



City of Santa Barbara

PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES

JULY 2, 2020

1:00 P.M.

This Meeting was Conducted Electronically
SantaBarbaraCA.gov

COMMISSION MEMBERS:

Deborah L. Schwartz, Chair
Lesley Wiscomb, Vice Chair
Roxana Bonderson
Gabriel Escobedo
Jay D. Higgins
Sheila Lodge
Barrett Reed

STAFF:

Tava Ostrenger, Assistant City Attorney
Allison DeBusk, Senior Planner
Heidi Reidel, Commission Secretary

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Schwartz called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

I. ROLL CALL

Chair Deborah L. Schwartz, Vice Chair Lesley Wiscomb, Commissioners Roxana Bonderson, Gabriel Escobedo, Jay D. Higgins, Sheila Lodge, and Barrett Reed

STAFF PRESENT

Tava Ostrenger, Assistant City Attorney
Greg Lusitana, Assistant City Attorney
Renee Brooke, City Planner
Allison DeBusk, Senior Planner
Ellen Kokinda, Planning Analyst
Timmy Bolton, Associate Planner
Jessica Grant, Supervising Transportation Planner
Stephanie Swanson, Assistant Planner
Robert Dostalek, Associate Planner
Tony Ruggieri, City TV Production Supervisor
Heidi Reidel, Commission Secretary

II. PRELIMINARY MATTERS

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

No requests.

B. Announcements and appeals:

No announcements.

C. Review, consideration, and action on the following draft Planning Commission minutes and resolutions:

1. Planning Commission June 18, 2020 Minutes

MOTION: Wiscomb / Lodge

Approve the minutes as amended.

The motion carried by the following vote:

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

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

No public comment.

III. **NEW ITEM**

ACTUAL TIME: 1:13 P.M.

APPLICATION OF LEONARD THOMAS, AGENT FOR 102 SANTA ROSA LLC, OWNER OF 102 SANTA ROSA PLACE, APN: 045-201-018, ZONE: E-3/S-D-3 (ONE-FAMILY RESIDENCE/COASTAL OVERLAY ZONE), LAND USE DESIGNATION: RESIDENTIAL 5 DWELLING UNITS/ACRE; (PLN2018-00625)

The project consists of demolition of an existing one-story single family residence and attached garage, and construction of a new two-story single family residence with an additional basement level and an attached garage. A six-inch diameter lemon tree is proposed for removal and a small palm tree in the front setback was previously removed; a replacement palm tree in the front setback, per the direction of the Urban Forest Superintendent, is proposed. A street tree is proposed to be relocated to accommodate the proposed driveway. Site work, including new decks, is also proposed. The 6,828-square-foot subject parcel is located at the northeast corner of Santa Rosa Place and Shoreline Drive. The parcel is zoned E-3/S-D-3 and located in the Appealable Jurisdiction of the Coastal Zone.

Stephanie Swanson, Assistant Planner, gave the Staff presentation.

Clay Aurell, AB Design Studio, Inc., gave the Applicant presentation, and was joined by Leonard Thomas, Applicant, AB Design Studio, Inc.

Public comment opened at 1:44 p.m., and the following individual spoke:

1. Jeff Lovegreen

Written correspondence from Mark and Melinda Miller, Randall and Whitney Kopf, Kathy and Mike Eliason, Matthew and Michaela Taylor, Bob and Jan Kopf, Mo Lovegreen, Jeff Lovegreen, Michael Paskin was acknowledged.

Public comment closed at 1:46 p.m.

MOTION: Wiscomb / Higgins

Assigned Resolution No. 004-20

Approve the project, making the findings for the Coastal Development Permit as outlined in the Staff Report dated June 25, 2020, subject to the Conditions of Approval as outlined in the Staff Report.

The motion carried by the following vote:

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

The ten calendar day appeal period was announced.

*** THE COMMISSION RECESSED FROM 2:29 TO 2:45 P.M. ***

IV. CONCEPT REVIEW

ACTUAL TIME: 2:45 P.M.

RECUSALS: To avoid any actual or perceived conflict of interest, Commissioner Reed recused himself from hearing this item due to a financial interest in a nearby property.

EX PARTE COMMUNICATION: Commissioner Higgins disclosed an ex parte communication with Suzanne Elledge, Applicant, regarding the site visit that he missed. Chair Schwartz disclosed ex parte communications with Suzanne Elledge, Applicant, regarding the project.

APPLICATION OF SUZANNE ELLEDGE, SEPPS, AGENT FOR SOMO SB, LLC, OWNER OF 121 E. MASON ST., 122 GRAY AVE., 120, 130 AND 136 E. YANONALI ST., AND 121 SANTA BARBARA ST.; APN: 033-084-001, -002, -003, -004, -005, -006, AND -007; OC/S-D-3 ZONE, LAND USE DESIGNATION: COASTAL-ORIENTED COMMERCIAL / MEDIUM HIGH RESIDENTIAL (MAX. 27 DWELLING UNITS/ACRE); (PRT2020-00041)

Request for concept review of a proposed mixed-use project on an approximately 2.1-acre site in the Funk Zone. The project consists of a four-story, mixed-use development with a total of 193,066 net square feet of building floor area, including 156 residential units and 19,203 square feet of nonresidential floor area. The project includes demolition of the existing on-site structures (approximately 30,825 gross square feet) while maintaining the approximately 523-gross-square-foot silo). The 91,497-square-foot (gross and net) project site encompasses all parcels in the block bounded by E. Yanonali Street, Gray Avenue, Mason Street and Santa Barbara Street. The project site is zoned OC/S-D-3 (Ocean-Oriented Commercial/Coastal Overlay), has a land use designation of Coastal-Oriented Commercial / Medium High Residential (maximum of 27 dwelling units per acre), and is located in the nonappealable jurisdiction of the coastal zone.

A total of 156 units are proposed, resulting in a density of approximately 74 units per acre. The residential rental unit portion of the project consists of 144 apartments (69 studios, 45 one-bedrooms, and 30 two-bedrooms) with an average unit size of approximately 705 square feet,

including 27 units affordable to low-income households. The residential condominium portion of the project includes 12 units (7 two-bedrooms and 5 three-bedrooms) with an average unit size of approximately 1,512 square feet, including 2 units affordable to moderate income households.

The 19,203-square-foot nonresidential portion of the project includes 8,076 square feet of café/restaurant use, 6,010 square feet of small stores, 3,409 square feet of art studio/collaborative use, 1,382 square feet of light industrial uses, and 1,975 square feet of restroom/utility/trash space.

The 40,849-square-foot at-grade parking garage would provide 114 residential parking spaces using mechanical puzzle lifts and 96 on-site commercial parking spaces using a combination of standard spaces, mechanical lifts, and valet service, for a total of 210 parking spaces.

The project is being proposed using State Density Bonus Law (SDBL) for additional density, and includes a request for two concessions per SDBL: 1) to apply the Average Unit-Size Density Incentive Program (AUD Program) Priority Housing Overlay density (up to 63 dwelling units per acre) instead of the existing Medium High Residential (up to 27 dwelling units per acre) land use designation allowed on this site; and 2) to allow the proportion of residential uses to be 87% of the project's total floor area instead of being limited to 70%. The applicant is also requesting the following three development standard waivers under SDBL: 1) to allow a 60-foot maximum building height instead of 45 feet; 2) to allow a maximum of 4 stories instead of 3 stories; and 3) to allow common outdoor living space to be less than 15% of the total lot area.

Robert Dostalek, Associate Planner, gave the Staff presentation. Jessica Grant, Supervising Transportation Planner, was available to answer questions.

Suzanne Elledge, Applicant, SEPPS, gave the Applicant presentation, and was joined by Christine Pierron, Architect, The Cearnal Collective; Courtney Miller, Landscape Architect, CJM::LA; Heidi Jones, SEPPS; and Robert Forouzandeh, Ownership Team, Reicker Pfau.

Public comment opened at 4:48 p.m., and the following individuals spoke:

1. Ben Romo
2. Aaron Goldschmidt
3. Derek Troya
4. Geoffrey Carter
5. James Rogers
6. Karl Kras

Written correspondence from David Jones, Housing Authority of Santa Barbara, Coastal Housing Coalition, Rob Fredericks, Harry and Jenny Bruell, John Jorgensen and Karen Kwan, John Campanella, and James Rogers was acknowledged.

Public comment closed at 5:04 p.m.

*** THE COMMISSION RECESSED FROM 5:04 TO 5:15 P.M. ***

Public comment re-opened at 5:17 p.m., and the following individuals spoke:

1. John Campanella
2. Harry Bruell

Public comment closed at 5:22 p.m.

Commissioner comments:

Commissioner Higgins:

- The property is underdeveloped for a reason, given that it is in the coastal zone.
- Supports the projects direction in doing something pretty radical.
- The architectural style and the size, bulk, and scale, feels like a college campus.
- A pyramid of the applicable policies, rather than a laundry list, would be more helpful to assist with determining what is most important. He believes the most important one is the prioritization of nonresidential private development.
- Is the project eliminating a coastal dependent use?
- The process the applicant is wanting to follow is appropriate.
- The state bonus density law is legally defensible.
- Parking and traffic: applicant should consider maximum parking or units without parking specifically, but there is a need for a parking demand study.
- Would like to see a buyer profile or an analysis of renters who want to live without a car.
- Base density is a lazy argument for variable density.
- Would like to see more affordability and homeownership opportunities.

Commissioner Wiscomb:

- Applicants gave a thoughtful and thorough presentation.
- Appreciates the connectivity of the alleys for public use, the bio-filtration planters, keeping the curved Weber wall and loading dock, the incorporation of art in creative ways, and the storm water management solution.
- Appreciates that the fourth floor is at the interior so there is less verticality at the street.
- Can't answer at this point if density is appropriate but is inclined to think it's too dense.
- Need to consider neighborhood compatibility criteria.
- Needs more information to fully analyze the proposal, including to make the finding that there is no negative impact on resources.
- With respect to policy LG-6, which was mentioned by the applicant, this is not a high density area.
- The applicant should address condominium unit findings.
- There is some inconsistency with coastal land use plan policies and coastal act policies, as the project will tax resources (LUP policies 2.1-1 and 2.1-156, Coastal Act policy 30252). Thinks that inadequate open yard will tax local resources.
- Agrees that a parking demand study should be done as this area is already lacking in parking (LUP policy 3.1-29).
- Must consider new users and their impacts on coastal resources (LUP policy 3.2-10).
- Not convinced that four stories are visually compatible with the surrounding areas (LUP policy 4.3-7).
- Funk zone must remain funky, the character of the neighborhood must be preserved (Coastal Act policy 30253).

- The project is lacking in open space benefits (GP policy LG-5).
- By allowing the outdoor living space to be less than 15% there is inconsistency with land use policy.
- Struggling to make findings for sound community planning and appropriate density.
- Supports affordable housing, but there's more work to be done.

Commissioner Escobedo:

- Admires the creativity and thoughtfulness of the project and appreciates the focus on the arts which is organic to the Funk Zone.
- Open concept of alleyways and open public spaces are fantastic ideas.
- Appreciates the flexibility in unit type and proportion.
- Proposed density is appropriate with a few caveats such as open area.
- The second, third, and fourth floor open area should be considered in addition to ground floor.
- Traffic on Yanonali Street is a concern for density.
- Fewer parking spaces would be a positive thing but a parking demand study is necessary.
- Would like to revisit the City's density bonus program, as medium high density on commercial property doesn't work in terms of producing affordable housing.
- Would like to see a mix of low- and moderate-income units.
- Generally comfortable with the waiver for the proportion of residential to nonresidential use, but understands that puts a strain on local resources; try to get closer to 30% nonresidential.
- Height and massing is appropriate but the applicant should work with neighbors to address some of their concerns.
- More concerned about the number of people at the site than the size or density of the building.
- Could find outdoor living space appropriate if upper floors are incorporated and would like to see more ground floor.

Commissioner Lodge:

- Can't answer if the proposed density is appropriate but thinks it is probably too high.
- More affordable units is better.
- Would prefer a mix of affordable income levels.
- Shocked by ground floor plan with so much nonresidential use and would prefer more residential use or more artist space.
- Restaurants and retail on the ground floor will create more low-wage jobs which will create more need for affordable housing.
- Save the existing garden area, have fewer restaurants, and have more open space.
- The amount of outdoor living space is inadequate, and much of the open space includes useless areas.
- The open space might be appropriate for condos but not apartments.
- Too much proposed for this site and can't support as presented.

Commissioner Bonderson:

- Can support the proposed density
- Can support the proposed ratio of commercial area because this project would positively shift the proportion of the whole area, not just the site, given that there is little housing in the area.
- Outdoor living space as proposed can be considered sufficient because people who choose to live downtown are choosing this lifestyle and will have access to beaches and other amenities.
- The introduction of high density affordable housing as opposed to luxury condos should be rewarded, not stifled.
- We need to encourage this project to set a precedent for mixed-use projects, particularly a blended use.
- Would love to see more low affordable and missing middle moderate income levels.
- In favor of the second alternative income level model proposed by the applicant.
- In support of height and massing in this location.
- Applicant and staff should go back to the drawing board to set their baseline and evolve from that level.
- Understanding the hierarchy of laws, and how they apply to the project, is important.
- Thanks the applicant for their hard work and research.

Chair Schwartz:

- Would like to see this project shaped, not suffocated, through the process.
- Would like to see the applicant and staff work together.
- Whatever blend of units and relative to a parking study, staff and the applicant should seek advice based on data from the Housing Authority. Most Housing Authority properties are overparked and overparking is irresponsible to housing and environment.
- Not sure if the proposed density is appropriate, as there is no reconciliation between applicant and City legal counsels.
- Would like to see maximum density for this area.
- Would like to see a blend of affordability levels.
- Need housing for the missing middle.
- Agrees with Commissioner Lodge on commercial area – reduce it in favor of housing, as nonresidential will drive traffic and a need for housing that is not provided.
- The referential ideas, palette, textures, and styles are perfect for the Funk Zone.
- The actual height and massing is getting there; the applicant should work with the neighbors.
- Need to separate protected public views from private views.
- The applicant should incorporate more outdoor living space and connectivity but agrees with Commissioner Bonderson that the project is close enough to the beach that overreach is not necessary.
- Strongly believes this project must come forward.

Straw poll: How many Commissioners find the proposed density appropriate?
Ayes: 4 Noes: 1 (Lodge) Abstain: 1 (Wiscomb) Absent: 1 (Reed)

Individual Comments:

1. Vice Chair Wiscomb abstained because she believes that the density could and should be increased on the site from the base density, but is not in a position to say if the proposed density is appropriate because she needs more information.
2. Commissioner Higgins stated that he is more concerned with size, bulk, and scale than density, as variable density has been abused in the past.
3. Commissioner Bonderson stated that she agrees with Vice Chair Wiscomb and Commissioner Higgins on the appropriateness of the density being dependent on size, bulk, and scale and how much it will provide affordable housing.
4. Chair Schwartz stated that she supports maximum density as negotiated by City and applicant legal counsel that follows state law.

Straw poll: How many Commissioners can find the ratio of market-rate to affordable units appropriate?
Ayes: 6 Noes: 0 Abstain: 0 Absent: 1 (Reed)

Individual Comments: Commissioners Bonderson and Lodge, Vice Chair Wiscomb, and Chair Schwartz would prefer the second alternative option proposed by the applicant.

Straw poll: How many Commissioners can support the Applicant's Bonus Density Alternative 2 with moderate income up to 120% AMI?
Ayes: 1 Noes: 5 (Schwartz, Wiscomb, Higgins, Bonderson, and Escobedo)
Abstain: 0 Absent: 1 (Reed)

Individual Comments: The Commissioners who voted no, did so because they want to give the applicant flexibility for the least amount of affordable housing.

Commissioner preferences for low, moderate, or mixed income:

- Commissioner Bonderson: moderate income to as high income as you can take it up through work force rates
- Commissioner Lodge: mixed income with a focus on moderate income up to 120% AMI
- Vice Chair Wiscomb: mixed income with a focus on moderate income up to 120% AMI
- Commissioner Higgins: moderate income to as high as you can take it up through work force rates
- Commissioner Escobedo: mixed income
- Chair Schwartz: moderate income to as high as you can take it up through work force rates

Straw poll: How many Commissioners find the proportion of residential to nonresidential use appropriate for this zone, site, and the Funk Zone neighborhood?
Ayes: 3 Noes: 3 (Lodge, Higgins, Schwartz) Abstain: 0 Absent: 1 (Reed)

Individual Comments:

1. Commissioners Lodge and Higgins and Chair Schwartz voted no because they would like to see more residential use.
2. Commissioner Escobedo stated that he would like to see one of the nonresidential uses be something like a grocery store.

Straw poll: How many Commissioners find the height and massing of the development appropriate for this location?
Ayes: 4 Noes: 1 (Lodge) Abstain: 1 (Wiscomb) Absent: 1 (Reed)

Individual Comments:

1. Commissioners Higgins and Escobedo are in favor of the height and massing conceptually but would like more information.
2. Commissioner Bonderson stated that she believes there is a value in developing the ground level but it depends on what the applicant returns to the Commission with.
3. Chair Schwartz is in favor of the height conceptually but with good neighbor considerations incorporated.

Straw poll: How many Commissioners find the amount of outdoor living space appropriate for the condominiums?
Ayes: 4 Noes: 2 (Wiscomb and Higgins) Abstain: 0 Absent: 1 (Reed)

Individual Comments:

1. Commissioner Higgins would like less outdoor living space as it is an amenity that makes the price of the units go up.
2. Commissioner Bonderson stated that she is comfortable with the amount of outdoor living space on the ground floor as long as it is being incorporated into the levels above.

Straw poll: How many Commissioners find the amount of outdoor living space appropriate for the apartments?
Ayes: 3 Noes: 3 (Higgins, Lodge, and Wiscomb) Abstain: 0 Absent: 1 (Reed)

Individual Comments:

1. Commissioner Higgins would like less outdoor living space as it is an amenity that makes the price of the units go up.
2. Commissioner Bonderson stated that she is comfortable with the amount of outdoor living space on the ground floor as long as it is being incorporated into the levels above.

V. ADMINISTRATIVE AGENDA

No reports.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Schwartz adjourned the meeting at 7:59 p.m.

Submitted by,

Heidi Reidel, Commission Secretary

DRAFT