

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
STUDY SESSION  
OF THE CITY OF SAN CLEMENTE  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
March 20, 2019 @ 6:00 p.m.  
City Council Chambers  
100 Avenida Presidio  
San Clemente, CA 92672**

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**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Crandell called the Regular Meeting of the Study Session of the Planning Commission of the City of San Clemente to order at 6:03 p.m. in City Council Chambers, located at 100 Avenida Presidio, San Clemente, CA 92672.

**ROLL CALL**

Commissioners Present: Chris Kuczynski, Zhen Wu; Chair pro tem Michael Blackwell, Vice Chair Jim Ruehlin, Chair Barton Crandell

Commissioners Absent: Donald Brown, Jason Talley

Staff Present: Gabriel J. Perez, City Planner  
Christopher Wright, Associate Planner II  
Eileen White, Recording Secretary

**AGENDA**

**A. Building Height Requirements for Development Projects (Perez/Wright)**

Gabriel J. Perez, City Planner, and Chris Wright, Associate Planner II, to provide an overview and discuss building height requirements of the San Clemente General Plan and Zoning Ordinance for development projects.

City Planner Perez and Associate Planner Wright narrated a PowerPoint Presentation entitled, "Building Height Requirement for Development Projects, Study Session," dated March 20, 2019. A copy of the Presentation is on file in Planning Division.

A majority of the Planning Commission opined that Zoning Ordinance height limitations to plateline are being interpreted correctly by staff and that the last sentence of San Clemente Municipal Code (SCMC) Zoning Ordinance Section 17.24.110.D.2.b.ii exempts building features roof deck elements as follows:

*“Features excluded from measurement under this definition shall include gable ends, sloping roofs, parapet walls and other vertical extensions which are normally controlled by limits on roof height as set forth in this section.”*

Staff has classified roof decks as vertical extensions that includes parapet walls and therefore exempt from the plateline height limit. Staff also referenced the purpose and intent of the height limit to plateline in the Zoning Ordinance is to encourage developments with full roofs. Commissioner Wu disagreed with the staff interpretation that the last sentence of Section 17.24.110.D.2.b.ii exempts gable ends, sloping roofs, parapet walls and vertical extensions from the plateline height limit.

The Commission discussed potential unintended consequences of parapet wall or roof decks exemptions from the plateline height limit, which without size limitations may result in a future building designs with monolithic roofs. Staff and Commissioners mentioned that there are several controls in place to prevent any design of monolithic roofs which include the Citywide design guidelines and the Purpose and Intent of Height Limitations in Zoning Ordinance Section 17.24.110 that call for the “development of full roofs” and “discourage excessively massive structures”. The City’s design guidelines encourages varied rooflines and allows for roof decks and flat roofs that are design “features”, not primary elements of a roofline.

The City Planner indicated, based on the Commission discussion that staff will continue to interpret the “plateline” definition to exclude roof decks from the plateline height limit. The Commission encouraged staff to modify the building height limitations of the Zoning Ordinance to further restrict roof features, such as parapet walls and a vertical extensions, from resulting in a monolithic roof appearance. The Commission suggested strategies included adding zoning language for further clarification of the plateline height limit, researching and potentially adopting the development code regulations used in the cities of Carlsbad and/or Encinitas, and consideration of exterior buildings walls for defining plateline height limits.

City Planner Perez and Associate Planner II Wright confirmed that they have adequate direction to move forward and that minutes will be forwarded to the City Council.

Report received and filed.

### **COMMISSION COMMENTS**

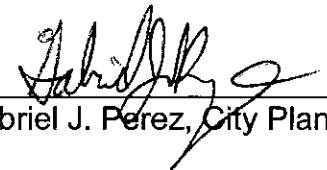
None

**RECESS** – The Commission recessed until the start of the Regular Session.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Barton Crandell, Chair

Attest:

  
Gabriel J. Perez, City Planner