Need to discuss now on what actions are appropriate when we reach capacity.

Mr. Dayton sees next step as a need to update the MEA with the General Plan; will refine analysis to incorporate Commission comments. Ms. Hubbell added that the 2030 General Plan update will take a cumulative look at city-wide traffic.

Bettie Weiss, City Planner, stated that the 2030 General Plan update has issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a series of technical studies related to the environmental baseline; one component is updating the MEA. This city-wide work has been accelerated in the Uptown State Street area.

**IV. ADMINISTRATIVE AGENDA**

A. Committee and Liaison Reports.

- Commissioner White noted the West Cabrillo Boulevard item on the Harbor Commissioner's Agenda.
- Commissioner Thompson gave a report on the Transportation and Circulation Committee; provided an update on the Street Lighting Report, Neighborhood Mobility Plan for the Saint Francis area, and Measure D.
- Commissioner White gave a review of the Estimated and Actual Water Production by Source Chart and addressed all peer questions. Recommended a future presentation by Bill Ferguson.
- Commissioner Jacobs announced that the Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance Committee meeting will be held on Saturday, March 4<sup>th</sup>, in Council Chambers, followed by a series of meetings.

B. Review of the decisions of the Staff Hearing Officer in accordance with SBMC §28.92.026.

None were requested.

C. Action on the review and consideration on items listed in V.C. of this agenda.

**MOTION: Jacobs/Thompson**

Approve the minutes and resolutions as corrected.

1. Minutes of February 2, 2006
2. Resolution 005-06  
709 Wentworth

The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Commissioner Larson abstained from the February 2nd minutes and resolution.

The planning Commission acknowledged visiting students from UCSB's California Planning class.

William Southhall and Julie Hogan, UCSB, introduced themselves to the Commission

The meeting was recessed at 2:23 P.M. and reconvened at 6:00 P.M. for Item III.B.

**V. ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Jostes adjourned the meeting at 8:23 P.M.

Submitted by,

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Julie Rodriguez, Planning Commission Secretary