



City of Sunnyvale

Meeting Minutes

Planning Commission

Monday, August 25, 2025

7:00 PM

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

No Study Session | Public Hearing - 7:00 PM

NO STUDY SESSION

7 P.M. PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

CALL TO ORDER

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

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Chair Iglesias led the salute to the flag.

ROLL CALL

Present: 7 - Chair Nathan Iglesias
Vice Chair Neela Shukla
Commissioner Galen Kim Davis
Commissioner Chris Figone
Commissioner Martin Pyne
Commissioner Michael Serrone
Commissioner Ilan Sigura

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

None.

CONSENT CALENDAR

There were no public speakers for this agenda item.

MOTION: Vice Chair Shukla moved, and Commissioner Davis seconded the motion to approve the Consent Calendar.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Chair Iglesias
Vice Chair Shukla
Commissioner Figone
Commissioner Serrone

No: 0

Abstained: 3 - Commissioner Davis
Commissioner Pyne
Commissioner Sigura

1. [25-0862](#) Approve Planning Commission Meeting Minutes of August 11, 2025
Approve Planning Commission Meeting Minutes of August 11, 2025, as submitted.

PUBLIC HEARINGS/GENERAL BUSINESS

2. [25-0868](#) **Proposed Project:**
APPEAL of a decision by the Director of Community Development approving a **DESIGN REVIEW** to demolish an existing home and construct a new two-story single-family home resulting in 3,579 square feet (3,174 square feet living area and 405 square feet garage) and 34.8% floor area ratio (FAR).
Location: 180 Donner Court (APN: 165-18-025)
File #: PLNG-2024-0817
Zoning: R-0 (Low-Density Residential)
Appellant: Anand Mohan and Seungug “Sean” Koh
Applicant/Owner: Vani Bahl / Karthik Raghunathan and Harini Jambunathan
Environmental Review: Exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per CEQA Guidelines Section 15303, New Construction of Small Structures (Class 3).
Project Planner: Julia Klein, (408) 730-7463, jklein@sunnyvale.ca.gov

Principal Planner Julia Klein presented the staff report with a slide presentation.

Commissioner Pyne confirmed with Principal Planner Klein that the Planning Commission decision on this agenda item will be considered final.

Commissioner Pyne asked why the Conditions of Approval for the proposed project does not include a provision for the 8-foot fence along the side and rear property lines. Principal Planner Klein and Planning Officer Mendrin stated that the fence is shown in the plans; however, the Planning Commission may choose to add a new Condition of Approval to reinforce the requirement.

Commissioner Sigura suggested that instead of building a taller fence, another option would be to plant evergreen landscaping that can grow taller along the proposed fence to further protect the privacy between the neighbors.

Commissioner Davis noted that the Planning Commission must meet Recommended Finding 2.2.3.

At Commissioner Davis' request, Principal Planner Klein explained that those within 300 feet of the proposed project site are considered immediate neighbors to the proposed project.

Chair Iglesias and Principal Planner Klein discussed how the applicants opted to frost the high-sill windows on both the left and right sides of the proposed second story in response to privacy concerns raised by their neighbors. Principal Planner Klein confirmed that the Design Review would have been approved even if the proposed windows had not been frosted.

Chair Iglesias received information from Planning Officer Mendrin regarding the process to create a single-story overlay district to restrict two-story buildings within the City's neighborhoods. Planning Officer Mendrin also confirmed that no such overlay exists for the neighborhood where the proposed project site is located.

Chair Iglesias confirmed with Principal Planner Klein that the proposed project meets parking requirements by providing two covered and two uncovered parking spaces.

Chair Iglesias confirmed with Principal Planner Klein that the applicant agreed to include an 8-foot privacy fence in response to privacy concerns raised by neighbors. The proposed fence would be along the left, right and rear property lines, as shown on the proposed project plans.

Chair Iglesias asked whether the proposed project's plans evolved due to concessions made by the applicant in response to concerns raised by neighbors. Principal Planner Klein answered that since she was not the original planner for the proposed project, this question would be better addressed by the applicant.

Chair Iglesias opened the Public Hearing.

Anand Mohan, Appellant 1, presented additional images and information to support his case.

Vice Chair Shukla commented that, in her opinion, the proposed project will not cast a large shadow onto the roof of Mr. Mohan's home. She also added that it is unlikely to see into his home from the second story of the proposed project.

Commissioner Davis and Senior Assistant City Attorney Sandra Lee discussed the state laws cited in Mr. Mohan's presentation. Senior Assistant City Attorney Lee stated that these state laws are not applicable to this scenario and that the proposed project complies with the Sunnyvale Municipal Code (SMC) since the shadow it will cast on adjacent structures is less than ten percent.

Seungug "Sean" Koh, Appellant 2, presented additional images and information to support his case.

Commissioner Davis and Principal Planner Klein discussed the setback requirements that apply to the proposed project.

At Commissioner Serrone's request, Mr. Koh elaborated on his concerns pertaining to the setback requirements for the proposed project as they are presented in the SMC.

Commissioner Pyne confirmed with Planning Officer Mendrin that the setback requirements that the proposed project is subject to are ones that also apply to similarly situated lots throughout the City.

Commissioner Pyne asked whether the solar study conducted for the proposed project considered the proposed project's grading and the grading of adjacent residential developments. Principal Planner Klein responded that the applicant's property was surveyed to ensure that the elevation points used for the solar study are accurate. She added that the proposed project's grading will be the same as that for the existing property. Principal Planner Klein also stated that the designer of the proposed project may provide additional information on this matter.

Karthik Raghunathan (applicant) and Vani Bahl (designer) presented additional images and information on the proposed project.

Commissioner Pyne asked about the accuracy of the roof heights indicated in the solar study conducted for the proposed project. Ms. Bahl explained that the measurements used for the solar study were taken from the survey done for the proposed project. These include measurements of building heights. She added that a survey was not done for the adjacent property, and Principal Planner Klein added

that a survey for adjacent properties is not required of applicants.

Commissioner Pyne confirmed with Principal Planner Klein that the preservation of the existing Japanese maple tree on the proposed project site is captured on the site plan for the proposed project.

Elie Semaan, Sunnyvale resident and neighbor to the right of the proposed project site, expressed his overall support of the proposed project.

Dan Hafeman, Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commissioner speaking on his own behalf as a Sunnyvale resident, stated he is in favor of the proposed project moving forward.

Gordon, Sunnyvale resident and neighbor behind the proposed project site, voiced his support of the proposed project.

Wei, Sunnyvale resident and neighbor near the proposed project site, spoke in agreement with concerns raised by Mr. Koh about the interpretation of the SMC's definition of lot width and urged the Planning Commissioners to consider these concerns.

Diane Wu, Sunnyvale resident, emphasized that since setback requirements are dependent on the SMC's definition of lot width, more stringent setback requirements than what the proposed project is subject to may be imposed on other lots throughout the City.

Harini Jambunathan, applicant, provided closing comments.

Mr. Koh provided closing comments.

Mr. Mohan provided closing comments.

Chair Iglesias closed the Public Hearing.

Vice Chair Shukla shared her thoughts on the proposed project and the concerns raised by the appellants. She added that the proposed project meets City requirements and considers the concerns of neighbors.

MOTION: Commissioner Davis moved, and Commissioner Sigura seconded the motion to approve Alternative 2 – Alternative 1 with a modification to the Conditions of Approval (by the Planning Commission) to include the following condition:

BP-15 FENCE – On the final plans submitted for Building Permit, the applicant shall show an eight (8) foot tall fence comprised of 6 feet of solid fencing material and 2 feet of lattice material (minimum 50% open). The applicant may repair, add to the existing, and/or propose a new fence to meet the 8-foot-tall fence requirement. The fence shall be located along the left side, right side and rear property lines; and shall not encroach into the 20 feet required front yard setback area. (COA)
[PLANNING].

Commissioner Davis addressed concerns raised by appellants and members of the public regarding privacy, the definition of lot width according to the SMC, and solar shading on adjacent properties. He also recognized the challenges that the applicants endured because of the appeal process for their proposed project.

Commissioner Sigura stressed that the proposed project meets applicable requirements and that it will add value to the neighborhood. For these reasons, he spoke in support of the proposed project.

Commissioner Serrone explained that privacy concerns may be mitigated by frosted glass or curtains and that the City would need to follow a process to update the SCM's definition of lot width. He also acknowledged the applicants' efforts to alter the proposed project's plans to accommodate concerns made by their neighbors.

Commissioner Pyne stated that the proposed project meets the Recommended Findings and SMC 19.56.020(b)(1). He also reiterated that neighborhoods may apply for a single-story overlay district and that until the SMC's definition of lot width is altered by the appropriate process, the current definition must be upheld. He then confirmed his support for the motion.

Chair Iglesias responded to concerns raised regarding the proposed project, explained that the evolution of properties is inevitable to meet the changing needs of the community, and stated his support of the motion.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Chair Iglesias
Vice Chair Shukla
Commissioner Davis
Commissioner Figone
Commissioner Pyne
Commissioner Serrone
Commissioner Sigura

No: 0

This decision is final.

STANDING ITEM: CONSIDERATION OF POTENTIAL STUDY ISSUES

None.

NON-AGENDA ITEMS AND COMMENTS

-Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Serrone and Planning Officer Shaun Mendrin discussed the study issue process and its impact to staff time.

-Staff Comments

None.

INFORMATION ONLY REPORTS/ITEMS

None.

3. [25-0863](#) Planning Commission Proposed Study Issues, Calendar Year: 2026
(Information Only)

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Iglesias adjourned the meeting at 9:15 PM.