

the motion.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Vice Chair Weiss
Commissioner Harrison
Commissioner Howard
Commissioner Howe
Commissioner Olevson
Commissioner Simons

No: 1 - Chair Rheume

Planning Officer Miner advised that this item goes to the City Council on May 8, 2018.

3. [18-0183](#) **Proposed Project:** A request for a Downtown Specific Plan Amendment Initiation to study changes to the development intensities and standards for Block 20 of the Downtown Specific Plan to increase the number of allowable residential units, an increase to the square footage of office allowed, and an increase in building height to allow up to five stories.
- File #:** 2018-7034
- Location:** 510 and 528 S. Mathilda Ave. (APNs: 209-29-060 and 061) and 562 and 566 S. Mathilda Ave. (APNS: 209-29-057 and 067)
- Zoning:** DSP (Block 20)
- Applicant / Owner:** SiliconSage Builders, LLC (applicant and owner 562 and 566 S. Mathilda Ave.) and Shawn Karimi (applicant and owner 510 and 528 S. Mathilda Ave.)
- Environmental Review:** The project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(a).
- Project Planner:** Cindy Hom, (408) 730-7411, chom@sunnyvale.ca.gov

Chair Rheume recused himself due to the proximity of his home to the proposed project.

Associate Planner Cindy Hom presented the staff report.

Commissioner Simons asked staff about improvements to the walkability and pedestrian feel of the public sidewalk in relation to a building's first floor. Associate Planner Hom advised that the Specific Plan Initiation (SPI) would study revised

development standards and an appropriate streetscape. Commissioner Simons confirmed with Planning Officer Andrew Miner that language can be added to that effect.

Commissioner Howe commented on the increase in building heights in the Downtown Specific Plan (DSP) and asked staff if the maximum heights are equivalent on both sides of the street. Planning Officer Miner advised staff that will look up this information.

Vice Chair Weiss opened the Public Hearing.

Sanjeev Acharya, representing SiliconSage Builders, LLC, presented information about the proposed project at 562 and 566 S. Mathilda Avenue.

Commissioner Simons confirmed with Mr. Acharya that they are amenable to work with staff on improvements to the first-floor architecture and shade plan.

Commissioner Harrison confirmed with Mr. Acharya that the existing Mezzetta office building would be demolished.

Shawn Karimi, representing Sunnyvale Imaging Center, presented information about the proposed project at 510 and 528 S. Mathilda Avenue.

Bill Weaver, Sunnyvale resident, spoke in opposition to the request for increased building height to allow up to five stories. Mr. Weaver requested that no additional residential or commercial square footage be added and that parking be increased if these additions are made.

Planning Officer Miner returned to Commissioner Howe's question and provided information about Downtown building height maximums. Commissioner Howe clarified with Planning Officer Miner that the requested building heights would match what is currently allowed on the adjacent block along Mathilda Avenue.

Apurva Samudra, Sunnyvale resident, spoke in opposition to the request for increased building height to allow up to five stories and additional office space. Mr. Samudra commented on existing residential complexes, parking issues and the potential impact on quality of life.

Melinda Hamilton, Sunnyvale resident, spoke in support of the staff

recommendation, especially the limit on building heights. Ms. Hamilton commented on the adjacent residential uses, building heights in Downtown and the need for pedestrian friendly streetscapes.

Anthony Ho stated an opinion that to accommodate 65 dwelling units per acre the proposed project will need four floors or more and a building height above 40 feet.

Anne Langer, Sunnyvale resident, requested that the building height limit not be increased for the proposed project.

Sonal Gupta, Sunnyvale resident, spoke in opposition to the request for increased building height to allow up to five stories and stated that it would negatively impact the quality of life. Ms. Gupta commented that an increase in office space will impact the walkability of Downtown.

Laurel Ashcraft, Sunnyvale resident, spoke in opposition to the request for increased building height to allow up to five stories. Ms. Ashcraft discussed her concerns regarding traffic safety in the Taaffe neighborhood.

Mr. Acharya presented additional information about the proposed project at 562 and 566 S. Mathilda Avenue.

Commissioner Howard asked what proportion of employees currently use public transportation for their commute. Mr. Acharya provided information about current parking availability and estimated that 50% of employees use personal cars for their commute.

Mr. Karimi presented additional information about the proposed project at 510 and 528 S. Mathilda Avenue.

Vice Chair Weiss closed the Public Hearing.

Commissioner Howard confirmed with Senior Assistant City Attorney Rebecca Moon that the applicant could leverage density bonuses to attain an increased building height.

Commissioner Howard confirmed the SPI study process and next steps with Senior Assistant City Attorney Moon.

Commissioner Harrison commented on the proposed 65 dwelling units per acre with a 3-story height limit and asked staff how 75% of the maximum number of units will be met. Planning Officer Miner explained that the density would be addressed in conjunction with the building height as part of the Downtown Specific Plan (DSP) amendment and that the maximum would be 65 dwelling units per acre.

MOTION: Commissioner Howe moved and Commissioner Simons seconded the motion for Alternative 2 – Alternative 1, with modifications, such as applicants' requests for additional height or that the land uses to be studied would only apply to their properties –

Concurrently, study improvements to the first-floor architecture, first-floor retail, pedestrian shading plan and proposed sidewalk widths.

Commissioner Simons commented on the potential need for engineered fill tree wells and that genetic estate sized trees should be planted to provide enough shade. Commissioner Simons noted that the pedestrian view will be enhanced by improving the architectural details.

Commissioner Olevson stated that he will be supporting the motion. Commissioner Olevson commented on Downtown changes over time and noted his appreciation of incrementally studying the perimeter of the project to ensure compatibility and optimum use.

Commissioner Howard stated that he will be supporting the motion and that this project moves the City in the right direction by providing housing. Commissioner Howard noted that he would be open to studying a 50-foot height limit if it could be achieved while respecting the adjacent heritage district.

Commissioner Harrison stated that she will be supporting the motion. Commissioner Harrison commented that the block to the north of the proposed project is limited to three stories and that it would be illogical to have a building height increase away from the central highest point.

Vice Chair Weiss stated that she will be supporting the motion, especially with the building height limitation. Vice Chair Weiss stated an opinion that a building height of five or six stories would severely impact the historic district, which is central to Downtown Sunnyvale.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Vice Chair Weiss
Commissioner Harrison
Commissioner Howard
Commissioner Howe
Commissioner Olevson
Commissioner Simons

No: 0

Recused: 1 - Chair Rheume

Planning Officer Miner advised that this item goes to the City Council on May 8, 2018.

STANDING ITEM: CONSIDERATION OF POTENTIAL STUDY ISSUES

Commissioner Simons and Commissioner Olevson discussed information regarding the need for commissioners to be issued City e-mail addresses as presented at the Planning Commissioners Academy.

Vice Chair Weiss asked staff about the possibility of a study issue to protect all properties zoned PF regardless of acreage. Planning Officer Miner stated that it would be an appropriate study issue. Senior Assistant City Attorney Moon advised that the City could not implement first rights of refusal but that eminent domain is a potential option. Planning Officer Miner advised that staff will present a write up at a future Planning Commission meeting.

NON-AGENDA ITEMS AND COMMENTS

-Commissioner Comments

Vice Chair Weiss noted her concerns that the Church of Christ of Sunnyvale is unable to sell their property to another religious denomination. Senior Assistant City Attorney Moon stated that a deed restriction for this purpose is likely invalid and that the church should seek their own legal counsel.

-Staff Comments

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Rheume adjourned the meeting at 9:52 PM.