



ACTION MINUTES

Planning Commission

Planning Commissioners:

Steven Keller	Chair
Erika Mendez	Vice Chair
Zoë Chafe	Commissioner
Al Dram	Commissioner
Jack Ghizzoni	Commissioner
Henry Symons	Commissioner
Erica Zepko	Commissioner

REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, March 24, 2022

6:30 PM

Teleconference

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was convened via teleconference at 6:30 p.m. by Chair Steven Keller.

2. ROLL CALL

Present: (6) Chair Steven Keller
 Vice Chair Erika Mendez
 Planning Commissioner Zoë Chafe
 Planning Commissioner Jack Ghizzoni
 Planning Commissioner Henry Symons
 Planning Commissioner Erica Zepko

Excused
 Absence: (1) Planning Commissioner Al Dram arrived at 8:15 p.m.

3. RESOLUTION DECLARING THE NEED FOR THE PLANNING COMMISSION TO CONTINUE TO MEET REMOTELY IN ORDER TO ENSURE THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF THE PUBLIC

Director Bryant read aloud a statement announcing that the meeting was being conducted by teleconference pursuant Assembly Bill 361, which provides for an exemption to the Brown Act, provided that the Planning Commission makes certain findings by majority no later than 30 days after it starts using the exemption, and every 30 days thereafter.

A motion was made to approve the resolution.

Moved: Mendez
Seconded: Symons
Ayes: (6) Chafe, Ghizzoni, Symons, Zepko, Mendez, Keller
Noes: (0)
Abstain: (0)
Absent: (1) Dram

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ben Donahue, 40 Broderick Street, San Francisco, commented via on-line speaker card, saying that he works in Emeryville and supports the messaging coming from the Emeryville city government to build housing and promote green transportation. However, he expressed concern about the implementation, citing multiple office developments and no major housing projects in the planning pipeline. He said that Emeryville should learn from San Francisco's mistakes.

5. APPROVAL OF ACTION MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 24, 2022

A motion was made to approve the Action Minutes.

Moved: Chafe
Seconded: Ghizzoni
Ayes: (6) Chafe, Ghizzoni, Symons, Zepko, Mendez, Keller
Noes: (0)
Abstain: (0)
Absent: (1) Dram

6. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Bryant reported on recent City Council actions, and announced that there would be an on-line community workshop on the Active Transportation Plan on Wednesday, March 30 at noon, via Zoom.

7. DISCLOSURE OF EX PARTE COMMUNICATIONS AND IDENTIFICATION OF CONFLICTS INTEREST

Regarding Item 9.2, Commissioner Chafe stated that she would recuse herself because she owns her primary residence within 500 feet of the project site. Regarding Item 9.3, Commissioner Ghizzoni stated that he would be recusing himself because one of the applicants is a client of his employer. Regarding Items 8.2, 9.2, and 9.3, Vice Chair Mendez stated that she would recuse herself because the applicants are clients of her employer and therefore a source of income. Regarding Item 9.3, Chair Keller stated that he would recuse himself because he owns his primary residence within 500 feet of the project site.

Chair Keller noted that both he and Vice Chair Mendez would be recused from Item 9.3, and therefore, under the Planning Commission Rules and Regulations, the Commission would need to elect a Presiding Officer for that item. He nominated Commissioner Chafe, who indicated that she would be willing to serve. A vote was taken to elect Commissioner Chafe as Presiding Officer for Item 9.3:

Ayes: (6) Chafe, Ghizzoni, Symons, Zepko, Mendez, Keller
Noes: (0)
Abstain: (0)
Absent: (1) Dram

8. PUBLIC HEARINGS

8.1 Bayview Master Sign Program (SIGN21-033) – Consideration of a Major Sign Permit for a Master Sign Program for the Bayview Apartments, currently under construction at 6701 Shellmound Street. CEQA Status: This project is exempt from environmental review under State CEQA Guidelines Section 15311(a) which applies to placement of on-premises signs, and the “common sense exemption” at Section 15061(b)(3) because it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the proposal may have a significant effect on the environment. General Plan Land Use Classification: Mixed Use with Residential; Zoning District: Mixed Use with Residential (MUR) (Owner/Applicant: Bayview Emeryville LLC) (APN: 49-1490-2)

Analisa Garcia, Assistant Planner, gave the staff presentation and responded to Commissioner questions.

Applicants Carol Schwartz, Director, AMCAL Housing, and Adam Burrows, Signage Design Consultant, The Design Factor, presented and responded to Commissioner questions.

The public hearing was opened; there was no one wishing to speak; the public hearing was closed.

A motion was made to approve the application.

Moved: Mendez
Seconded: Ghizzoni
Ayes: (6) Chafe, Ghizzoni, Symons, Zepko, Mendez, Keller
Noes: (0)
Abstain: (0)
Absent: (1) Dram

- 8.2 Nora Davis Transit Center Sign (SIGN22-003)** – Consideration of a Major Sign Permit for an entry gateway sign at the east entrance to the Emeryville Amtrak Station at 5885 Horton Street. CEQA Status: This project is exempt from environmental review under State CEQA Guidelines Section 15311(a) which applies to placement of on-premises signs, and the “common sense exemption” at Section 15061(b)(3) because it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the proposal may have a significant effect on the environment. General Plan Land Use Classification: Mixed Use with Residential and Major Transit Hub; Zoning District: Mixed Use with Residential (MUR), North Hollis District Overlay Zone (N-H), Transit Hub Overlay Zone (TH), and Pedestrian Priority Overlay Zone (PP), (Applicant: All Sign Services) (Owner: Wareham Development Corporation) (APN: 49-1325-108)

Vice Chair Mendez recused herself from this item because the applicant is a client of her employer; she left the meeting.

Analisa Garcia, Assistant Planner, gave the staff presentation and responded to Commissioner questions.

Applicants Rich Robbins, Wareham Development; and Jeffrey Heller, Founding Principal, Heller Manus, presented and responded to Commissioner questions.

The public hearing was opened; there was no one wishing to speak; the public hearing was closed.

A motion was made to approve the application.

Moved: Keller
Seconded: Symons
Ayes: (5) Chafe, Ghizzoni, Symons, Zepko, Keller
Noes: (0)
Recused: (1) Mendez
Absent: (1) Dram

Vice Chair Mendez rejoined to the meeting.

9. STUDY SESSIONS

- 9.1 4300 San Pablo Intergenerational Affordable Housing (ZC22-001)** – A study session to review a proposal for redevelopment of a 0.47 acre site at 4300 San Pablo Avenue with a 5-story, 68-unit, 100% affordable intergenerational housing project with ground floor amenity and community space. The applicant proposes that the project be processed under SB 35, which mandates ministerial approval (i.e. staff level), and AB 1763, which specifies no density limit for projects within one-half mile of transit. General Plan Land Use Classification: Mixed Use with Residential, Major Transit Hub, and Neighborhood Retail Overlay; Zoning District: Mixed Use with Residential (MUR), Neighborhood Retail Overlay (NR), Transit Hub Overlay (TH), and Pedestrian Priority Zone (PP) (Applicant: EAH Inc.) (Owner: City of Emeryville) (APNs: 49-1079-14-1 and -17-1)

Analisa Garcia, Assistant Planner, gave the staff presentation and responded to Commissioner questions.

Applicants Bianca Neumann, Director of Business Development, EAH Housing; Steve Pratt, Business Development Manager, EAH Housing; Lily Ciammaichella, Director of Design, KTG Architecture; and Jessica Musick, Principal, KTG, presented and responded to Commissioner questions.

Public comment was opened; there was no one wishing to speak; public comment was closed.

Commissioners expressed enthusiasm for the intergenerational housing concept and encouraged the applicant to incorporate sustainable design and materials, including all-electric and Bay Friendly landscaping. Commissioners also appreciated the proposed laminated wood on the ground floor as well as the perforated steel over the balconies, and encouraged the applicant get feedback from the community, including seniors and transitional age youth, as to what they would like to see in the amenity space. Commission suggestions for the amenity space included job training and assistance, and educational opportunities for both youth and seniors such as computer classes. Commissioners also suggested that the applicant provide cargo bicycle parking spaces.

- 9.2 EmeryStation Overland (UPDR21-001)** – A second study session to review a proposal to construct a new 300,000 square foot Research and Development building and a six level parking structure accommodating approximately 495 parking spaces on an approximately 113,325 square foot site on the block bounded by Overland Avenue and 62nd, 63rd, and Hollis Streets. The proposal includes preservation of the existing Hollis Street Building that accommodates Ruby's Café and 41 live-work units, and demolition of all other structures on the western portion of the site. CEQA Status: To be determined. General Plan Land Use Classification: Office/Technology and Major Transit Hub; Zoning District: Office/Technology (OT), North Hollis Overlay (N-H), and Transit Hub Overlay (TH) (Owner/Applicant: Wareham Development) (APN: 49-1488-1)

Vice Chair Mendez recused herself from Items 9.2 and 9.3 because the applicants are clients of her employer; she left the meeting. Commissioner Chafe recused herself from Item 9.2 because she owns her primary residence within 500 feet of the project site; she was moved to the "attendee" group.

Miroo Desai, Senior Planner, gave the staff presentation and responded to Commissioner questions.

Commissioner Dram arrived at 8:15 p.m.

Applicants Rich Robbins, Founder Wareham Development; Geoff Sears, Partner, Wareham Development; Claudia Cappio, Consulting Principal, Urban Planning Partners; Matt Malone, Landscape and Project Architect, Perkins & Will; and Dwight Long, Principal, Perkins & Will, presented and responded to Commissioner questions.

Public comment was opened; there was no one wishing to speak; public comment was closed.

Overall, the Commission liked the project and appreciated the inclusion of a mid-block path for bicyclists and pedestrians. One Commissioner commented that the width of the proposed “Art Walk” was too narrow. Concern was expressed regarding the amount of parking proposed, and that the proposal was too close to Overland Avenue between 62nd and 63rd Streets. A Commissioner stated that the park space that would be created on Overland Avenue would not be utilized. There was also a concern expressed regarding the proposed vertical curbs along the bike lanes, and the ability to keep the bike lanes clear of debris. The Commission was satisfied with the project obtaining a portion of the bonus points by providing additional public open space.

Commissioner Chafe was moved from the “attendee” group back to the Planning Commission panel.

- 9.3 Bay Center Life Science Project (UPDR22-002)** – A study session to review a proposal to construct a new six story, 96-foot-tall building accommodating 210,000 square feet of Research and Development space, and a new 505-space parking garage at 6475 Christie Avenue. CEQA Status: To be determined. General Plan Land Use Classification: Mixed Use with Non-Residential; Zoning District: Mixed Use with Non-Residential (MUN) and Pedestrian Priority (PP) Overlay for a portion of 64th Street frontage. (Owner/Applicant: Bay Center Investors, LLC c/o Harvest Properties) (APNs: 49-1491-7; -8; and -11)

Chair Keller recused himself from this item because he owns his primary residence within 500 feet of the project site; he was moved to the “attendee” group. Commissioner Ghizzoni recused himself from this item because one of the applicants is a client and a source of income; he left the meeting. In the absence of Chair Keller and Vice Chair Mendez, Commissioner Chafe presided over Item 9.3.

Miroo Desai, Senior Planner, gave the staff presentation and responded to Commissioner questions.

Tom Wagner, Partner, Harvest Properties; Carina Abella Huang, Senior Associate, Senior Project Architect, DGA; Samuel David Capps, Associate, Project Architect, DGA; and Niall Malcolmson, Principal, DGA, presented and responded to Commissioner questions.

Public comment was opened.

Steven Keller, 6363 Christie Avenue, 20 year resident, said his living room window overlooks the project. He said that the parking garage should be screened on all four sides, and that live screens should not be used. He said that parking access should not be only from 64th Street, or from Christie Avenue, but could be from 64th and 65th Streets with all or most of the surface parking removed. For the mixed-use component, he suggested a bike self-repair shop, dog spa, rentable maker space, rentable community room, or a cafe in the southeast corner of the new building. He said that all sidewalks should comply with City guidelines, and all loading should be off-street. He suggested adding solar panels to the roof of the garage, and said that all open space requirements should be met.

Public comment was closed.

The Commission generally liked the design of the main building, but was critical of the parking garage, stating that all four sides of the building needed to be better articulated. One Commissioner noted that green screens generally do not function well, citing examples from neighboring cities. The Commission agreed that there should be no driveways on Lacoste Street but indicated that 65th Street should be the main entry/exit with 64th Street as a secondary entry/exit. The Commission was also unanimous in its suggestion of removing all surface parking spaces. Other comments included providing additional public open space as a way of obtaining bonus points, a need to provide some mix of uses at the ground level and to provide some community space, ensuring that all glass is bird friendly, and a suggestion of using public art as a way of providing visually attractive facades.

Vice Chair Mendez and Commission Ghizzoni returned to the meeting. Chair Keller was moved from the "attendee" group back to the Planning Commission panel and presided over the remainder of the meeting.

10. PLANNING COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS

A Commissioner expressed gratitude for the parking survey and articles that had been provided to the Commission. Commissioners commented about various parking strategies, including shared parking and unbundled parking. It was suggested that parking and other topics of interest be listed on the agenda of a future meeting for discussion.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned 10:25 pm.

THE NEXT SCHEDULED REGULAR MEETING WILL BE HELD ON THURSDAY, APRIL 28, 2022 AT 6:30 P.M. VIA TELECONFERENCE IN ACCORDANCE WITH CALIFORNIA ASSEMBLY BILL 361 OR IN THE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL, 1333 PARK AVENUE, EMERYVILLE, CA 94608 IF THE STATE OF EMERGENCY HAS BEEN LIFTED.