



City of Sunnyvale

Excerpt Meeting Minutes - Draft Planning Commission

Monday, September 23, 2024

7:00 PM

Online and Council Chambers, City Hall,
456 W. Olive Ave., Sunnyvale, CA 94086

No Study Session | Public Hearing - 7:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER

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

ROLL CALL

Present: 6 - Chair Nathan Iglesias
Vice Chair Galen Kim Davis
Commissioner Martin Pyne
Commissioner Michael Serrone
Commissioner Neela Shukla
Commissioner Ilan Sigura

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Chris Figone

PUBLIC HEARINGS/GENERAL BUSINESS

2. [24-0910](#) **Proposed Project:**
 Introduce an Ordinance and adopt a Resolution to:
 Amend Sunnyvale Municipal Code Chapter 19.36 (El Camino
 Specific Plan District) and Adopt an Ordinance to Implement
 Housing Element Program H17: El Camino Real Specific Plan
 (ECRSP) Commercial Requirement for Affordable Housing
 Developments and Adopt a Resolution to Establish and Adopt
 Program H-17 for Modified Commercial Requirements in
 Mixed-Use Development in the El Camino Real Specific Plan.
- Location:** El Camino Specific Plan Area (APNs: Various)
File #: PLNG-2024-0581
Zoning: ECR-Variou
Environmental Review: Non-discretionary project (Public Resources
Code Section 21080(b)(1), CEQA Guidelines Sections 15268, 15357)
Project Planner: Shaunn Mendrin, (408) 730-7431,
smendrin@sunnyvale.ca.gov

Planning Officer Shaunn Mendrin provided an oral presentation.

At Vice Chair Davis' request, Planning Officer Mendrin explained that a development has been proposed but is awaiting approval of the ordinance and resolution to reserve its ground floor for active use rather than commercial use.

Commissioner Serrone expressed his concerns regarding the negative effects that may result from removing the commercial space requirement for affordable housing developments in the El Camino Real Specific Plan (ECRSP) area. He focused on the impacts of low-resource areas and the significant decrease in the City's yearly retail sales tax revenue. Planning Officer Mendrin addressed these concerns.

Commissioner Sigura questioned whether the resolution may be applied to developments on a case-by-case basis to prevent the loss of retail in the ECRSP area.

Chair Iglesias echoed concerns raised by other Commissioners regarding the loss of retail in the ECRSP area. He also noted that there may be risks associated with applying the resolution to developments on a case-by-case basis.

At Chair Iglesias' request, Planning Officer Mendrin explained why Exhibit A of the resolution considers both 98% and 100% affordable residential units.

Chair Iglesias and Planning Officer Mendrin discussed the relationship between density and the affordability of residential development units.

Commissioner Pyne confirmed with Planning Officer Mendrin that there have been at least four residential development projects within the last year that included at least 98% affordable units and that affordable housing development projects generally rely on external funding. Planning Officer Mendrin added that he is unsure whether any projects with between 58% to 98% affordable units were proposed.

Chair Iglesias opened the Public Hearing.

Chuck Fraleigh, Co-Chair of Livable Sunnyvale's Housing Committee, stated that Livable Sunnyvale is supportive of the removal of retail requirements for all 100% affordable housing developments along El Camino Real and throughout the City. He urged the Planning Commissioners to ensure that the removal of retail requirements also applies to 100% affordable housing developments on lots larger than 3 acres and explained why.

Gail Rubino questioned the reason for removing retail requirements for affordable housing developments in the ECRSP area. She also stressed the importance of language used in the ordinance and resolution so that developers do not take advantage of the lack of retail requirements for affordable housing developments.

Planning Officer Mendrin explained the reasoning behind removing retail requirements for affordable housing developments in the ECRSP area. He advised the Planning Commissioners that they may recommend that staff return to the City Council to consider amending the resolution once two affordable housing development projects have been proposed for the ECRSP area.

Chair Iglesias closed the Public Hearing.

Commissioner Serrone confirmed with Planning Officer Mendrin that no changes may be made to the Housing Element since it has already been certified.

Commissioner Pyne confirmed with Planning Officer Mendrin that the ordinance and resolution would apply only to sites that are currently designated for mixed-use and not those that are designated only for commercial use.

Commissioner Pyne specified the agenda item that is before the Planning Commission for consideration.

Commissioner Shukla confirmed with Planning Officer Mendrin that sites zoned for commercial use may be rezoned for mixed-use through a zoning amendment that would be subject to approval by the Planning Commission and City Council.

MOTION: Commissioner Pyne moved and Vice Chair Davis seconded the motion to recommend Alternative 2 to the City Council: Alternative 1 with a modification.

The modification is as follows:

- 1) Staff to return to the City Council after two projects that include 98% or more affordable units have been developed under the ordinance and resolution to determine whether any amendments to the ordinance or resolution must be made.

Commissioner Pyne shared his support of affordable housing projects due to the housing crisis, and he spoke of the retail requirement as a barrier to building such projects. He urged his fellow Commissioners to support the motion.

Vice Chair Davis offered his thoughts on the ordinance and resolution, reflected on their intent, and spoke in support of affordable housing developments and the motion.

FRIENDLY AMENDMENT: Commissioner Serrone proposed a friendly amendment to specify that staff return to the City Council after two projects that include 98% or more affordable units have been approved under the ordinance and resolution to determine whether any amendments to the ordinance or resolution must be made. Commissioner Pyne and Vice Chair Iglesias accepted the friendly amendment.

Commissioner Serrone confirmed his support of the motion.

Commissioner Shukla stated that she is in support of the motion and that she does not believe that the loss of retail in the ECRSP area is a concern.

Commissioner Sigura spoke in favor of the motion and noted the importance of both retail and affordable housing.

Chair Iglesias expressed his support of motion.

MOTION: Commissioner Pyne moved and Vice Chair Davis seconded the motion to recommend Alternative 2 to the City Council: Alternative 1 with a modification.

The modification is as follows:

1) Staff to return to the City Council after two projects that include 98% or more affordable units have been approved under the ordinance and resolution to determine whether any amendments to the ordinance or resolution must be made.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Chair Iglesias
Vice Chair Davis
Commissioner Pyne
Commissioner Serrone
Commissioner Shukla
Commissioner Sigura

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Figone

This recommendation will be forwarded to the City Council for consideration at the October 15, 2024 meeting.