



City of Santa Barbara

PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES

JULY 21, 2022

1:00 P.M.
City Hall, Council Chambers
735 Anacapa Street; and
1026 Via Los Padres
Santa Barbara 93111

COMMISSION MEMBERS:

Gabriel Escobedo, Chair
Roxana Bonderson, Vice Chair
John M. Baucke
Jay D. Higgins
Sheila Lodge
Devon Wardlow
Lesley Wiscomb

STAFF:

Tava Ostrenger, Assistant City Attorney
Allison DeBusk, Senior Planner
Gillian Fennessy, Commission Secretary

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Escobedo called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m.

I. ROLL CALL

Chair Gabriel Escobedo, Vice Chair Roxana Bonderson, Commissioners John M. Baucke, Sheila Lodge, and Lesley Wiscomb

Absent: Jay D. Higgins and Devon Wardlow

STAFF PRESENT

Tava Ostrenger, Assistant City Attorney
Allison DeBusk, Senior Planner
Julia Pujo, Project Planner
Tony Ruggieri, City TV Production Supervisor
Janet Ahern, City TV Production Specialist
Gillian Fennessy, Commission Secretary

II. PRELIMINARY MATTERS

A. Requests for continuances, withdrawals, postponements, or addition of ex-agenda items:

No requests.

B. Announcements and appeals:

No announcements.

C. Comments from members of the public pertaining to items not on this agenda:

Public comment opened at 1:02 p.m., and as no one wished to speak, it closed.

III. **CONCEPT REVIEW**

ACTUAL TIME: 1:02 P.M.

222 EAST CANON PERDIDO

Assessor's Parcel Number: 031-012-025
Zoning Designation: C-G (Commercial General)
Application Number: PRE2022-00028
Applicant: Trish Allen, SEPPS, INC.
Owner: Jeremy Bassan, 222 E Canon Perdido Street LLC

The 27,142 square-foot site is currently developed with a three-story 12,970-square-foot commercial office building and 43 surface parking spaces. The proposed project involves construction of a new three-story residential building with a roof deck, comprised of 27 units developed under the City's Average Unit-Size Density Incentive (AUD) Program. The residential unit mix would include 15 1-bedroom units and 12 studio units, with an average size of 577 square feet. The proposed density on the 27,142 square-foot lot would be 44 dwelling units per acre. A total of 25 parking spaces would be provided, 19 of which are located in a garage structure with a puzzle lift parking system, and six surface spaces, including two van accessible/EV stalls. The project includes a new trash/recycling structure, grading, site walls, and hardscape and landscape improvements. No changes are proposed to the existing commercial office building.

The purpose of the hearing is for the Planning Commission to review the proposed design and provide the applicant, staff, and the Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) with comments regarding the design, overall improvements, and consistency with the City's General Plan (SBMC §30.150.060.E).

The project is being presented to the Planning Commission for AUD concept review and comments only; no decisions will be made at this meeting. The HLC would be the formal decision-maker for the project.

Allison DeBusk, Senior Planner gave the Staff presentation. Pilar Plummer, Associate Planner and Michelle Bedard, Associate Transportation Planner were available remotely to answer questions.

Christine Pierron, Architect gave the Applicant presentation and was joined by Trish Allen, SEPPS, INC and Jeremy Bassan, Owner.

Public comment opened at 1:30 p.m., and the following individuals spoke:

1. Dr. Anne Peterson
2. Jordan Thomas

Public comment closed at 1:34 p.m.

Written correspondence from Paulina Conn, Karolina Aizenstat, Rita Mounir, Sullivan Israel, Elliott MacGougall, Joe Ferreira, Casey Gutierrez, Hayden & Sarah Gower, Anne Peterson, Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation; Jesse Aizenstat, Noah Dentzel, Mike Sheffey, Alex Suhadolnik, Maya Zayne Dentzel, Christ Anderson was acknowledged.

Commissioner comments:

Commissioner Baucke:

- Frustrating to lose seven units of housing that the community needs with the removal of the fourth story.
- The site has a central location and a high walk score.
- Supports the use of the puzzle lift.
- Agrees with Commissioner Wiscomb's comments about the consideration of electric bikes, local preference, and conservation easement because it all meets the needs of the site.
- This is a location where the fourth story wouldn't be as tall visually because of the 7- or 8-foot elevation change on the street.
- Believes that the City has a lot of alley easements that are lost track of and we should create an inventory.
- This alley easement is an example of other alleys and other historic holdings that the city has that could be used better.
- Strong advocate of unbundling the parking.
- Commercial spaces that are available at night and weekends should be available.
- The City should consider a program that if parking is not required, then parking is available in city lots through shared parking arrangements.
- Believes that the four-story 34-unit project would have been a better benefit for the community.

Commissioner Wiscomb:

- Echoes some of the comments made by Commissioner Baucke.
- Suspects that the Historic Landmarks Commission wanted the height reduction because of the elevation of this particular site as it is towards the top of Canon Perdido Street.
- Would like to see the project move forward.
- Shame that the Planning Commission hasn't become the decision maker yet on AUD projects.
- Supports the addition of the smaller studio units and that some of them have a private outdoor space.
- Appreciates that the project has gone from a condominium project to a rental project.
- The project fits into the Laguna neighborhood.
- Encourages the City to approve an encroachment permit so that when the property is developed, that alley can be an informal part of the project and be done at the same time.
- Appreciates the conversations on the donation of the land or conservation easement to Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation. Believes that it needs to continue and come to positive conclusion for both parties.
- Accommodating electric bikes is essential; address them in the bike room.
- This is a project that is marketed without parking and believes that we need to take that for a spin and see where it lands in terms of rents because rents will be lower without parking.

- Unfortunate that there is a whole City approval process required to turn those commercial parking spaces into residential spaces at night.
- Believes that there are plenty of parking spaces available in the City parking lots and Downtown Parking would welcome increased revenue from the parking program.
- Believes that there is a marketing effort there for the owner of the property that needs to be considered.
- The local preference is really important and would like to see that implemented because we want people who work and have jobs here to live here.
- Hopes that the team will develop an appropriate landscape plan for the project that includes the alley way and that the trees be replaced on a 1 to 1 basis.
- Thanks the applicants.
- Believes that this is an exciting project.

Commissioner Lodge:

- The HLC's job is to protect historic resources and one of the findings they have to make is that the size, bulk, and scale is compatible with the area that it is in.
- It is not great to lose seven units, but we are gaining rental units that are needed in the community.
- The project is located downtown and is an appropriate infill site.
- Glad to hear that discussions are going well with the Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation and hopes to see an agreement that suits both property owners.
- Hopes the applicant can gain control of the former alley way to benefit the office workers and residents.

Commissioner Bonderson:

- Agrees with both Baucke's parking and height comments as well as Commissioner Wiscomb's comments.
- Disappointed that we had an opportunity to have more housing and to lose an entire story is unfortunate.
- Encourages the applicant team to consider returning with a fourth story.
- Concerned with current parking; while no vehicle parking is required for the residential component, would like to see some residential parking even if shared or otherwise.
- By taking away all parking, we limit a lot of people who may love to live downtown and could manage short distances, but need a car for a number of reasons including handicapped or being disabled in a temporary fashion.
- Recommends that the applicant create a loading and unloading area for tenants.
- Would like applicants to make the non-car situation more creative and comfortable for tenants who might need extra support.
- Commends the applicant team for the thoughtfulness toward the historical aspects with the site.
- Advocates for the City's Presidio and found it interesting how the applicant team thought through different ideas on allowing the wall to be visited.
- Hopes to see more projects like this come in for concept review.
- Thanks the applicant and is looking forward to seeing this project.

Chair Escobedo:

- Believes this is a great project and site.
- It is a deep lot and most of the development is happening internal to the lot which is good.

- The site is close to public transit, bikeable, walkable, and near many other amenities.
- Believes that if there were a place for no residential parking, it would be located here.
- Whether the applicant provides shared parking or not, believes that it is a great opportunity.
- Supports the idea of the applicant working with the Trust to donate a portion of the property or figure out something that works out for both parties.
- Supports providing a local preference.
- Supports providing charging for E-bikes.
- Agrees with Commissioner Lodge's comments about the alley way and would like to use it for open space for residents or occupants of the commercial space.
- Echoes Commissioner Baucke's frustration about losing seven units with the removal of the fourth story
- For infill properties and projects where there are limited areas of opportunity to develop housing and when the project meets the zoning code and height requirements, he doesn't think that we should be providing feedback that reduces the number of units in a project.
- Worries about the fact that mass, bulk, and scale concerns may have the effect of reducing the number of units in a project.
- Looks forward to the change in decision makers from Design Review Boards to Planning Commission.
- Encourages the applicant, if possible, to reinstate the fourth story and reincorporate the seven units.
- Believes that we need to figure out the question of mass, bulk, and scale and how it relates to the reduction of units and how we can provide more guidance for the Design Review Boards.
- Between now and whenever the Planning Commission is the decision maker, we need better guidance for the Design Review Boards.
- Whether it is the proposed project or if there are some alterations, it will be a welcome addition to the community.

MOTION: Wiscomb / Lodge

The proposed design and improvements of the project, although the Planning Commission differs in some small regard, are generally considered acceptable and exciting as infill and the project is consistent with City's General Plan Goals. The individual comments made by the Planning Commissioners will be included in the forwarded minutes to the Historic Landmarks Commission.

This motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: 5 Noes: 0 Abstain: 0 Absent: 2 (Higgins and Wardlow)

IV. TRAINING ITEM

ACTUAL TIME: 2:26 P.M.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) OVERVIEW

Staff will provide a presentation on the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and environmental review process for development applications within the City. The presentation will include a general overview of CEQA and state requirements, the purpose and intent of CEQA, and different types of CEQA review and exemptions.

Julia Pujo, Project Planner, gave the Staff presentation.

Public comment opened at 2:52 p.m., and as no one wished to speak, it closed.

Training held.

V. ADMINISTRATIVE AGENDA

ACTUAL TIME: 3:03 P.M.

A. Committee and Liaison Reports:

1. Staff Hearing Officer Liaison Report

No report.

2. Other Committee and Liaison Reports

a. Commissioner Bonderson reported on the May 31, 2022 and June 13, 2022 meetings of Architectural Board of Review.

b. Commissioner Lodge reported on the June 8, 2022 meeting of Historic Landmarks Commission.

c. Commissioner Escobedo reported on the July 14, 2022 meeting of Downtown Parking Committee.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Escobedo adjourned the meeting at 3:18 p.m.

Submitted by,



Gillian Fennessy, Commission Secretary