

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LOS ALTOS, HELD ON THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2019 BEGINNING AT 7:00 P.M. AT LOS ALTOS CITY HALL, ONE NORTH SAN ANTONIO ROAD, LOS ALTOS, CALIFORNIA**

**ESTABLISH QUORUM**

PRESENT: Vice-Chair Lee Commissioners Ahi, Bodner, Bressack and Marek  
ABSENT: Chair Samek and Commissioner Meadows  
STAFF: Community Development Director Biggs and Assistant City Attorney Kara Ueda

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

None.

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

**1. Planning Commission Minutes**

Approve minutes of the regular meeting of November 7, 2019.

Action: Upon motion by Commissioner Bressack, seconded by Commissioner Ahi, the Commission approved the minutes from the November 7, 2019 Regular Meeting as amended by Commissioner Bodner.

The motion was approved (5-0) by the following vote:

AYES: Lee, Ahi, Bodner, Bressack and Marek

NOES: None

ABSENT: Samek and Meadows

**SPECIAL ITEM**

**2. Commission Reorganization**

Election of Chair and Vice Chair

This item has been continued to the next Planning Commission meeting.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**3. CUP19-0003 and VCMF19-0002 – Melissa Bryant-Neal, Los Altos Veterinary Clinic – 1150 Riverside Drive: Conditional use permit and variance to allow an animal clinic in the Commercial Neighborhood to be located adjacent to an R1 District where a 50-foot minimum separation is required. *Project Planner: Niday***

Assistant Planner Niday presented the staff report recommending approval of Conditional Use Permit and Variance applications CUP19-0003 and VCMF19-0002 subject to the suggested findings and recommended conditions.

Veterinarians Dr. Echerd, Dr. Melissa Bryant-Neal and resident Abby Ahrens presented the project.

Public Comment

Resident Don Durr gave his support for the project.

Resident Nancy Ellickson gave her support for the project.

Resident Karina Nilsen gave her support for the project and said this is the perfect location.

Action: Upon motion by Commissioner Bressack, seconded by Commissioner Ahi, the Commission approved Conditional Use Permit and Variance applications CUP19-0003 and VCMF19-0002 subject to the suggested findings and recommended conditions.

The motion was approved (5-0) by the following vote:

AYES: Lee, Ahi, Bodner, Bressack and Marek

NOES: None

ABSENT: Samek and Meadows

**4. 19-UP-02 – Los Altos Chinese School – 461 Orange Avenue**

Use Permit for a new Chinese immersion program and after-school program to use existing classrooms at the Foothills Congregational Church. The programs would include up to 90 students and operate between 8:30am to 6:00pm, Monday to Friday. *Project Planner: Gallegos*

Community Development Director Biggs presented the staff report recommending approval to the City Council of Use Permit 19-UP-02 subject to the listed findings and conditions contained in the resolution.

John Miller representing Foothills Congregational Church presented the project stating that if a school, Lincoln Park might be utilized for outdoor space.

Project Circulation Engineer Keith Higgins gave an overview of the Circulation Study and that he came to the same conclusion as Jamie Rodriguez.

Public Comment

Resident David Hurd gave his support for the project and said last year the church policy was no driving on Orange Avenue.

Resident Lei Huang gave his support for the project.

Resident Charlie Golden stated his support for the well-designed program that is meeting a need in the community.

Resident David Nudell stated concerns over safety and traffic.

Resident Harry Guy stated that this was not an appropriate location for a school; the project was not looked at by the Complete Streets Commission; and 224 trips feels like a large impact.

Resident Grant Bowen stated concerns with traffic and notices a lot of speeding on the neighboring streets.

Resident Iris Roth stated concerns with safety and traffic; mentioned the current location at Los Altos Lutheran Church; the details related to the proposed school are unclear; 600 students by 2020; and the traffic study between 4-6 p.m. with a 244-vehicle impact.

Resident Dana Tasic expressed concerns over traffic.

Resident Mark Homan stated he lives directly across the street and asked the recommend denial of the use permit since church goers flood the neighborhood.

Resident Tim Fitzgibben stated he is a member of Foothills Congregational Church and his children attend this school.

Resident Jill Curcio asked for denial of the use permit and to consider old Los Altos at large.

Resident Stacey Walter said a school is not appropriate; noted the school operated without the use permit and saw the activity in violation of the use permit; has parking concerns; and said no outdoor play seems infeasible.

Resident John Curcio stated his opposition for his family's quality of life; said the school will have a negative impact and others will profit at the City's expense; the site is inappropriate for 90 students; and the buildings do not meet standards for schools.

Resident Dan Arra stated traffic concerns; noting traffic has increased over the years; and a car regularly gets hit on the street.

Resident Janet Corrigan stated a lack of notice and transparency; trusts that an added 216 vehicle trips will impact University and Orange Avenues; said she was almost hit by a vehicle in the area; and asked why the applicant can't find another school to locate in.

Resident Braden Beck stated he found out about the meeting a few days ago and said he has a petition in opposition to the school because it will impact the area from 4:30-6:30 p.m. five days a week.

#### Commission Discussion

Commissioner Ahi

- Trying to maximize an underutilized space;
- Noted traffic report inconsistencies; and
- Should clearly demonstrate an accurate vehicle count appropriate for drop-off/pick-up.

Commissioner Bodner:

- Lack of space in the City of Los Altos for schools like this with no affordable space available to help serve a public need/service;
- Should use underutilized spaces – that's how community space is made affordable by design;
- This has been done before and remembers many examples;
- Doesn't see why this neighborhood can't accommodate this use;
- Neighbor concerns become very alarmist;
- Underutilized spaces can accommodate more;
- Gave her support for the use permit;
- Understands the traffic and said parking issues can be managed; and
- Neighbors are affected but not detrimentally impacted and the impact is actually quite minimal.

Commissioner Bressack:

- Traffic an issue in the City of Los Altos;
- Child care is a hidden issue in town that needs lots of good quality childcare that is readily available;
- The Building Official will address code compliance of the building;
- Lots of trips in the mornings for drop-off and pick-ups, could be a bit more staggered;
- The sound of kids playing is a joyous sound;
- Using underutilized space is a good thing; and

- You pay for child care and it's okay to have a for profit program in some underutilized spaces in the City.

Commissioner Marek:

- Traffic issues have been relayed; and
- This is not a school problem, but a circulation issue.

Vice-Chair Lee:

- Gave his support for the use permit; and
- The traffic report is a technical report.

Action: Upon motion by Commissioner Bressack, seconded by Commissioner Bodner, the Commission recommended to the City Council approval of Use Permit 19-UP-02 subject to the listed findings and conditions contained in the resolution and the following recommended conditions:

- Provide an annual compliance report submitted to the Community Development Department;
- Develop a traffic management plan that addresses drop-off/pick-up and a carpool van;
- Use appropriate signage, staffing and monitoring that shall be outlined in the traffic management plan;
- Acknowledgement or check in by those taking students to or from site with drop-off/pick-up locations limited to Lincoln Avenue and applicant discouraging the use of Orange Avenue;
- Complete Streets Commission to review use permit prior to consideration by the City Council;
- Develop a plan for outdoor activities; and
- Any student population increase beyond approved enrollment number requires a use permit amendment.

The motion was approved (5-0) by the following vote:

AYES: Lee, Ahi, Bodner, Bressack and Marek

NOES: None

ABSENT: Samek and Meadows

## **COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS AND COMMENTS**

Community Development Director Biggs reported on the November 12, 2019 City Council meeting and November 19, 2019 Special City Council meeting.

## **POTENTIAL FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Staff provided an overview of upcoming projects on the Commissioner's meeting agendas.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Vice-Chair Lee adjourned the meeting at 9:08 P.M.

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Jon Biggs  
Community Development Director