

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LOS ALTOS, HELD ON THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2018 BEGINNING AT 7:00 P.M. AT LOS ALTOS CITY HALL, ONE NORTH SAN ANTONIO ROAD, LOS ALTOS, CALIFORNIA

ESTABLISH QUORUM

PRESENT: Chair Bressack, Vice Chair Samek, Commissioners Bodner, Enander, Lee, McTighe and Meadows

STAFF: Planning Services Manager Dahl and Senior Planner Golden

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

None.

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION/ACTION

CONSENT CALENDAR

1. Planning Commission Minutes

Approve the minutes of the September 6, 2018 Regular Meeting.

Action: Upon motion by Commissioner Enander, seconded by Commissioner McTighe, the Commission unanimously approved the minutes from the September 6, 2018 Regular Meeting as amended.

The motion was approved (7-0) by the following vote:

AYES: Bodner, Bressack, Enander, Lee, McTighe, Meadows and Samek

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

PUBLIC HEARING

2. 18-D-01, 18-UP-01 and 18-SD-01 – Mircea Voskerician – 4846 – 4856 El Camino Real

Design Review, Use Permit, and Subdivision applications for a new five-story, multiple-family, condominium building with 50 units and two levels of underground parking. The application includes a density bonus and development incentives to allow for increased building height and a reduced rear yard setback for the upper stories. *Project Planner: Dahl*

Planning Services Manager Dahl presented the staff report, recommending to the City Council approval of design review, use permit and subdivision applications 18-D-01, 18-UP-01 and 18-SD-01 per the recommended findings and conditions.

Project applicant Mircea Voskerician introduced the project and project architect Jeff Potts presented the project.

Public Comment

Abby Ahrens, resident and owner of Enchante Hotel, spoke in support of the project.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Enander stated for the record that she does not have a conflict of interest since she has not prejudged the project and will judge fairly and impartially.

Commissioner Enander noted that the 3D renderings and additional modeling information was useful; the Construction Management Plan should manage construction parking to minimize impacts to the nearby neighborhood; and that the excavation work should not impact the redwood trees.

Commissioner Meadows expressed support for the project; noted that the information provided was very thorough; the design has improved with good use of materials; good outreach to the neighbors; a 75 percent density bonus is high, but it does provide additional BMRs as well as numerous other amenities exceeding code requirements.

Vice-Chair Samek expressed support for the project, but noted design concerns with the exterior materials; improve window treatments and window rhythm on El Camino Real frontage; improve front entry appearance; consider alternative to concrete wall along the front.

Commissioner Bodner noted that the overall design has improved, but still has some concerns with mix of exterior materials; supported design of the rooftop deck; expressed concerned about the 75 percent density bonus, noting that the project should increase size and/or number of BMR units.

Commissioner McTighe expressed support for the design; but noted that the project still had a lot of stucco; should look into use of natural stone; make the bike racks more accessible; provide an additional two-bedroom/three-bedroom to the BMR mix.

Commissioner Lee expressed support for the overall project; but noted that significant exceptions were being requested; exterior materials could be improved; good use of color and interior skylight a nice design element.

Chair Bressack expressed support for the overall project, noted the high quality and thorough nature of the project plans; that the size of the one-bedroom BMRs should be increased; a lot of stucco used; nice color palette; consider addition of some natural stone; good amount of parking with two spaces per unit.

Commissioner Enander noted that 4880 El Camino Real set a precedent with a five-story building; concerned about setting a further precedent, but understands the need for housing; should clarify the reasons why this project is allowed to go beyond 35 density bonus.

Action: Upon motion by Commissioner Meadows, seconded by Vice-Chair Samek, the Commission recommended approval of use permit and subdivision applications 18-UP-01 and 18-SD-01 to the City Council.

The motion was approved (6-1) by the following vote:

AYES: Bressack, Enander, Lee, McTighe, Meadows and Samek

NOES: Bodner (concerned about too great of a density bonus being given and the overall design)

ABSENT: None

Action: Upon motion by Commissioner Meadows, seconded by Commissioner McTighe, the Commission recommended approval of commercial design application 18-D-01 to the City Council, per the listed findings and conditions, with the following additional recommendations:

- The exterior design should be updated to address the Planning Commission's concerns and come back to the Commission for final approval prior to submittal of a building permit.

- Consider increasing the size and/or bedrooms in the BMR units and modifying income levels to best meet the City's needs of for-sale BMR units;
- Add a finding that notes additional project amenities, such as parking ratio, significant amount of open space, bike parking, and larger side yard setback, contributed to approval of the 75% density bonus; and
- The Construction Management Plan should outline how construction parking impacts on the nearby neighborhood will be minimized.

The motion was approved (6-1) by the following vote:

AYES: Bressack, Enander, Lee, McTighe, Meadows and Samek

NOES: Bodner (concerned about the density and overall design)

ABSENT: None

The Commission took a five-minute break at 9:15 PM before the start of agenda item #3.

STUDY SESSION

3. **18-CA-03 – Paul Lovoi – Amendment to R3-4.5 Multiple-Family District**

A Planning Commission Study Session to consider potential amendments to the R3-4.5 Multiple-Family District (Zoning Code Chapter 14.16) to establish lot coverage, floor area ratio, setbacks, off-street parking, height of structures, daylight plane and other appropriate site standards. The R3-4.5 District includes all properties along Stevens Place and Marshall Court.

Project Planner: Golden

Senior Planner Golden presented the staff report, providing an overview and background to the R3-4.5 District.

Project applicant Paul Lovoi presented the request, noting that he wants clarity on the site standards for the district.

Public Comment

Resident Teri Wiss who lives adjacent to the R3-4.5 District, noted that any new standards should consider R1 adjacencies, should not increase the density, and that there should be adequate community outreach prior to adoption of new standards.

Resident Michelle Machado expressed concern about prescriptive easements and noted that nonconforming structures should be addressed.

Resident Conni Ahart noted that the units are old, small, and could be designed more efficiently by allowing changes to the footprint; need to establish standards to allow for improvements to the neighborhood.

Resident Nitin Panjwani expressed support for establishing site standards, supported ability to convert to a single-family use and would support allowing second stories.

Resident Ed North expressed concerns about potential privacy impacts if second story additions are allowed.

Resident Randall Mitchell expressed opposition to allowing second stories or increasing the density; concerned about the current lack of parking.

Resident Karen Chin expressed support for site standards that would allow for additions and remodels, but should be one-story only

Resident Eric Defriez noted that the density should not be increased, is concerned about two-stories being allowed, tenants and owners should be engaged, and that traffic is a concern along Homestead.

Resident Caroline Zimmer expressed concern about two-story additions and that there needs to be more outreach and education about the proposed zoning amendments.

Commission Discussion

The Commission expressed general support for establishing development standards for the R3-4.5 District,

Commissioner Bressack noted that the new standards should avoid creating non-conforming structures.

Commissioner Enander noted that the process should include additional neighborhood outreach.

Commissioner Meadows noted that the standards should consider limiting the district to one-story.

Commissioner McTighe noted that the density should not be increased.

The Commission was in general agreement with regards to the questions posed by staff as follows:

- Examine the topographical differences between the neighborhoods;
- Explore single story restrictions because of the flag lots;
- Maintain the density of the neighborhood;
- Explore second story privacy impacts; and
- The proposed development standards should create the least amount of non-conforming situations.

DISCUSSION

4. Story-Poles

Discuss the City's Story-Pole policy.

Commissioner Enander noted that modified story poles for 4856 El Camino Real are still good.

Commissioner McTighe noted that story poles on sites with tenants are a safety risk.

Chair Bressack noted that there are issues with safety, the use of the site, and the cost of erecting the story poles.

Commissioner Bodner noted that story poles should be installed for only 60 days, regardless of the review time of the project, to minimize long term visual impacts.

The Commission noted that the intent of the discussion was to prepare for its joint meeting with the City Council and further discuss the topic with them.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS AND COMMENTS

Commissioner Meadows reported on the September 11, 2018 City Council meeting.

POTENTIAL FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Bressack adjourned the meeting at 10:36 P.M.

Zachary Dahl, AICP
Planning Services Manager