



**SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
154 SOUTH EIGHTH STREET
GROVER BEACH, CALIFORNIA
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2007
6:30 P.M.**

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in a City meeting, please contact the City Clerk's Office (473-4568) at least 48 hours prior to the meeting to ensure that reasonable arrangements can be made to provide accessibility to the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER: 6:30 p.m.

FLAG SALUTE: Commissioner Blum

PRESENT: Commissioners: Blum, Long, Nielsen, Vice Chair Snow, and Chair Peterson.
Absent: Commissioners Coleman and Marshall

PUBLIC COMMENTS: *At this point of the meeting, members of the public may bring up any items within the jurisdiction of the Planning Commission that are not on the agenda. Please limit your comments to three (3) minutes. The Planning Commission will listen to all comments; however, in compliance with the Brown Act, the Commission cannot act on items not on the agenda.*

There was no one present who wished to comment.

Chair Peterson suggested changing the order of items to handle Item Two first, due to correspondence that had been received regarding that item.

PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS:

1) Development Permit Application No. 07-024

Applicant – Alex deLeon

This Application is a request for approval of Site and Architectural Plans to allow the construction of a two-story split level single family residence. The subject property is located at 465 Park View (Assessor Parcel No. 060-526-007) and is zoned Single Family Residential (R-1). The project planner is Lorie Ingan.

Planner Janet Reese presented the staff report. She stated that the subject property is a vacant, undeveloped lot and it is surrounded by single-family residential development. There is an existing retaining wall. The proposed two-story single-family residence has been designed to incorporate and utilize the existing retaining wall, which will be certified by a structural engineer during the building permit phase. The first floor of the proposed residence has a bathroom, living room, dining room and kitchen, in addition to a two-car garage. The second floor has a master suite, laundry room, two bedrooms a bathroom, loft area and deck. There is an underground drainage system proposed as part of the project. Fire sprinklers will be installed, and curb, gutter and sidewalk improvements will replace existing asphalt berm, per city requirements.

Since the project site is located north of Grand Avenue, in the R-1 zone, and the applicant is proposing to construct a two-story residence with a height of 24.7 feet, a view impact analysis was required. Story poles were erected on the site, and the pole placement was verified by a licensed surveyor. Staff believes that while some views may be impacted, the proposed dwelling will not needlessly or substantially affect adjacent properties. Additionally, the existing neighborhood is

developed with other two-story structures and there are numerous trees. The proposed project is consistent with the surrounding neighborhood.

Staff received one response from the public regarding the project, from the resident from 560 Oceanview. Photos were given to staff that were taken from the rear property line of that residence. The pictures and renderings are not drawn to scale, however, they depict that the proposed project may impact some ocean views from the rear yard of the property. It is staff's opinion that the project is as sensitively designed as possible to accommodate the surrounding areas and that there is no needless alteration of views.

Planning Commission review of site and architectural plans is to ensure compliance with current Grover Beach municipal code requirements, assess neighborhood compatibility and determine whether or not the proposed project will have a detrimental effect on the existing residences or neighborhood. The Planning Commission must also make a finding that the proposed development is consistent with the General Plan. Staff believes that the finding of consistency with the General Plan can be made.

Staff is recommending that the Planning Commission approve the project, subject to the recommended conditions of approval.

Commissioner Long asked for clarification about the maximum allowable height. Planner Reese stated that if a building is below 15 feet from the highest point of grade and 25 feet from the lowest point of grade, then it does not come to Planning Commission. If the height is above those amounts, then it requires architectural approval from the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Blum stated that he liked the design of the drainage system, but thinks that they should explore pervious paving as well.

Commissioner Nielsen asked about the letter that was submitted. She stated that they only submitted the two photos that were distributed, along with text written on the back of the photo. Commissioner Nielsen stated that since the residence it refers to is located more than a block away, he didn't know how their view would be impacted.

Commissioner Nielsen asked if the utilities would be underground. Planner Reese stated that what is required for single family units is that if there is a utility pole located on the property, then they underground their service from their house to the pole, but the main lines themselves are not undergrounded.

Commissioner Nielsen stated that the site plan does not show ADA-compliant sidewalks. Planner Reese stated that usually Public Works is satisfied with a note on the plans indicating that the sidewalks will comply with ADA standards. Commissioner Nielsen expressed concern that if it isn't on the plans, then it may not happen. Planner Reese stated that on the construction drawings, the sidewalks will be drawn correctly.

Chair Peterson stated that on the exterior elevations, it appears that the buildings are more than 25 feet high. Planner Reese stated that the height for buildings are calculated from the average of the high and low points. She stated that part of their grade is higher than the other side.

Chair Peterson stated that they might be able to address some concerns regarding the view impacts if they switched the plans to put the higher part of the building on the lowest part of the lot. She asked if that is something that could be accomplished.

Planner Reese stated that there would be no street access to the garage if it was moved to the higher point of the lot. She believed that they had discussed it, and it didn't seem like it would be possible, but that they can address the question to the applicant.

Chair Peterson asked the applicant to come forward.

Alex deLeon, owner/builder/designer for the project, stated that he also owned the adjacent parcel which is being remodeled. He stated that a member of his family may live in the house, upon completion and his father lives in the adjacent home. He stated that in order to put the garage on the higher end of the lot, they would have to somehow ramp up from the street to access. The site plan was designed to work with the existing terrain and existing grades to keep grading at a minimum. Since the site had been used before with the existing street access, it was logical to start from that point. He stated that they would be removing a portion of the retaining wall, and some of it would be replaced by an engineered wall. He stated that in order to minimize the impact of the concrete surfaces, he is planning to stain part of it for color contrast.

The landscaping will incorporate some existing trees, and will have boulders and plants clustered at focal points.

He described some features from the deck and entry way that tie in together. Addressing the photos that were submitted by the neighbor, he stated that new construction of two-story houses in that area will impact views. If someone near him put on a second story, it would impact his view, but that is the way it goes when everyone is trying for the same thing.

Commissioner Nielsen stated that he doesn't think there is anything of a similar style in that neighborhood. Mr. deLeon stated that most of the homes in the area were built in the fifties and sixties. Commissioner Nielsen stated that he doesn't think there was anything with a flat roof in the area. Mr. deLeon stated that there is a home one block away that has a roof deck, that makes an effectively "flat" roof. Commissioner Nielsen expressed concern about setting a precedent for the neighborhood, if that becomes what everybody has to match. He stated that he likes the building and the style, but doesn't know if it fits in the neighborhood. Mr. deLeon stated that hoped that they would judge each project on its own merits.

Commissioner Blum stated that he likes the project and likes that they put the roof deck on the low side of the building. He stated that he has seen other homes near there that have a similar style to what is being proposed. He asked if they had considered incorporating any pervious paving. Mr. deLeon stated that they did not consider that. Part of the reason was economics, and also that he had a couple of bad experiences using pervious paving. He also stated that there is sometimes conflict if the soil is too compacted beneath the pavers.

Commissioner Long stated that it is a nice project that would look nice with the neighborhood. He asked if the adjacent property had recently been split. Mr. deLeon stated that they had always been two separate parcels, but had to be sold together, since the porch of the home on one parcel crossed over the property line. That porch has since been removed.

Commissioner Long also encouraged them to consider the use of pervious paving.

Chair Peterson stated that she also wanted to address the issue of the paving, since the Planning Commission has moved in that direction. She also asked if the applicant used any particular "green build" techniques in the design.

Mr. deLeon stated that some of those things can be prohibitively expensive to incorporate.

Chair Peterson asked about the ADA compliance of the sidewalks. Mr. deLeon stated that the plans that are before the Planning Commission have been approved by the Engineering Department. They intend to do whatever the City requires.

Mr. deLeon stated that the ADA ramps take up a lot of space. He asked if the “wings” of the ADA sidewalk are allowed to encroach on the property and on the neighbor’s property.

Chair Peterson asked for public comment.

Liz Doukas, Grover Beach resident, stated that this building is a “McMansion” for this area. She stated that it is almost a 3,000 sq. ft. home, and doesn’t look like anything else in the area. She doesn’t think it is good for this area. She stated that the adjacent property will lose sunlight because of this building. She asked if it was a good neighbor, regardless of if it is a family member or not. She stated that on the corner of 8th and Newport, there was a home that had this type of a structure in front of it, and that home has not been able to sell. This is a single-family residential area, and she doesn’t feel that this fits in. She stated that they should move the structure back to allow the other home to have something. She stated that it is setting precedence, and the highest part of the roof is closest to the adjacent residence. She thinks it is the wrong way to go.

Anita Shower, Grover Beach resident, asked about the drainage system and the materials for the roof. She also pointed out that two newest homes on Parkview had to use pervious pavers. She stated that it doesn’t fit in the neighborhood. Planner Reese stated that the drainage is being addressed with underground basins. There are no surface basins proposed. The capacity of the basins is 1,476 cubic feet. The requirement is for 1,111 cubic feet.

Mr. deLeon stated that he will not be using built up tar for the roof. He will be using a single-ply membrane, which is white and seamed together. It is a 50 year roof. He stated that the roofing material will not be visible from anywhere. Mr. deLeon stated that he didn’t think that their retention was underground. He stated that the yards are slightly depressed to accommodate the drainage. He stated that that is what is shown on the plans. Chair Peterson asked him for clarification about the location and depth of the basins, and how much of the landscaping they take up. Mr. deLeon state that they are not taking the place of the landscaping but are part of the landscaping. He stated that it is the rear yard and a strip on the side of the garage. He stated that it is engineered so that it works.

City Engineer Jim Garing stated that the basins cover most of the back yard of the project. They are slightly less than one foot deep, about 8/10th of a foot deep, and are flat, so that they can readily be landscaped and not appear to be a basin.

Regarding the ADA sidewalk extension, City Engineer Garing stated that the City does require that and that on some of the narrower streets, the extension is on private property. For this project, it does look like it will fit, however, if it does not completely fit on the side where the driveway abuts the neighbor, it would not be built on the neighbors property but at the time that the adjacent property was improved, it would be completed.

Chair Peterson asked Mr. Garing if there have been any issues regarding usage of pervious paving in the City. Mr. Garing stated that he was not aware of any failures of the systems. He stated that if the soil is properly compacted before the pavers are installed, there shouldn’t be any settling.

Chair Peterson closed the public hearing and asked for a motion.

Vice Chair Snow made the motion to accept staff's recommendations and approve the project. Commissioner Blum seconded the motion.

Commissioner Long felt that this was a great chance to move in a positive direction by including use of pervious pavers. He stated that this project could have been moved back on the lot further. The opportunity is there to try to implement more pervious concrete.

Commissioner Blum felt that this project does fit, and is well thought out and is not very obtrusive. He stated that he didn't feel like someone should be penalized for being the first one in the neighborhood to make improvements. He likes the way that they have utilized the space, with the cantilevered deck and the rest of the house on the natural elevations of the property. He would like to explore the idea of using pervious pavers, but he thinks this is a good project.

Commissioner Nielsen stated that he is torn. He doesn't believe that it fits in with the neighborhood, even though it is a nice project.

Chair Peterson stated that even if they built a single-level home on the higher part of the site, it would still cause some view obstructions. She stated that moving the project further to the back of the lot may help with that issue. She stated that they did a nice job blending the new project into the upgrades that are occurring next door. Even if it sets a precedent in the neighborhood, it is a precedent that is workable. She asked if the applicant would be willing to comply with a condition to utilize pervious pavers in the driveway.

Mr. deLeon stated that regarding the size of the backyard, that if the backyard was smaller, the depressions would be deeper. He would prefer to keep the basin in the back rather than incorporate pervious paving. He also stated that if they move the house further back, then they will not have any views, since all of the other houses are at the same setback as he is proposing.

Chair Peterson asked for a vote on the motion. The motion passed with a vote 3-2-0-2 vote, with Commissioners Long and Nielsen voting no.

**2) Development Permit Application No. 07-016
Applicant – Skip Kautz**

This Application is a request for approval of Site and Architectural Plans, Use Permit, and exception for the construction and use of a fuel service station, a building containing an office and a convenience store with alcoholic beverages, and automated car wash. The exception request is to allow two driveway aprons to exceed the maximum 35-foot-wide driveway apron permitted by the City's Standards and Specifications. The subject property is located at 1284 West Grand Avenue (old Assessor Parcel Nos. 060-242-031 & 038, new Assessor Parcel No. 060-242-055) and is zoned Shopping Center District (C-S). The project planner is Janet Reese.

Chair Peterson stated that a letter was received from the applicant, Skip Kautz, requesting a continuance until December 11, 2008.

City Attorney Koczanowicz stated that the Planning Commission can open the public hearing and continue it to December 11, 2007, recognizing that due to the timing, it will likely not be ready for public hearing. Staff is recommending tabling the item until such time that it is ready for public hearing. At that time, it would be re-noticed and advertised.

Vice Chair Snow made the motion to remove the item from the agenda; Commissioner Nielsen seconded the motion and it was carried.

WORKSHOP/DISCUSSION ITEMS:

3) Residential Development Standards

Ray Hetherington presented the workshop. He stated that in December, 2006, the City Council directed City Staff to schedule future discussion of residential development standards to address issues that were occurring in the community. On June 4, 2007, staff presented a report to the City Council. City Council direction was to schedule a workshop, which was conducted on September 12, 2007. Discussion focused on Mr. Hetherington displayed the slides that were presented to the City Council.

He stated that the City Council workshop focused on Residential Development Standards in all multi-family, R-2 and R-3 zones and included discussion about increasing density while reducing negative impacts to surrounding areas; increasing lot coverage, lowering building heights and providing larger footprints or building envelopes for development opportunities.

Mr. Hetherington reviewed some of the existing regulations for the R-2 and R-3 zones. He stated that many of the projects that come before the Planning Commission are Condominiums or PUDs, which come under Part 40, which is a separate zoning section with separate standards. Those standards are more stringent than what is in the base zoning district regulations. Most of the projects are ownership projects, since not very many apartments are currently being proposed.

As part of the discussion with the City Council, they looked at various ways that they can try to accommodate more units on lots and also dealing with the issue of lowering heights.

On R-2 lots, they don't have a lot of issues. On R-3 lots, there are challenges because you are dealing with the issue of parking and driveways. These issues lead to not being able to provide the maximum units allowable on the site. They are trying to find ways of increasing building coverage to allow more units. They looked at the possibility of reducing setbacks, modifying the parking standards. These aren't necessarily changes that they want to make to the zoning ordinance, but they are exploring different options. They recognize the fact that there are areas where parking is an issue.

Areas for possible future consideration include:

1. Employ net density calculations. The City Council indicated that they do not wish to consider changing the calculations.
2. Reduce some of the setbacks.
3. Allowing guest parking in driveways, in front of the garage.
4. Maintain current density.
5. Limit the square footage of the living units.
6. Reduction of interior parking spaces.

Staff is not asking for Planning Commission action at this time, but is keeping them up to date with what is being considered.

In the R-2 district, it was consideration of raising the current building coverage from 40 to 50 percent. Also, there is consideration of changing the maximum building height to 25 feet.

In the R-3 district, increasing the building coverage from 55 to 60 percent and reducing the

maximum building height from 40 feet to 32 feet.

There is discussion about form based design, which allows for some discretion when certain design considerations are met.

Another thing to look at is common trash areas so that issues with trash can storage can be addressed.

Staff is currently looking at the issues presented by the City Council. Staff will report back to the City Council with some suggestions, following the Council's direction. The City Council could then initiate an amendment to the zoning regulations which would be formally drafted into an amendment that would be presented to the Planning Commission for recommendation.

City Attorney clarified that any and all of these issues will be brought back to the Planning Commission once the zoning amendments are initiated by the City Council.

There was discussion regarding senior housing projects, and Mr. Hetherington indicated that part of the Housing Element focuses on promoting higher densities through a density bonus for all senior projects.

/s/
CHAIR PETERSON

/s/
SECRETARY TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION
GEORGE HANSEN, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

(Approved at PC Meeting: July 8, 2008)