



City of Santa Barbara Planning Division

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

April 4, 2013

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Jordan called the meeting to order at 1:03 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:

Jim Armstrong, City Administrator
Danny Kato, Senior Planner
Renee Brooke, Senior Planner
Steve Wiley, City Attorney
Scott Vincent, Assistant City Attorney
Rob Dayton, Principal Transportation Planner
Stacey Wilson, Associate Transportation Planner
Allison De Busk, Project Planner
Jill Zachary, Assistant Parks and Recreation Director
Steve Greer, Environmental Analyst
Julie Rodriguez, Planning Commission Secretary
Rosa Rogers O'Reilly, Commission Secretary

II. PRELIMINARY MATTERS:

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

1. Draft Minutes of March 14, 2013
2. Resolution 005-13
1210 Olive Street
3. Draft Minutes of March 21, 2013
4. Resolution 006-13
1533 and 1537 Shoreline Drive

MOTION: Thompson/Schwartz

Approve the minutes and resolutions of March 14, 2013.

This motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: 5 Noes: 0 Abstain: 2 (Jordan, Pujo) Absent: 0

MOTION: Thompson/Schwartz

Approve the minutes and resolutions of March 21, 2013 as corrected.

This motion carried by the following vote:

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

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

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

III. SUBSTANTIAL CONFORMANCE DETERMINATION:

ACTUAL TIME: 1:08 P.M.

RECUSAL: To avoid any actual or perceived conflict of interest, Commissioner Bartlett recused himself from hearing this item because his architectural firm is the architect for the project. Commissioner Bartlett left the dais at 1:08 P.M.

APPLICATION OF DOUG FELL, AGENT FOR 35 STATE STREET HOTEL PARTNERS, LLC; 35, 36 AND 118 STATE STREET ("ENTRADA DE SANTA BARBARA"); APN: 033-081-013, 033-102-018, 033-111-013; HRC-2/S-D-3 ZONES, GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION: OCEAN RELATED COMMERCE/MEDIUM HIGH RESIDENTIAL (15-27 UNITS/AC), LOCAL COASTAL PLAN LAND USE DESIGNATION: HOTEL AND RELATED COMMERCE II/BUFFER (MST97-00357)

The purpose of this discussion item is to inform the Planning Commission of proposed changes to the Entrada de Santa Barbara ("Entrada") Project, approved by the City Council on December 11, 2001, within the context of a request to the City for a Substantial Conformance Determination (SCD). The Entrada Project involves the redevelopment of portions of three blocks of properties totaling 2.41 acres at the intersection of State Street and Mason Street with hotel/timeshare units and commercial square footage, as well as public improvements along State Street, Mason Street and Helena Avenue. Area A is 35 State Street (former Californian Hotel); Area B is 36 State Street (current location of Hot Spots), Area C is 118 State Street (previously developed with commercial buildings that were demolished to begin construction of the underground parking garage for the project; currently vacant and surrounded by a green fence).

Key proposed changes include:

- Change from 114 hotel units and 9 timeshare units to 123 hotel units and no timeshare units. This results in a reduction of hotel-related square footage.

- Slight increase in the amount of public commercial square footage (from 21,654 square feet to 22,326 square feet).
- Consolidating all hotel units onto Areas A and B.
- Consolidating almost all parking onto Area C. Approximately 10 parking spaces would remain on Areas A and B for queuing and hotel operator needs. This eliminates the underground parking on Area B. On Area C, all hotel parking (140 spaces) would be valet and provided below grade; all public parking (124 spaces) would be provided in the three-level above grade parking structure.
- Changes to the layout of Area C, including moving the retail space back to the State Street frontage and revising/relocating the public plaza. This results in changes to the massing of development on Area C due to relocation of buildings and public plaza area.
- Changes to site plans for each Area, including changes to encroachments into required setbacks, for which modifications were originally granted.
- Proposing to construct the entire project, including Stage 2 and 3 of the offsite improvements, as one phase.

The City Administrator will ultimately make a determination as to whether the proposed changes are in substantial conformance with the approved Project.

The purpose of the discussion is to allow the Planning Commission an opportunity to review the proposed changes to the Project and provide input to the Community Development Department with regard to the SCD request.

Case Planner: Allison DeBusk, Project Planner

Email: ADeBusk@SantaBarbaraCA.gov

Phone: (805) 564-5470, ext. 4552.

Allison DeBusk, Project Planner, gave the Staff presentation. Stacey Wilson, Associate Transportation Planner; Jim Armstrong, City Administrator; Rob Dayton, Principal Transportation Planner; and Derrick Bailey, Supervising Transportation Engineer were available to answer questions.

Michael Rosenfeld, 35 State Street Hotel Partners LLC, gave the Applicant presentation, joined by the DesignARC team: Melisa Cinarli, Project Manager, and Mark Shields, Architect.

Chair Jordan opened the public hearing at 1:44 P.M.

The following people spoke in support of the project:

1. Lynette Hall
2. Aaron Lynch
3. Shelley Shulte
4. Michael Erickson
5. Jackie Waddill
6. Robin Himovitz
7. Barbara Schoch

8. Kenny Slaught
9. Mark Romasanta
10. Bonnie Donovan
11. Ray Mahboob

With no one else wishing to speak, the public hearing was closed at 1:56 P.M.

The consensus of the Commission was to support the Substantial Conformance Determination (SCD). The Commissioners made the following comments:

1. Commissioner Campanella felt the SCD request conforms to the original approval and intent for this gateway, as well as to later iterations of the project. Likes the idea of including an area for art on Area C. The common area should be for public use and not strictly hotel guests (e.g. wedding set-up). Suggested the area near the Funk Zone and Helena Street blend in with the Funk Zone and be an entry for an expression of art that people can see. Consider creating more areas for creative displays; obtain community artist input; keep flexibility in any display areas so art can be rotated. Bulb-outs on Helena may detract from existing activities that currently take place in the street. Suggested looking at first floor rooms that border Helena Street, might be a good place for commercial space that would blend in with the Funk Zone, rather than hotel rooms that may be less appropriate uses.
2. Commissioner Thompson acknowledged that the long process has resulted in an improved project, and supports the SCD as being in conformance with the original approval. He is not convinced one lane in each direction on State Street is a good idea.
3. Commissioner Lodge agreed that this is a better project and shared some concerns with the SCD not being consistent with the SCD approved in 2010. Noted that views are improved over the original, but not over the 2010 SCD project. Likes the commercial space on Mason/Helena Street corner. The 2010 SCD project Area C plaza was more inviting and not as closed off; suggested a compromise between the 2010 SCD project and this current proposal in the amount of commercial frontage on State Street to open it up more. Area A is a constricted area; suggested that it would be more in conformance if the new addition lined up with existing Californian Hotel.
4. Commissioner Pujo agreed that the project is substantially conforming and meets the goals that were originally identified. That is, it not alter the integrity of the project components: Areas A, B ,C and the streetscape plan, nor does it increase environmental impacts. Would like to see an arcade in Area C more like the original approval and more consistent with the arches in the arcades shown in Areas A and B. Would like to see the Area C plaza design and landscape components more refined and reflective of Santa Barbara tradition; there is a lot of grass, there should be more native plants, it is not interesting enough, there should be more shade and more furniture. There needs to be strong cues to the public and pedestrians that this area is inviting and can be used by the public. Would like to see the Helena end of the Area B paseo have a visual connection; it should be more prominent and inviting. Would like attention given to the street frontage of Mason Street where the

- valet is located and consider how a pedestrian would have access through the valet area without having to cross the street to avoid all of the associated congestion.
5. Commissioner Schwartz was also in support of the SCD and was glad to see it moving forward with an experienced hotel developer. However, she is concerned with the valet operation, traffic circulation and Helena improvements. This project can honor traditional Santa Barbara and also reference the uniqueness of the Funk Zone; the back-of-house area should not look like a typical hotel back-of-house. Encourages creativity outside the box that is stimulating to locals and tourist. Create a sense of place at the corner of Area C.
 6. Commissioner Jordan could not find the project in conformance, but would be able to if the following were addressed:
 - a. Would like to see the plaza component adjacent to the visitor information center in the original plan put back into the plans.
 - b. Agrees with earlier comments made about Areas B and C to encourage public use of the plaza and paseos; and that could include amenities such as seating areas or furniture. Would like the Area C plaza to be not just a mass of grass, but small grass areas broken up by walking paths and benches that are inviting. Applicant needs to work harder to “encourage” public use of the spaces.
 - c. The original Planning Commission approval had a myriad of improvements that encouraged access to transit with a covered and obvious shuttle stop location; the previously approved bus stop sign pole with a turn out does not accomplish the original intent. Suggested moving the shuttle stop to in front of the visitor information center by moving over four trees and bringing the curb back in, instead of a landscaping area, and make a shuttle turn out. Should mimic the existing covered bench as referenced in earlier conditions that called for lighted and covered bus and transit facilities.
 - d. Concurred with Commissioner Pujo on the Area B paseo and would like to see it be a pedestrian paseo that maintains the width all the way to Helena Street. There should not be loading or storage at the end of it. The paseo needs to entice people in; don’t create visual barriers. Noted that the improvements shown on the elevation on State Street do not encourage pedestrians to go by the fountain and the steps, perhaps moving the fountain into the paseo would be a better configuration.
 - e. Shared same concern as Commissioner Pujo and was not comfortable with the front of the lobby on Mason Street and the potential for queuing vehicles waiting for valet parking with the unknown level of activity in a public right-of-way.
 - f. Concerned that the public would not know about the public parking lot; it needs a plan to announce it. And it should have pedestrian access from Helena.
 - g. Also commented that he doesn’t like the narrowing of State Street, thinks it will affect traffic circulation negatively.

****Chair Jordan called for a recess at 3:49 P.M. and reconvened at 4:10 P.M.****

IV. DISCUSSION ITEM:

ACTUAL TIME: 4:10 P.M.

Commissioner Bartlett returned to the dais.

URBAN FORESTRY MASTER PLAN PROJECT.

The Planning Commission will receive a status update on the Urban Forestry Master Plan, and provide comments on its Urban Forest Key Issues and Draft Objectives.

Case Planner: Jill Zachary, Assistant Parks and Recreation Director

Email: JZachary@SantaBarbaraCA.gov

Phone: (805) 564-5470, ext. 5437

Jill Zachary, Assistant Parks and Recreation Director, gave the Staff presentation.

Chair Jordan opened the public hearing at 4:30 P.M., and with no one wishing to speak, closed the hearing.

The Commission appreciated staff's work and looks forward to seeing the plan executed. Suggestions included partnering with non profits, providing a glossary of terms, designating opportunity sites to receive mitigation trees and educating the public on environmental benefits.

V. ADMINISTRATIVE AGENDA

ACTUAL TIME: 5:04 P.M.

A. Committee and Liaison Reports.

1. Staff Hearing Officer Liaison Report

Commissioner Lodge reported on the Staff Hearing Officer meeting held on April 3, 2013.

2. Other Committee and Liaison Reports

a. Commissioner Bartlett announced that today was First Thursday.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Jordan adjourned the meeting at 5:07 P.M.

Submitted by,



Julie Rodriguez, Planning Commission Secretary