



City of Sunnyvale

Excerpt Meeting Minutes - Final Planning Commission

Monday, October 10, 2022

7:00 PM

Telepresence Meeting: City Web Stream |
Comcast Channel 15 | AT&T Channel 99

Special Meeting: Study Session - Canceled | Public Hearing - 7:00 PM

7 P.M. PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

CALL TO ORDER

Pursuant to Government Code Subdivision 54953(e), the meeting was conducted telephonically; pursuant to state law, the City Council made the necessary findings by adopting Resolution No. 1089-21, reaffirmed on September 27, 2022.

Chair Pyne called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

ROLL CALL

Present: 7 - Chair Martin Pyne
Vice Chair Nathan Iglesias
Commissioner Daniel Howard
Commissioner John Howe
Commissioner Michael Serrone
Commissioner Neela Shukla
Commissioner Carol Weiss

PUBLIC HEARINGS/GENERAL BUSINESS

2. [22-0823](#) **Proposed Project: General Plan Amendment Initiation** to consider amending the General Plan designation from Commercial to Medium Density Residential on a one-acre site.
Location: 665 South Knickerbocker Drive (APN: 198-08-036)
File: 2022-7477
Zoning: C-1/PD (Neighborhood Business with a Planned Development Combining District)
General Plan: Commercial
Applicant / Owner: Mandevilla LLC
Environmental Review: The project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(a)
Project Planner: Shila Bagley, (408) 730-7418,

sbagley@sunnyvale.ca.gov

Associate Planner Shila Bagley presented the staff report with a slide presentation.

Commissioner Howe and Principal Planner George Schroeder discussed the history of how two parcels adjacent to the study area have commercial zoning designations but are developed with residential uses.

Commissioner Weiss asked whether any data exists regarding the number of medical and dental practitioners within the City across recent years since the proposed project will cause these numbers to decline. She also asked about when the Moffett Park Specific Plan (MPSP) will be completed. In response, Principal Planner Schroeder answered that while the Planning Division does not possess the data she requested, the City's Economic Development Division may. Planning Officer Shaunn Mendrin added that a market analysis may be conducted to determine this information, and he stated that the MPSP is scheduled to be heard at Board and Commission and City Council meetings in the spring of 2023.

Commissioner Weiss confirmed with Principal Planner Schroeder that the proposed project will be funded by the applicant.

Commissioner Serrone confirmed with Principal Planner Schroeder that a market analysis or fiscal impact study will be conducted to determine the impact that the proposed project will have upon the City's revenue. Commissioner Serrone also voiced his concerns about the loss of medical and dental professionals because of the proposed project.

Commissioner Serrone commented that since the proposed project will not move forward until completion of the MPSP, a delay in much-needed residential development is inevitable.

Vice Chair Iglesias conversed with Associate Planner Bagley about why the City recommends high density residential development for the proposed project site as opposed to the medium density residential development requested by the applicant. Associate Planner Bagley explained what would be required of the applicant if high density residential development is approved for the proposed project site.

At Commissioner Shukla's request, Principal Planner Schroeder elaborated upon why two additional parcels are being included in the expanded area study and what the study would entail.

Commissioner Howe confirmed with Principal Planner Schroeder that if the two parcels were to be included in the expanded area study, this would be done at no cost to the property owners of those parcels. Instead, the applicant will fund the study in full.

Commissioner Howe and Principal Planner Schroeder discussed the open space and recreation requirements associated with both medium and high-density developments on the proposed project site. Principal Planner Schroeder stated that every residential development project, including ones on El Camino Real, are subject to these requirements.

Chair Pyne confirmed with Principal Planner Schroeder that the inclusion of the two parcels in the expanded area study will have no significant effect on the timeliness of the study's completion.

Vice Chair Iglesias asked why the applicant is responsible for costs associated with the expanded area study and Principal Planner Schroeder explained why.

Chair Pyne opened the Public Hearing.

Anthony Ho, principal architect for the proposed project, presented the project including additional information.

There were no public speakers for this agenda item.

Steve Saray, applicant and property owner speaking on behalf of Mandevilla LLC, presented the project including additional information.

Commissioner Weiss questioned whether the applicant would reconsider their design for the proposed project to accommodate the inclusion of more units and open space on the proposed project site. Mr. Ho answered that this was considered and presented an alternative design for the proposed project.

Commissioner Weiss confirmed with Mr. Ho that a plan for the proposed project will need to be finalized before the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review may begin. He added that in the event the proposed project is initiated soon, a plan like the alternative design he just presented would be submitted.

Commissioner Weiss confirmed with Mr. Saray that the tenants on the existing property site possess leases of two years or less and that they have already been notified of the proposed project. Mr. Saray also confirmed that no considerations have been made to convert the proposed project's apartments into condominiums at a later time.

Principal Planner Schroeder reminded the Planning Commissioners that the first phase of the General Plan Initiation (GPI) process involves the authorization of a study to consider the land use and zoning designation of the proposed project site. He added that finer details may be discussed as the proposed project progresses.

Commissioner Howe confirmed with Planning Officer Mendrin that due to an insufficient staffing issue, this project may not be prioritized until after completion of the MPSP. As a result, any costs incurred by the applicant for the CEQA study may not be reimbursed if the study is initiated prior to completion of the MPSP. Mr. Saray responded that he understood.

Commissioner Shukla confirmed with Mr. Ho that the alternative design he presented was of a high-density model.

In response to questions posed by Commissioner Shukla, Mr. Saray explained that the existing structure on the proposed project site will need to be rebuilt rather than remodeled since it is not in line with current standards and conditions.

Vice Chair Iglesias discussed the maximum number of dwelling units that the proposed project site may accommodate if it is designated as high density. He also confirmed that the Planning Commission may not waive fees incurred by the applicant since they are standard City fees.

Chair Pyne closed the Public Hearing.

MOTION: Commissioner Howe moved and Commissioner Howard seconded the motion to approve the following:

- 1.) Initiate a General Plan Amendment study to analyze amending the General Plan designation from commercial to medium and high density residential on 665 South Knickerbocker Drive and find that the action is exempt from CEQA Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(a).
- 2.) Invite the property owners of the parcels located at 695 South Knickerbocker

Drive and 745 South Bernardo Avenue to join and fund their share of an expanded General Plan Amendment study to analyze amending the General Plan designation from commercial to medium and high density residential and find that the action is exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(a).

3.) Commence the General Plan Amendment study after the update to the Moffett Park Specific Plan is completed at the discretion of the City Council.

Vice Chair Iglesias asked whether the motion may be revised to indicate high density residential on the proposed project site rather than both high and medium density residential. Commissioner Howe answered that he would prefer that a new motion be made with Vice Chair Iglesias' recommendation if his own motion fails.

Commissioner Howe explained why both medium and high density designations for the proposed project site need to be examined. He also voiced his aim to reduce costs incurred by the applicant by inviting the other parcels to participate in the extended area study of their own accord.

Commissioner Howard spoke in support of staff's inclination to include the other two parcels in the expanded area study and noted his reasons for allowing the City Council to dictate when the General Plan Amendment study may commence.

At Commissioner Serrone's request, Principal Planner Schroeder clarified the requirements that the applicant would be subject to if the proposed project site was designated high density residential. Commissioner Serrone also commented that he is uncomfortable with explicitly stating that the City Council will determine when the General Plan Amendment study commences.

Commissioner Shukla shared her opinion that the applicant should be given the authority to determine whether the proposed project site is designated high or medium density. She added that a medium density site will allow for greater open space.

Principal Planner Amber Blizinski shed light on the timeline of GPI requests and staffing needs involved based on her own experiences with GPIs.

Commissioner Weiss advised that she does not support the motion since the proposed project site should be designated high density and staff should be given the authority to determine its own staffing limitations.

Chair Pyne engaged in a discussion with Principal Planner Schroeder regarding the rezoning of the two parcels adjacent to the proposed project site. He added that, in his opinion, the proposed project site would not be consistent with the uses of the surrounding parcels if it was designated medium density.

Commissioner Howard asked what the outcome might be if the motion did not explicitly state that the General Plan Amendment study would commence after the update to the MPSP is completed and at the discretion of the City Council. Principal Planner Blizinski explained that the purpose of this component of the motion is to set expectations for the timeline of the proposed project.

The motion failed by the following vote:

Yes: 3 - Commissioner Howard
Commissioner Howe
Commissioner Shukla

No: 4 - Chair Pyne
Vice Chair Iglesias
Commissioner Serrone
Commissioner Weiss

MOTION: Vice Chair Iglesias moved and Chair Pyne seconded the motion to approve the following:

- 1.) Initiate a General Plan Amendment study to analyze amending the General Plan designation from commercial to high density residential on 665 South Knickerbocker Drive and find that the action is exempt from CEQA Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(a).
- 2.) Invite the property owners of the parcels located at 695 South Knickerbocker Drive and 745 South Bernardo Avenue to join and fund their share of an expanded General Plan Amendment study to analyze amending the General Plan designation from commercial to high density residential and find that the action is exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(a).
- 3.) Commence the General Plan Amendment study after the update to the Moffett Park Specific Plan is completed at the discretion of the City Council.

Chair Pyne stated that he is comfortable allowing the City Council to determine whether the General Plan Amendment study may commence following the

completion of the MPSP.

Commissioner Howard agreed with earlier comments made by Commissioner Shukla about how the applicant should be given the authority to determine the proposed project site's density designation.

Commissioner Serrone relayed his understanding of the third component of the motion and spoke in overall support of the motion.

Vice Chair Iglesias expressed that his reason for limiting the proposed project site to high density is rooted in the fact that the applicant and architect confirmed their ability to meet the requirements of this density designation.

Commissioner Weiss agreed with comments made by Vice Chair Iglesias but explained that she is unable to support the motion since staff, not the City Council, should decide the timeline of the proposed project.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 5 - Chair Pyne
Vice Chair Iglesias
Commissioner Howard
Commissioner Serrone
Commissioner Shukla
No: 2 - Commissioner Howe
Commissioner Weiss

This recommendation will be forwarded to the City Council for consideration at the November 1, 2022 meeting.