



**CITY OF SOUTH PASADENA
Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, November 17, 2020, 6:30 PM
Via Zoom Teleconference**

CALL TO ORDER

A scheduled meeting of the South Pasadena Planning Commission was called to order by Chair Braun on Tuesday, November 17, 2020 at 6:31 p.m. The meeting was held Via Zoom.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair: Janet Braun
Vice-Chair: John Lesak
Commissioners: Richard Tom, Lisa Padilla, Laura Dahl

City Staff

Present: Teresa L. Highsmith, City Attorney
Joanna Hankamer, Planning & Community Dev. Director
Kanika Kith, Planning Manager
Margaret Lin, Manager of Long-Range Planning & Economic Development
Malinda Lim, Associate Planner

Council

Present: Council Liaison: Diana Mahmud, Mayor Pro Tem

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Tom made a motion to adopt the agenda as submitted by staff
Vice Chair Lesak seconded the motion

Motion carried, 5-0

DISCLOSURE OF SITE VISITS AND EX-PARTE CONTACTS

Commissioner Dahl visited the 7 patios site. Commissioner Padilla visited the 7 patios site. Commissioner Tom visited the 7 patios site. Vice Chair Lesak visited the 7 patios site. Chair Braun visited the 7 patios site.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None.

PUBLIC HEARING:

1. **1312 Meridian Ave, Project No. 2205-NID/HDP/DRX/VAR, Notice of intent to demolish Design Review, Hillside Development Permit, and Variance for modification and addition to a single-family residence**

Commissioner Padilla recused herself due to the proximity of the project to her residence

Staff Presentation:

None

Recommendation:

Move this item to the December meeting

Questions for Staff:

None

Public Comment:

None

Motion:

Commissioner Tom motioned to move the item to the December meeting. Commissioner Dahl seconded.

Chair Braun asked for Roll Call.

Motion carried,4-0

2. **Project No. 2171-CUP/DRX/TTM/TRP–Seven Patios Mixed-Use Residential and Commercial Project at 845/899 El Centro Street**

Staff Presentation:

Planning Manager Kith presented the project. Project requires a Conditional Use Permit for mixed-use in the Mission Street Specific Plan (MSSP) zone, Design Review, Tentative Tract Map, Tree Removal Permit for 20 trees, and Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND).

Staff Recommendation:

Adopt a resolution adopting the MND and approving the applications for the 7 Patios project subject to conditions of approval.

Recommend to MTIC (Mobility Transportation Infrastructure Commission): evaluate traffic and parking issues, expand the Mission-Meridian parking district.

Within one year of the final inspection, a traffic study will be provided.

Question for Staff:

None

Public Comment:

Commenter brought up the fact that Orange Grove was not paved and was unsuitable for large development, and the surrounding streets are too narrow for parking. Additionally concerned about the noise levels as previous projects were extremely loud.

Ella Hushagen was concerned that the project provides no affordable housing, even though the project is next to the metro stop which many middle-income residents rely on.

Joshua Albrekston expressed support for the project due to its proximity to the metro station.

Lilia Morton asked that the project be scaled down by 1/3 due to concerns about traffic and parking. Additionally, she expressed concern that traffic studies were conducted during COVID which is not an accurate description of normal traffic conditions.

Mario Hernandez was disappointed in what he called the “overbuilding” of South Pasadena.

Commenter requested that the developers set aside parking for the homes on Orange Grove that do not have a garage or driveway as increased traffic would block homeowners on Orange Grove from parking next to their house.

Tina Chang was concerned about the increased traffic of the project.

Applicant Presentation:

Architect Stefanos Polyzoides presented graphics outlining the project from multiple angles. Believes the project will bring more vibrancy to the city.

Applicant's Representative Burke Farrar stated they were doing everything they could to avoid having residents park on Orange Grove, and provided adequate parking for all residents. Additionally were providing as many EV chargers as the city requested.

Applicant's attorney Richard replied to a few public comments. Stated that mandating a traffic study after the final inspection is illegal under CEQA. Attorney reminded the Commission of the RHNA mandate to build more housing of all types and the intense pressure to build housing around the metro stations. The Housing Accountability Act (HAA) prevents downscaling the project.

Questions for Applicant:

Commissioner Dahl asked about the applicant's plan for overhanging the sidewalk. Applicant's representative Farrar said they would get a permit from the Public Works Dept. Commissioner Dahl also asked about changing the brick to a rustic style. Architect Stefanos Polyzoides said they would prefer to make it out of a single brick.

Commissioner Tom asked if there was a way to walk through the townhouses to the apartment complex. Applicant's representative Farrar clarified that the townhouses were accessible for the townhouses but the complex could only be accessed from El Centro.

Commissioner Padilla asked what the envisioned price is for each of the units. Applicant's representative Farrar responded that the units won't go on sale for 3 years and they can't provide an accurate estimate. Commissioner Padilla followed up by asking why there were no affordable housing units. Applicant's representative Farrar responded that the neighbors already have a problem with the current density, 35% more would cause an uproar. Commissioner Padilla asked what would prevent a bungalow resident for using the hammerhead for parking. Applicant's representative Farrar responded it was a public safety issue that created the hammerhead and they would mark it was a fire lane.

Vice Chair Lesak asked about the east elevation. The applicant clarified that the massing of the building on the plans were incorrect and the plans were changed accordingly.

Chair Braun asked the applicant if they are willing to build EV charging ports at every parking place. Applicant's representative Farrar said that was correct. Commissioner Padilla asked if they could build an outlet next to every parking space which would allow EV drivers to slow charge overnight. Applicant's representative Farrar said they would provide the electricity to give the resident the option to EV charge but to track and charge for electricity would require individual wiring to each unit which is impractical.

Commissioner Discussion:

Commissioner Tom appreciated the effort the developer took to reach out to the community but was worried about further unanticipated concerns of the community.

Commissioner Dahl was concerned about the lack of a demolition plan due to the large impact on the neighborhood. Specifically wanted no trucks or workers to go through Orange Grove Place. Planning Manager Kith replied they could add the truck route as a condition of approval.

CEQA consultants stated that construction traffic would be dispersed over multiple roadways and the construction would be short-term only. All factors are added in and have been addressed.

Chair Braun asked if the designated restaurant space had to be a restaurant. Planning Manager Kith replied that a minimum percentage of the site had to be a restaurant.

Commissioner Dahl asked if the building conditions on EV was consistent with the plans. Additionally noted it was a poor look to have no affordable housing on a project of this scale.

Commissioner Padilla raised concerns about bike and pedestrian safety on El Centro and requested bike warning signs. Commissioner Padilla agreed with the MTIC take a look at the traffic impact and was concerned that Orange Grove Place didn't have parking restrictions. She thought it was important to not have fire exiting routes count as open space in the general plan. Commissioner Padilla wanted a chair review on the east elevation.

Vice Chair Lesak thought that the project was well designed and a good project for South Pasadena, though the project could provide affordable units but

understandable the points made by the applicant. Additionally, it would be open to creating more open space. Finally thought the EV plan was adequate.

Chair Braun echoes the lack of affordable housing units and wanted the infrastructure for a charging station on every space. She understood the concern regarding bike lanes but was unclear on how that would be approached. Mentioned that the biggest concern was parking and traffic. Asked staff how the parking entrance worked. Planning Manager Kith clarified that the garage doors were open 5 am to midnight and would swing open into the garage. Chair Braun requested Orange Grove Place be resident only parking. Planning Manager Kith clarified that the commission could provide a recommendation to MTIC and though the traffic report did not raise traffic concerns residents brought up parking concerns.

Commissioner Dahl asked if there would be another traffic study done after the final inspection. Planning Manager Kith clarified that was the case to check for any unexpected problems that may arise.

Commissioner Tom asked if the traffic study was focused on traffic patterns at nearby intersections or on specific driveways. Planning Manager Kith clarified the past study focused on Mission Bell, but the new traffic study would be along Fairview and Mission.

Chair Braun asked if anyone had a list of open items. Planning Manager Kith summarized that the commission would like to add a condition about parking and construction routes on Orange Grove Place, a condition to specific the restaurant to a boutique restaurant, and strike the option to move the building back 18 inches, revise the condition on the bike lanes, and to allow the brick design. Chair Braun asked if it was infrastructure for all parking or the 11 chargers. Planning Manager Kith replied that was the case and added that of the 65 spaces, 36 were public.

Planning Manager Kith brought up that no consensus was reached on the traffic study. Chair Braun asked how much a traffic study costs. Traffic Consultant Carlo estimated it would be anywhere between \$5,000 and \$10,000. Commissioner Padilla requested that additional intersections be included in the study. Chair Braun supported that. Commissioner Dahl wanted the study to be conducted after the units began being occupied. Planning Manager Kith specified that was the intention of the one year post final inspection.

Commissioner Dahl requested at least two bike warning signs be added.

Motion:

Vice Chair Lesak motions to approve the Conditional Use Permit, Design Review Permit, Tentative Tract Map, Tree Removal Permit, and adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration for the proposed project at 845-899 El Centro with the modified conditions as previously discussed. In addition, formally recommend that the MTIC study the effects of extending the Mission Meridian parking district to the Orange Grove Place and Orange Grove Avenue, and the EV charging stations.

Commissioner Padilla seconded.

Commissioner Dahl requested a double-check of all the conditions.

Motions carried, 5-0

DISCUSSION:

3. Tenant Protection – Impacts of State Law relating to Tenant Protection Act of 2019 (AB 1482) on local tenant protection opportunity

Manager Lin advised commissioners it might be best to return to this topic after the City Council meeting on the 18th. Commission agreed to move the meeting to the scheduled meeting on November 19, 2020.

Motion:

Commissioner Tom motioned to move this item to the November 19, 2020 meeting.

Vice Chair Lesak seconded.

Motion carried, 5-0

4. Regional Housing Needs Assessment Allocation Appeal Update

Manager Lin provided an update on the RHNA appeal and thanked the ad hoc committee for their work. Out of the 191 cities, 47 have appealed. South Pasadena's appeal is centered on faulty calculations for determining housing units and distribution, as well as insufficient water, sewer and school resources. No comments have been made on South Pasadena's appeal.

5. Accessory Dwelling Units Ordinance Update

The City has received an invitation from Arup to work with them to look at South Pasadena's ADU program. Director Hankamer added that they would provide a scope of work, but would delay the ADU update by about 6 weeks.

Public Comment:

Josh Albrektson expressed that the proposed ADU number in the Housing Element is unrealistic.

6. Inclusionary Ordinance

Motion:

Chair Braun moved to continue this item at the December 2020 meeting. Vice Chair Lesak seconded.

Motion carried 5-0.

ADMINISTRATION

7. Comments from City Council Liaison

Council Liaison Mahmud thanked the commission.

8. Comments from Commissioners

Commissioner Padilla thanked Chair and Vice Chair for their work, as well as everyone on the RHNA ad hoc committee.

9. Comments from Staff

None

ADJOURNMENT

10. Adjournment to the Special Planning Commission meeting scheduled on November 19, 2020.

There being no further matters, Chair Braun adjourned the meeting at 10:19 p.m.



Janet Braun, Chair