



# City of Sunnyvale

## Meeting Minutes - Draft Planning Commission

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Monday, September 13, 2021

7:00 PM

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

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

### TELECONFERENCE NOTICE

#### **STUDY SESSION CANCELED**

#### **7 P.M. PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

Pursuant to Section 3 of Executive Order N-29-20 (March 17, 2020) and Section 42 of Executive Order N-08-21 (June 11, 2021), issued by Governor Newsom, the meeting was conducted telephonically.

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

#### **ROLL CALL**

**Present:** 6 - Chair Daniel Howard  
Vice Chair Martin Pyne  
Commissioner Sue Harrison  
Commissioner John Howe  
Commissioner Ken Rheaume  
Commissioner Carol Weiss

#### **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

None.

#### **CONSENT CALENDAR**

Vice Chair Pyne asked staff if the Meeting Minutes of August 23, 2021 may be revised so that the first sentence of the third paragraph on page 10 reads as follows: "Vice Chair Pyne asked Mr. Morley whether the same amount of parking spaces would have been built if not required by the code minimum."

Commissioner Harrison asked staff if the Meeting Minutes of August 23, 2021 may

be revised so that the duplicate motion and vote recorded for the Consent Calendar items are removed.

MOTION: Vice Chair Pyne moved and Commissioner Weiss seconded the motion to approve the Consent Calendar with the following revisions to the minutes:

1.) Note that the first sentence of the third paragraph on page 10 should read as follows: "Vice Chair Pyne asked Mr. Morley whether the same amount of parking spaces would have been built if not required by the code minimum."

2.) Remove the duplicate motion and vote recorded for the Consent Calendar items.

The motion carried by the following vote:

**Yes:** 5 - Chair Howard  
Vice Chair Pyne  
Commissioner Harrison  
Commissioner Rheume  
Commissioner Weiss

**No:** 0

**Abstained:** 1 - Commissioner Howe

- 1. [21-0885](#) Approve Planning Commission Meeting Minutes of August 23, 2021

**PUBLIC HEARINGS/GENERAL BUSINESS**

- 2. [21-0820](#) **Proposed Project:** General Plan Amendment Initiation: to consider a 100% Floor Area Ratio (FAR) combining district on 10 parcels in the M-S zoning district totaling 63 acres.  
**Location:** 974 East Arques Avenue (APNs: 205-36-006, 205-36-007, 205-36-008), 190 Commercial Street (APN: 205-35-001), 198 Commercial Street (APN: 205-35-002), 930 East California Street (APN: 205-35-003), 1050/1090 East Arques Avenue (APN: 205-37-009), 928/930 East Arques Avenue (APN: 205-35-017), and 955/965 East Arques Avenue (APNs: 205-25-018 and 205-25-019)  
**File #:** 2021-7282  
**Zoning:** M-S - Industrial and Service  
**General Plan:** Industrial  
**Applicant / Owner:** RMW Architecture & Interiors (applicant) / Applied Materials, Inc. (owner)  
**Environmental Review:** The project is exempt from the California

Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(a).

**Project Planner:** Momoko Ishijima, (408) 730-7532,  
mishijima@sunnyvale.ca.gov

Senior Planner Momoko Ishijima presented the staff report with a slide presentation. She noted a correction to the staff report so that the map on page five excludes two parcels on East California Avenue (214 Commercial Street and 989 E California Avenue) since they were not part of the applicants' proposed study area. Additionally, the text on page seven of the staff report indicates the inclusion of two parcels on Commercial Street that staff recommends should be included in the expanded study area.

Commissioner Weiss asked about the number of parcels that would be included in the Arques Campus Specific Plan. Assistant Director Andrew Miner stated that if City Council approves the General Plan Initiative as recommended, the applicant would be required to submit an application for a formal General Plan Amendment which would include 10 parcels.

Commissioner Weiss requested clarification on the following text found on page four of the staff report: "If the GPI is granted, future GPA and rezoning is approved for this project, and the City Council decides to grant the square footage from the Citywide Development Pool, the balance would be exhausted." Senior Planner Ishijima explained that while the current balance of the Citywide Development Pool is 1.2 million square feet, the requested square footage of the expanded study area parcels combined is 1.63 million square feet. Assistant Director Miner elaborated that the General Plan Amendment will serve as an amendment to the General Plan Initiative and increase the amount of square footage in the development reserve by what is being considered for this expanded study area. He then invited feedback from the Planning Commissioners regarding the expansion or minimization of the square footage balance in the Citywide Development Pool as this feedback will be presented to City Council and incorporated in the study.

Commissioner Howe inquired about whether there are any approved projects or ones that have been filed that will be prevented from accessing the square footage available in the Citywide Development Pool if this General Plan Initiative is approved. Assistant Director Miner confirmed that there are none.

Commissioner Howe probed about whether the application for this General Plan Initiative addressed the underground electrical power lines for scanning electron microscopes along Central Expressway. Assistant Director Miner stated that while it

did not, the Planning Commission may make a recommendation for this.

Vice Chair Pyne referenced the following text on page nine of the staff report: "All studies required for a General Plan Amendment or preparation of a specialized plan would be paid by the applicant." He asked if this would be applicable if the boundary was expanded to include the parcels that are not owned by the applicant. Assistant Director Miner confirmed that this would be applicable.

Chair Howard cited that in recent years, there were not enough staff or resources to move other General Plan Initiatives forward and questioned whether these constraints still exist. Assistant Director Miner confirmed that while they do, Applied Materials' involvement with the manufacturing of microchips deemed this General Plan Initiative an essential one to advance due to the microchip shortage that is currently prevalent.

Chair Howard and Assistant Director Miner discussed how select parcels were chosen to be included in the expanded study area.

Chair Howard opened the Public Hearing.

Joe Pon, Corporate Vice President of Applied Materials, and Stan Lew, President of RMW Architecture and Interiors, presented the project including additional images and information.

Commissioner Howe asked the applicants whether they are familiar with the electron microscopes along Central Expressway in non-Applied Materials uses. Mr. Pon stated that while he is not, the Applied Materials facility utilizes electron microscopes and Applied Materials remains sensitive to the concerns of surrounding neighbors.

There were no public speakers for this agenda item.

Chair Howard closed the Public Hearing.

Commissioner Harrison questioned why the property on which the Fry's building is situated was not included in the expanded study area.

Commissioner Harrison asked whether owners of the small parcels to the west of the expanded study area have anything to say about their property's placement

relative to the expanded study area. Assistant Director Miner stated that no outreach meetings are completed at this stage, so it is uncertain what input the owners of those parcels may have.

MOTION: Commissioner Howe moved and Commissioner Harrison seconded the motion to approve Alternative 2 - Initiate a General Plan Amendment study of a larger study area as an industrial intensification site in the General Plan to allow 100% FAR with the preparation of a Specific, Area, or Precise Plan (as shown in Attachment 7 to the report), with modifications.

The modifications are as follows:

1.) Revise the staff report so that the map on page five excludes two parcels on East California Avenue (214 Commercial Street and 989 E California Avenue) since they were not part of the applicants' proposed study area.

2.) Revise the staff report so that the text on page seven indicates that two parcels on Commercial Street are recommended by staff to be included in the expanded study area.

Commissioner Howe stated that he believes this General Plan Initiative is an excellent way of moving forward and noted that Applied Materials has contributed to the City's success. He unveiled his appreciation for the company's efforts and plan concepts, and he looks forward to working on the plan as it progresses.

Commissioner Harrison spoke in favor of the motion due, in part, to its ability to increase available industrial jobs within the City.

Commissioner Rheume voiced his support of the motion and echoed Commissioner Howe's comments. He recognized Applied Materials' role in the City's success and proposed more open space in the upcoming plans.

Chair Howard stated that he is in support of the motion and in agreement with comments made by his fellow Commissioners. He then acknowledged that improving the City's supply chain for semiconductor manufacturing is in the best interest of the City, the nation, and humanity. Lastly, he revealed his hope that the practices of the company will be addressed in the Environmental Impact Report that will follow.

The motion carried by the following vote:

**Yes: 6 -** Chair Howard  
Vice Chair Pyne  
Commissioner Harrison  
Commissioner Howe  
Commissioner Rheume  
Commissioner Weiss

**No: 0**

These recommendations will be forwarded to the City Council for consideration at the September 28, 2021 meeting.

3.        [21-0862](#)        **Proposed Project:**  
**DESIGN REVIEW** for a new two-story single-family residence with 4,257 square feet gross floor area (3,815 square feet living area and 442 square foot garage) and 43.6% Floor Area Ratio (FAR).  
**Location:** 575 Crawford Drive (APN: 201-34-010)  
**File #:** 2020-7579  
**Zoning:** R-0  
**Applicant / Owner:** Deng Design Studio (applicant) / Chaolin Chiang (owner)  
**Environmental Review:** A Class 3 Categorical Exemption relieves this project from the CEQA provisions.  
**Project Planner:** Aastha Vashist, (408) 730-7458, avashist@sunnyvale.ca.gov

Associate Planner Aastha Vashist presented the staff report with a slide presentation.

Commissioner Weiss inquired about the use of spandrel glass for the windows located on the second floor (as seen on page A-500.1 of Attachment 5). Associate Planner Vashist recommended that Commissioner Weiss verify this information with the applicant as it might be an error in the representation.

Commissioner Rheume requested further explanation on the staff recommendation for the proposed project's garage height. Associate Planner Vashist stated that while the applicants are proposing a nine-foot plate height for the garage and living areas, there will be a two-and-a-half-foot cavity space over the garage that is not required. Therefore, staff recommends that the overall garage height be brought down by two and a half feet. Commissioner Rheume noted that this would result in an imbalance that would offset the symmetry present in the proposed project's

design.

Commissioner Rheume asked whether the proposed project will have a designated area for garbage bins. Senior Planner Noren Caliva-Lepe stated that the City requires garbage bins to be screened, so most residents keep them behind a side yard gate.

Commissioner Harrison engaged in a discussion with Associate Planner Vashist and Senior Planner Caliva-Lepe about whether Planning Commission review would be required if an area of the house is converted to a Junior Accessory Dwelling Unit (JADU) and the square footage of the main house becomes less than 3,600 square feet.

Commissioner Harrison questioned how the extended porch may be accessed. Associate Planner Vashist and Senior Planner Caliva-Lepe confirmed that the canopy over the porch is what will be extended and that the proposed project includes standard Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) steps leading to the porch. When asked by Commissioner Harrison, Associate Planner Vashist confirmed that extending the porch canopy will minimize the appearance of the stone wall. Commissioner Harrison added that increasing the garage height may accomplish this goal as well, but Associate Planner Vashist reminded her that the proposed project is subject to the City's Single Family Home Design Techniques which recommends the reduction of the parking's visual prominence.

Chair Howard and Associate Planner Vashist deliberated upon the possibility of the area above the garage being converted to an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) or second floor deck at a later time. Associate Planner Vashist informed him that while the proposed project's design does not currently include plans for a second-floor deck or ADU, it does have the potential to include one in the future.

Chair Howard opened the Public Hearing.

Kevin Chiang, son of Chaolin and Janie Chiang (the homeowners at 575 Crawford Drive), presented the project including additional images and information.

Commissioner Harrison initiated a conversation about the proposed project's ceiling height. Kevin explained that while some modern homes have a ceiling height of up to twelve feet, a ceiling height of nine feet and an overall height of twenty-eight feet will maintain the modern look of the proposed project without exceeding the height

of neighboring homes.

Commissioner Harrison invited Kevin to share his thoughts on the garage height being lowered so that it sits below the porch canopy. Kevin responded that in the event this is done, he is open adding a three-foot decorative railing on the second floor to maintain the symmetrical balance of the proposed project's design.

Commissioner Harrison asked whether there are plans to convert the first-floor area of the proposed project, which contains a wet bar, into an ADU. Kevin and Mrs. Chiang stated that they have no current plans to convert the space to an ADU and confirmed that the wet bar takes up room since the master bedroom is large enough to accommodate one.

Commissioner Weiss asked whether the second-floor windows would use spandrel glass. Kevin responded that this glass would be in use to maintain the proposed project's exterior appearance while obstructing public view of its interior.

Commissioner Weiss confirmed with Kevin that the tall hedges to the right of the proposed project will be kept since they serve as both a natural barrier and privacy screen.

Commissioner Weiss quizzed Kevin about whether the property at the proposed project site is currently occupied. He, along with Mrs. Chiang, revealed that while the property is currently being rented, its renters have been made aware far in advance of plans for the proposed project.

Chair Howard commended Kevin for his presentation and noted the applicants' efforts to embed symmetry and other aesthetic qualities into the proposed project's design.

Vice Chair Pyne questioned the height measurement of the proposed project's garage door. The proposed project's architect, Jeremy Deng, confirmed that the garage height is eight feet which is the standard height for garage doors.

There were no public speakers for this agenda item.

Chair Howard closed the Public Hearing.

MOTION: Commissioner Rheaume moved and Commissioner Howe seconded the

motion to approve Alternative 2 - Approve the Design Review with modified conditions.

The modified Conditions of Approval are as follows:

- 1.) Remove Recommended Condition of Approval PS-1.a regarding the garage height.
- 2.) Remove Recommended Condition of Approval PS-1.b regarding the extension of the entry porch canopy.

Commissioner Rheaume spoke in favor of the motion and mentioned that he is fond of the proposed project's symmetry, vaulted roof lines, and windows that are in line with the vaulted ceilings. Overall, Commissioner Rheaume found the proposed project to have a quality design.

Commissioner Howe voiced his support of the motion.

Commissioner Harrison stated that she is in support of the motion and finds that maintaining the height of the garage door rather than lowering it is detrimental to the proposed project's overall architecture.

Commissioner Weiss confirmed that she will be approving the motion and she noted how the proposed project incorporates symmetry and balance, has a striking and thoughtful architecture, and will be quite an addition and improvement to the neighborhood. She also applauded the Chiang family's explanations and involvement with designing the proposed project.

Vice Chair Pyne assured that he will be voting in favor of the proposed project as it is a good addition to the neighborhood and will invite neighboring homes to look as nice. He also mentioned his strong appreciation for the symmetry of the proposed project's design as well as the thought that went into it.

Chair Howard clarified with other Planning Commissioners what the motion for this agenda item is and what the proposed modified conditions entail. Following this, he spoke in favor of the proposed project.

The motion carried by the following vote:

**Yes: 6 -** Chair Howard  
Vice Chair Pyne  
Commissioner Harrison  
Commissioner Howe  
Commissioner Rheaume  
Commissioner Weiss

**No: 0**

This decision is final unless appealed or called up for review by the City Council by 5:00 PM on Tuesday, September 28, 2021.

### **STANDING ITEM: CONSIDERATION OF POTENTIAL STUDY ISSUES**

#### **INFORMATION ONLY REPORTS/ITEMS**

4. [21-0886](#) Planning Commission Proposed Study Issues, Calendar Year: 2022  
(Information Only)

### **NON-AGENDA ITEMS AND COMMENTS**

#### **-Commissioner Comments**

Commissioner Weiss shared that on Saturday, September 11, 2021, Pat Castillo passed away. In addition to serving as a City Council member, Commissioner Weiss stated that Pat Castillo will be missed and remembered for her many contributions to the City, her beautiful garden, and the receptions she organized.

Vice Chair Pyne described his first day participating in the 2021 Annual American Planning Association (APA) Conference as a positive experience thus far as it has prompted ideas about potential study issues.

Commissioner Harrison's comments regarding the APA conference echoed that of Vice Chair Pyne's. In particular, she noted several sessions of interest to her that centered on migration from the Bay Area to surrounding areas as well as the income levels of those migrating.

Commissioner Howe recognized Pat Castillo as a City Council member, mayor, and President of the League of California Cities. He acknowledged that she will be missed by his family and the community. Lastly, Commissioner Howe spoke of his

appreciation of Dave Simons' efforts as a Planning Commissioner and revealed that he thinks highly of him.

Chair Howard seconded Commissioner Howe's comments.

**-Staff Comments**

Assistant Director Miner expressed shock and sadness at the news of Pat Castillo's passing. He regarded her as a wonderful person and loved working with her.

Assistant Director Miner informed the Commissioners that on September 8, 2021, the City Council considered and approved the True Life Project on Fremont Corners.

Assistant Director Miner announced that on September 14, 2021, the City Council will be considering the Lawrence Station Area Plan and the Intuitive Surgical Inc. project.

Assistant Director Miner revealed his plans for retirement in November 2021 and called attention to his positive relationship with the Planning Commissioners by thanking them for their work efforts and friendship. Commissioner Rheume congratulated Assistant Director Miner on his retirement. Commissioner Harrison articulated that she is both shocked and happy for Assistant Director Miner. Commissioner Weiss disclosed her hope that the City may find someone who is as proficient and talented as Assistant Director Miner and who has a similar sense of humor. Commissioner Howe advised that Assistant Director Miner will be greatly missed.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Howard adjourned the meeting at 8:40 PM.