

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE CITY OF SAN CLEMENTE
PLANNING COMMISSION
June 3, 2015 @ 6:00 p.m.
City Council Chambers
100 Avenida Presidio
San Clemente, CA**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Darden called the Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of San Clemente to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Eggleston led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Vonne Barnes, Barton Crandell, Wayne Eggleston, and Michael Smith; Chair pro tem Jim Ruehlin, Vice Chair Donald Brown, and Chair Julia Darden

Commissioners Absent: None

Staff Present: Jim Pechous, City Planner
John Ciampa, Associate Planner
Christopher Wright, Associate Planner
Jim Hare, Consultant Planner
Matthew Richardson, Assistant City Attorney
Eileen White, Recording Secretary

4. SPECIAL ORDERS OF BUSINESS - None

5. MINUTES

A. Minutes from the Planning Commission Adjourned Regular Meeting of May 12, 2015

IT WAS MOVED BY VICE CHAIR BROWN, SECONDED BY CHAIR PRO TEM RUEHLIN, AND CARRIED 6-0-1, WITH COMMISSIONER BARNES ABSTAINING, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE ADJOURNED REGULAR MEETING OF MAY 12, 2015, AS SUBMITTED BY STAFF.

B. Minutes from the Planning Commission Adjourned Regular Meeting of May 20, 2015

IT WAS MOVED BY CHAIR PRO TEM RUEHLIN, SECONDED BY VICE CHAIR BROWN, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE ADJOURNED REGULAR MEETING OF MAY 20, 2015, WITH THE FOLLOWING REVISION:

Page 6, add another bulleted item as follows: "Requested landscaping be installed in the barren strips on Avenida Victoria."

6. ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

Christy MacBride-Hart and Bill Hart, residents, displayed a view simulation of the new Avenida Pico Bridge as well as a life-sized mock-up of an individual pillar indicating how large they are in comparison to human scale. Ms. Hart suggested a simpler design for the caps and lowered columns would be more complementary to the City's existing style and ensure motorists see the ocean and beautiful town rather than a fancy bridge.

Jim Pechous, City Planner, announced that in response to City Council direction, this issue will be reviewed at the Design Review Subcommittee Meeting on June 10, 2015, and is expected to be on the Planning Commission meeting of June 17, 2015. Tom Bonigut, Assistant City Engineer, will provide information and potential designs for Commission consideration.

7. CONSENT CALENDAR - None

8. PUBLIC HEARING

A. 407 Avenida Santa Barbara – Cultural Heritage Permit 14-073/Lot Line Adjustment 15-156/Minor Exception Permit 15-157 – Santa Barbara Apartments (Ciampa)

Public Hearing to consider a request to demolish an existing house and construction of a three-unit residential building with a reduced garage setback, and a lot line adjustment within 300 feet of multiple designated historic structures. The project is located in the Residential High Density Zone and Coastal Zone Overlay (RH-CZ) at 407 Avenida Santa Barbara. Legal description is Lot 4, Block 6, of Tract 785, Assessor's Parcel Number 692-025-21.

John Ciampa, Associate Planner, narrated a PowerPoint Presentation entitled, "Santa Barbara Apartments, CHP 14-073, LLA 15-156, MEP 15-157, dated June 3, 2015." A copy of the PowerPoint Presentation is on file with the Planning Division.

Michael Luna, representing the applicant, described the proposed project; advised the project is consistent with all applicable standards and regulations; noted all landscaping is drought tolerant; agreed that it will be necessary for residents to be at home in order to open the garage door to allow their visitors to park.

Chair Darden opened the public hearing.

Robert Dyer, resident and adjacent historic home owner, supported the project; commented the lot line adjustment will solve existing access issues.

Harold Alzate, property owner, thanked staff for their efforts; commented that he and his family intends to live in one of the units.

There being no one else desiring to address the Commission, Chair Darden closed the public hearing.

During the ensuing discussion, the Commissioners, either individually or in agreement, provided the following commentary:

- Suggested the applicant be required to install a tree elsewhere in the City to make up for the loss in environmental and air quality benefits when the existing large tree on site is removed to make way for construction.
- Suggested the City consider thinking more about the environment in future planning.
- Requested the applicant work with staff on a plan for guest parking access.
- Commented the proposed project was sensitive to the historic home, featured beautiful architecture, and blended well with existing properties.
- Expressed support for the project without requiring an additional tree.

IT WAS MOVED BY CHAIR PRO TEM RUEHLIN, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER EGGLESTON, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. PC 15-024, A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF SAN CLEMENTE, CALIFORNIA, APPROVING CULTURAL HERITAGE PERMIT 14-073, AND MINOR EXCEPTION PERMIT 15-157, SANTA BARBARA APARTMENTS, A REQUEST TO ALLOW THE DEVELOPMENT OF A TRIPLEX WITH A REDUCED GARAGE SETBACK THAT IS ADJACENT TO TWO HISTORIC RESOURCES AND WITHIN 300 FEET OF MULTIPLE HISTORIC STRUCTURES LOCATED AT 407 AVENIDA SANTA BARBARA.

[DECISION FINAL. SUBJECT TO APPEAL OR CALL UP BY COUNCIL]

**B. Zoning Amendment 14-456 and General Plan Amendment 15-049
(Wright/Hare)**

Public Hearing to consider City-initiated amendments to the Centennial General Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

Chair Darden and Vice Chair Brown recused themselves from considering this agenda item, left the meeting room at 8:20 p.m., and did not return to the meeting. Chair Darden and Vice Chair Brown recused themselves because they own property within 500 feet of the Mixed Use 3.2 area, which is one of several areas that are part of the overall General Plan and Zoning Amendment in process. At this meeting, staff has requested a focused discussion on this area and related development standards.

Christopher Wright, Associate Planner, narrated a PowerPoint Presentation entitled, "General Plan and Zoning Amendments, Public Hearing Presentation, City of San Clemente Planning Commission, dated June 3, 2015." A copy of the PowerPoint Presentation is on file with the Planning Commission. Planner Wright explained that due to an unavoidable scheduling issue, staff recommended the Commission: 1) have a focused discussion on Mixed Use 3.2 area, where there continue to be questions regarding the development standards, and 2) continue discussion of the overall agenda item until the meeting on July 8, 2015, to complete environmental studies, mapping, and amendments.

Chair pro tem Ruehlin opened the public hearing.

Michael Luna, resident, commented that the primary focus of City Council during their discussion is to have the frontages along El Camino Real appear to be two-story buildings; suggested the Commission concur with the staff recommendation to allow architects designing the various buildings the ability to be creative with design; noted too strict regulations will render the lots infeasible to develop.

Nick Buchanan, resident, advised the rezoning of this area approved during the General Plan update provided incentive for him to develop there; suggested the staff recommendation will make the subject lots feasible to develop; commented on the lack of urban housing near the beach and downtown for young people to buy; noted requiring a large amount of retail for mixed use sites may lead to lower rents and less desirable tenants.

There being no one else desiring to address the Commission, Chair pro tem Ruehlin closed the public hearing.

During the ensuing discussion, the Commissioners, either individually or in agreement, provided the following commentary:

- Commented that City Council direction calls for projects to have a maximum of two stories facing S. El Camino Real side and projects to have a maximum height and mass that appears to be three stories above existing grade along the rear.
- Commented that building mass should step down the slope from El Camino Real to the alley as much as possible.
- Suggested that building mass and height should be setback where a basement ceiling must be above ground, so that buildings appear to be three stories, not three and one-half stories high.
- Suggested limiting heights would be more effective in controlling massing rather than limiting the number of stories, since it provides more design flexibility to provide articulation and break up building mass.
- Commented on the importance of making the area pedestrian friendly and human scaled.
- Suggested additional landscaping and setbacks will make the area more inviting to pedestrians, provide shade, and help the environment by absorbing greenhouse gasses and producing fresh oxygen.
- Suggested alternative standards such as reducing the number of dwellings allowed per acre; increased setbacks, reduced lot coverage, number of trees required based on square footage of lots; parking to City code standards, no interior garage access to discourage garages being used for storage.
- Suggested that requiring setbacks at this point would be downsizing from what is allowed now; noted it would not be fair to property owners to downsize at this point in time.
- Suggested additional restrictions would make the requirements more restrictive than on Avenida Del Mar, which is pedestrian oriented, with zero lot line setbacks, well established for its pedestrian friendly atmosphere, and beloved by residents.
- Expressed concern that not having a specific limit on the number of stories along the alley, could result in the appearance of more than three stories in the rear.
- Expressed concern that a story limit limits design options and can be confusing to implement with basement parking and split-levels on a downward slope, where flexibility may be desirable to make projects work and look good.
- Direct staff to look into ways to discourage residents from using their garages for storage.
- Suggested considering requiring developers to provide adequate storage for each residential unit.

- Suggested continuing this item to the June 17, 2015, regular meeting to allow the existing Planning Commission to provide recommendations on the topics discussed this evening.

Actions:

On a straw vote of 3-2-2 with Commissioner Eggleston and Commissioner Smith opposed, and Chair Darden and Vice Chair Brown abstaining, the Commission voted that the three-story height limit is appropriate.

On a straw vote of 5-0-2 with Chair Darden and Vice Chair Brown abstaining, the Commission voted to direct staff to reexamine height standards for development along the alley so building mass appears to be three stories above ground.

On a straw vote of 5-0-2, with Chair Darden and Vice Chair Brown abstaining, the Commission voted to require a certain percentage of required open area to be adjacent to public street frontage.

On a straw vote of 5-0-2, with Chair Darden and Vice Chair Brown abstaining, the Commission voted to support standard parking ratios for the Mixed Use 3.2 area, not less restrictive parking ratios applied to the downtown Pedestrian Overlay area.

On a straw vote of 5-0-2, with Chair Darden and Vice Chair Brown abstaining, the Commission voted to direct staff to look into requiring a minimum amount of storage space for each residential unit so it more likely that garages be used for parking, not as storage space.

IT WAS MOVED BY COMMISSIONER EGGLESTON, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BARNES, AND CARRIED 5-0-2, WITH CHAIR DARDEN AND VICE CHAIR BROWN ABSTAINING, TO CONTINUE ZONING AMENDMENT 14-456 AND GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT 15-049 TO THE REGULAR MEETING OF JUNE 17, 2015, WITH DIRECTION TO HAVE STRAW VOTES ON THE ISSUES DISCUSSED THIS EVENING.

[ITEM CONTINUED. PLANNING COMMISSION DECISION PENDING.]

9. NEW BUSINESS - None

10. OLD BUSINESS - None

11. REPORTS OF COMMISSIONERS/STAFF

A. Tentative Future Agenda

B. Minutes from the Zoning Administrator meeting of May 20, 2015

C. Staff Waiver 15-172, 515 Elena Lane

Chair pro tem Ruehlin reported that the Mobility Committee would conduct its first meeting for Phase II on Monday.

12. ADJOURNMENT

IT WAS MOVED BY COMMISSIONER CRANDELL, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER EGGLESTON, AND CARRIED 5-0-2, WITH CHAIR DARDEN AND VICE CHAIR BROWN ABSTAINING, to adjourn at 10:39 p.m. to an Adjourned Regular Meeting to be held at 6:00 p.m. on June 9, 2015 in Council Chambers at City Hall located at 100 Avenida Presidio, San Clemente, CA.

Respectfully submitted,



Julia Darden, Chair

Attest:



Jim Pechous, City Planner