

**CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH  
[DRAFT] PLANNING COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING  
JUNE 10, 2009**

The Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Manhattan Beach, California, was held on the 10th day of June, 2009, at the hour of 6:35 p.m., in the City Council Chambers of City Hall, at 1400 Highland Avenue, in said City.

**A. ROLL CALL**

Present: Andreani, Fasola, Lesser, Paralusz, Chairperson Seville-Jones  
Absent: None  
Staff Present: Richard Thompson, Community Development Director  
Eric Haaland, Associate Planner  
Recording Secretary: Sarah Boeschen

Chairperson Seville-Jones welcomed new Commissioner Martha Andreani. She said that Commissioner Andreani has been on a number of committees and is the immediate past president of the Manhattan Beach Residents Association.

**B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – May 27, 2009**

Commissioner Fasola requested that page 1 of the May 27 minutes be corrected to reflect that he approved rather than abstained from approving the April 22 minutes.

Commissioner Fasola requested that the first sentence of the last paragraph of page 5 of the May 27 minutes be revised to state: “Commissioner Fasola said that the ~~only~~ most effective option for mitigating the noise of the carwash from the field ~~would~~ might be to provide a wall as a barrier.”

Commissioner Lesser requested that language be added to the fourth paragraph on page 5 of the minutes to read: “Commissioner Lesser commented that he does not have sufficient information to determine whether a noise reduction package should be included as a requirement and stated further research may be appropriate.”

Chairperson Seville-Jones requested that the wording of the first sentence on page 3 of the minutes be revised to read: “She indicated that notice of the zone change was published in the Beach Reporter and was sent to individual property owners who were ~~impacted~~ required to be notified.”

Chairperson Seville-Jones requested that the second paragraph of page 11 of the minutes be revised to read: “She said that it appears that gas stations in the CL zone are not entitled to the same vested right to 24 hour operation because they are in a limited commercial area and that in the CG zone the presumption is 24 hour operation and in the CL zone the presumption is not 24 hours.”

A motion was MADE and SECONDED (Lesser/Paralusz) to APPROVE the minutes of May 27, 2009, as amended.

AYES: Lesser, Paralusz, and Chairperson Seville-Jones  
NOES: None.  
ABSENT: None.

ABSTAIN: Andreani

### C. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

None.

### D. PUBLIC HEARINGS

#### **06/10/09-1 Consideration of a Coastal Development Permit and Minor Exception to Allow an Addition to an Existing Duplex at 121 24<sup>th</sup> Street**

Associate Planner Haaland summarized the staff report. He stated that the project includes a 453 addition to the second floor unit of an existing walk-street duplex. He said that the proposal would replace some of the existing deck area with living area. He indicated that the useable open space for the site would be reduced to 204 square feet as proposed, and the requirement is 440 square feet total for the two units. He stated that the project is in compliance with the standards of the Zoning Code except for the open space minor exception request. He commented that the Code does provide for minor exception approval of reduced open space for a two story building in an area where three stories are permitted. He indicated that the minor exception process is designed to encourage retention of lower two story buildings in situations when a project might otherwise need to include three levels in order to provide the required amount of open space. He commented that reduced open space minor exception have been approved by staff at 1807 Highland Avenue and 325 18<sup>th</sup> Street for existing two story buildings. He indicated that staff is recommending that the Commission approve the minor exception application.

In response to a question from Chairperson Seville-Jones, Associate Planner Haaland stated that staff feels there are practical difficulties which warrant deviation from the Code standards, in that complying with the open space requirement and providing the desired living area would require more extensive construction with a third level.

In response to a question from Commissioner Lesser, Associate Planner Haaland indicated that a 4,590 square foot structure could be built on the site with new construction. He stated that it is typical that projects do not reach the maximum allowable; however, some designs have come close to the maximum allowable while complying with open space requirements.

**Richard Ballew**, the applicant, said that the proposed addition would complete his home. He pointed out that the home would still have a 200 square foot deck with the proposal, and it would be an improvement to the neighborhood.

Chairperson Seville-Jones opened the public hearing.

There being no one wishing to speak, Chairperson Seville-Jones closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Fasola commented that as much as he supports providing open space, he feels the proposal is a great use of the site. He said that he feels the proposal is well designed and would be an improvement to the neighborhood. He said that he is pleased that two units would be provided on the site without the structure appearing large and imposing. He said that he supports the proposal.

Commissioner Paralusz said that she supports the proposal and commended the applicant on a design that would help to beautify the neighborhood. She pointed out that it is below the 4,500 square feet which would be permitted on the site, and it would not be building up to the three

permitted stories. She indicated that she would support the proposal.

Commissioner Lesser indicated that the proposal is the first review of a minor exception by the Commission, and it is at the heart of what the City was attempting to achieve with the Mansionization Ordinance. He said that the minor exception allows property owners to achieve their dream of making their property more viable without having to scrape their existing home. He stated that he can make the required finding that there are practical difficulties which warrant deviation from Code Standards, including, but not limited to, lot configuration, size shape, or topography, and/or relationship of existing buildings to the lot. He stated that he also feels the finding can be met that the proposed project would be compatible with properties in the surrounding area, including but not limited to, scale, mass orientation, size and location of setbacks, and height. He indicated that the orientation of the structure on the lot is compatible with the adjacent properties in the area. He also commented that he does not feel there would be a detrimental impact to surrounding neighbors, including, but not limited to, impacts to privacy, pedestrian and vehicular accessibility, light and air. He indicated that he also can make the finding that the existing non-conformities will be brought closer to or in conformance with Zoning Code and Building Safety requirements where deemed to be reasonable and feasible. He stated that he supports the proposal.

Commissioner Andreani said that although there is a concern by some regarding the reduction of open space, she feels the project is an excellent example of application of the Minor Exception Ordinance which came from the Mansionization Issues Committee. She indicated that the duplex remains compatible with the neighborhood by maintaining two levels rather than expanding to three levels. She also commented that she feels the structure as proposed with two levels maintains more of a pedestrian friendly feel from 24<sup>th</sup> Street and 24<sup>th</sup> Place. She said that the project would also have a minimal impact to loss of privacy, air and light to the residents located to the east of the property, which is in keeping with the intent of the General Plan. She also pointed out that the proposal does not remove any of the existing parking for the duplex which can accommodate five cars. She indicated that she supports the proposal.

Chairperson Seville-Jones stated that she also feels the proposal would be an attractive addition to the existing home. She commented that she is always pleased when existing homes can be preserved rather than scraped and rebuilt with a structure that is less attractive. She said that she supports the proposal.

### **Action**

A motion was MADE and SECONDED (Lesser/Fasola) to **APPROVE** a Coastal Development Permit and Minor Exception to Allow an Addition to an Existing Duplex at 121 24<sup>th</sup> Street

AYES: Andreani, Fasola, Lesser, Paralusz, Chairperson Seville-Jones  
NOES: None  
ABSENT: None.  
ABSTAIN: None.

Director Thompson explained the 15-day appeal period and indicated that the item will be placed on the City Council's Consent Calendar for their meeting of July 7, 2009.

### **E. DIRECTORS ITEMS**

### **F. PLANNING COMMISSION ITEMS**

**G. TENTATIVE AGENDA**

**H. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m. to Wednesday, June 24, 2009, in the City Council Chambers, City Hall, 1400 Highland Avenue

SARAH BOESCHEN  
Recording Secretary

ATTEST:

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RICHARD THOMPSON  
Community Development Director