

**CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH
[DRAFT] PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
OCTOBER 12, 2011**

A Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Manhattan Beach, California, was held on the 12th day of October, 2011, at the hour of 6:30 p.m., in the City Council Chambers of City Hall, at 1400 Highland Avenue, in said City.

1. ROLL CALL

Present: Conaway, Gross, Seville-Jones, Vice-Chair Andreani
Absent: Chairperson Paralusz
Staff Present: Richard Thompson, Director of Community Development
Laurie Jester, Planning Manager
Jim Arndt, Public Works Director
Recording Secretary, Sarah Boeschen

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – September 28, 2011

Commissioner Conaway requested that “thee” be corrected to “three” in the first paragraph under “Commission Discussion” on page 4 of the September 28 minutes.

Commissioner Gross requested that wording be added after the first sentence of the fourth paragraph on page 5 of the minutes to state: “Commissioner Gross commented that he strongly supports the project. He expressed agreement with Commissioner Seville-Jones’ comments encouraging community comments and concerns but recognizing rights of applicants to lawful use of the land.”

Commissioner Gross requested that the last paragraph of page 7 of the minutes be revised to read: “Commissioner Gross pointed out that there is not a commercial district that is located within 1,000 feet ~~from a school~~ of public schools.”

Commissioner Gross requested that wording be added at the end of the first paragraph on page 10 of the minutes to read: “Commissioner Gross indicated that he would prefer that tattoo studios be permitted in the CD zone rather than in the CG zone. He said the draft Resolution does not provide a process where residents near a proposed tattoo studio would be notified or have recourse.”

A motion was MADE and SECONDED (Seville-Jones/Conaway) to **APPROVE** the minutes of September 28, 2011, as amended.

AYES: Conaway, Gross, Seville-Jones, Vice-Chair Andreani
NOES: None
ABSENT: Chairperson Paralusz
ABSTAIN: None

3. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

4. BUSINESS ITEMS

09/28/11-3 Presentation and Status Report of Manhattan Beach County Library Project

Public Works Director Jim Arndt summarized the staff report. He commented that the agenda that was given to the Commission is the same as was given to the Cultural Arts Commission and the Library Commission. He stated that Linda Demmers, Library consultant, was not able to attend the meeting. He pointed out that information regarding the project is on the City's website. He indicated that there was a public meeting regarding the project on September 13, and there will be a further public meeting in early November. He commented that the date of the meeting will be posted on the City's website. He indicated that decisions regarding the location, overall size of the library, and floor plan have been determined. He said that the library will be 21,500 square feet. He indicated that decisions have not been finalized regarding the exterior of the building and landscaping. He commented that story time may be provided two to four times a week and a bookmobile will be in the area for 20 to 40 hours per week while the library is under construction. He stated that up to \$150,000 per year will be budgeted for interim services.

Director Thompson pointed out that the Planning Commission's main responsibility is to approve the Use Permit and Coastal Development Permit. He pointed out that a list of the required findings that must be made to approve the project is included in the staff report. He said that the decision of the City cannot be appealed to the Coastal Commission. He said that the Commissioners also should look at the project as residents. He stated that it is important for the Commissioners to consider the relationship of the Library to the Civic Center complex and the surrounding neighborhood. He commented the plans for the project are changing almost daily, and they will be given to the Commission before the next meeting. He stated that there was a community meeting held on September 13 regarding the project.

Jason Kim presented the project budget and project schedule for the new library. He stated that the total project budget is \$22,571,000. He stated that the new library is scheduled to open in December of 2014.

In response to a question from Commissioner Seville-Jones, Public Works Director Arndt indicated that the \$137,000 budgeted for art for the project has been dedicated from County rather than City funds, although the City does have a separate public art fund. He stated that no money from the City's General Fund would be used for the project.

In response to a question from Commissioner Seville-Jones, Mr. Kim indicated that they have forecast the number of hours that would be needed for county inspectors and project managers and contract administrators for the duration of the project in arriving at the figure of \$2,180,000 that is budgeted for county services.

Gil Garcia said that Johnson Favaro has been contracted with the County to prepare the scoping documents but would be precluded from participating in the design build procurement process for the library. He said that they will continue to be under contract with the County and will provide support services and will help to review the documents prepared by the design builder.

In response to a question from Vice-Chair Andreani, Mr. Garcia commented that \$400,000 is budgeted under "consultant services" for preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). He indicated, however, that an EIR was prepared previously as part of the City's Civic Center/Metlox Plan that included a library. He said that they are working with staff to determine if it can be utilized for the project.

Vice-Chair Andreani indicated that she is pleased that a budget and project schedule have been prepared that allow for public comments.

In response to a question from Commissioner Gross, Mr. Garcia stated that Johnson Favaro will be retained by the County to review the plans from the design builder to ensure that they comply with the scoping documents.

Jim Favaro, the project architect, gave an overview of the project design. He said that the smaller configuration of the library will allow the library to be run efficiently with creating more open space, requiring less heating, and requiring less staff costs. He stated that there would be the opportunity in the future of adding onto the library or adding other uses in the Civic Center. He pointed out that the more compact design also allows for more daylight to enter the building. He said that they are concerned with respecting the views of the neighboring properties along 15th Street and the homes on the hill beyond Valley Ardmore. He indicated that the maximum height was a major consideration in the design. He commented that four parking lots potentially can serve the library, including the lot for City Hall, a small lot with approximately 10 parking spaces next to the driveway into the Civic Center parking garage, the lot under the Civic Center, and the public parking lot across Highland Avenue. He indicated, however, that only the City Hall parking lot adequately serves the library in its current configuration. He indicated that they plan to eliminate the benches and planters on the south side and the west of City Hall next to the Human Resources entry. He commented that they will grade the site to the level of Highland Avenue. He indicated that they are proposing to place the main entrance closer to Highland Avenue. He commented that the new location of the entrance would allow easy access from the parking lot across Highland Avenue. He said that the building would be set back about 20 feet from the curb and 10 feet from the edge of the sidewalk. He commented that direct access would also be provided to the library with ramps from the 15th Street parking lot and the underground parking lot.

Mr. Favaro said that there is an opportunity to provide a small park on the east side of the library. He commented that the intent is to keep the park area as open without benches, walkways, or planters. He indicated that the area could be used for community events. He stated that the intent is for functions of the library like storytime to spill out into the park area. He said that there would be a walk street along the south side of the library that would allow for service vehicle and pedestrian access. He said that the walk street would become a walkway for pedestrians when not being used for deliveries to the library.

Mr. Favaro commented that the two entrances would converge into one room at the front of the building. He indicated that the community room for the library would be larger than the community room that is located in the Police and Fire Facility. He commented that the community room would overlook the park area. He indicated that the more active and noisier areas of the library would be on the ground level, and the quiet area with the book stacks and reference library would be on the second level. He said that glass doors could open to connect the children's area with the outdoor pocket park. He indicated that the community room could be used for children's story time during the day and for meetings during the evenings. He said that a dedicated area would be provided for mechanical equipment on the second floor in order to eliminate the need to place equipment on the roof to preserve the views of the neighbors. He said that the maximum height of the structure would be 4 feet below the height of City Hall.

Mr. Favaro commented that the City does not have a single architectural style, and the structures are a large mix of styles. He described possibilities for the design of the exterior of the building. He stated that they are considering the use of a second layer of glass along the exterior of the building to provide a barrier to protect from the glare of the sun. He commented

that they would like for the building to have a transparent look with the use of glass. He said that the current technologies with glass would animate the design of the building. He commented that putting the protective layer inside of the transparent layer of glass would allow the building to maintain a transparent appearance. He stated that the gap between the layers could be sealed to help to keep heat inside the building in the winter to reduce heating costs. He indicated that the inner layer could also be opened up to allow the hot air to circulate out of the building. He indicated that the extra layer of glass would also help to provide an acoustical barrier from the outside of the building.

Commissioner Conaway said that he is concerned with the lower height of the second story. He stated that he understands that there are concerns with views from the properties on 15th Street. He suggested the possibility of granting a variance to increase the height of the structure. He indicated that having more height would allow more natural daylight to enter into the structure. He commented that there is potential for the second floor to be a great space, and he is concerned with sacrificing a couple feet of height for a handful of properties that may or may not have issues regarding the view. He asked if an additional 1 or 2 feet of height would impact the views of the neighbors.

Mr. Favaro said that three adjacent neighbors on 15th Street did have an issue with the blocking of their views of the ocean and the base of Palos Verdes. He said that the view from inside the building through the windows would provide the grandeur of the space. He said that they are confident that they can provide a good reading area with the height of the second story as planned.

In response to a question from Vice-Chair Andreani, Director Thompson pointed out that the height is determined by the Use Permit. He indicated that staff evaluated the area to determine the most appropriate maximum height considering all of the factors.

Commissioner Conaway indicated that he likes the approach with using glass for the exterior. He commented that all City buildings will meet the LEED gold standard, and he would hope the County would match the same standard.

Mr. Favaro indicated that the structure would be commissioned gold. He commented that they are looking into using glass that acts as solar panels.

Commissioner Conaway stated that he has a concern with having sufficient funds to maintain and keep the glass clean on the exterior of the building.

Mr. Favaro pointed out that glass may be preferable to using plaster on the exterior of the building because it is more resistant to corrosion with the moisture in the air from the ocean.

Commissioner Conaway said that he would hope the pocket park could help to activate the Civic Center plaza and that it would be utilized.

Commissioner Seville-Jones commented that she likes the idea of doors that would open to the pocket park, as she had a concern previously regarding a lack of fresh air circulating in the building. She indicated that she is not certain of the activities that would take place in the park. She said that she is not certain of ideas to make the park more usable for performance groups or other organizations for activities or performances. She suggested that a grass be used that is drought resistant for the park.

Vice-Chair Andreani asked about establishing a reservation system for use of the pocket park and making the park available for different types of uses in addition to the library.

Mr. Favaro commented that he would imagine that the Parks and Recreation Department and Library would come together to program events in the space.

Commissioner Seville-Jones said that the coordination of the Parks and Recreation Department with the County for use of the Library is important, as events could be scheduled during times that the Library is closed. She indicated that the pocket park would be on County property, and it would be important to include language in the Use Permit that the park is allowed for use by the City. She asked whether the City would be able to participate in any decision by the County to sell the property in the future.

Director Thompson indicated that he can bring back further information regarding the authority of the City in the event the County decides to sell the property. He said that he will also provide the Commissioners with further information regarding the programming that is envisioned with the park. He commented that a presentation regarding the library project was given to high school students at the Police Fire Facility, and they were very excited about the possibility of using the pocket park for activities.

Commissioner Seville-Jones indicated that she would like further information as to whether the Use Permit can include language that the City would have the first right of refusal in the event that the County decides to sell the property.

Vice-Chair Andreani also suggested including language in the Use Permit regarding which group or groups would manage programming for the park area.

Commissioner Gross commented that the water play area in the open space of the Metlox center attracts people. He suggested that some thought be given to attracting people to the park. He indicated that having a place for performance art would be a great benefit and would be used at night. He said that consideration should be given to utilizing the space during the day. He commented that he has rebuilt his house on The Strand several times over the years and has struggled with the best way to utilize glass with tinting and shades. He commented that the colors of the ocean vary greatly and are beautiful during all times of the year. He said that he currently has glass in his home that is designed for windshields which helps protect against ultra violet rays but is not effective in shielding heat. He indicated that that tinted glass blocks the beautiful shades of gray of the ocean. He said he is concerned that that the layer of protection that is being suggested for the Library would eliminate the transparency of the structure.

Mr. Favaro indicated that the layer of protective glass would not be dark. He commented that they would use shades to block sunlight regardless of the type of glass that is used.

Commissioner Gross commented that blocking heat from the sun is a definite problem with large windows. He commented that he is worried that the view of the ocean with all of its colors would be lost from inside the building if tinted glass is used.

Mr. Favaro indicated that they are more interested with the reflectivity of the interior layer of glass rather than with using tinting.

In response to a question from Commissioner Gross, Mr. Favaro commented that the south side of the structure would not be all glass. He indicated that they are not certain of the design for the south side of the structure. He commented that there is an opportunity for generating solar power on the south side.

Vice Chair Andreani said that it is necessary to allocate sufficient space for books and computers in the library. She stated that using all glass for the exterior would take away wall space that could be used for shelving.

Mr. Favaro said that there have been detailed discussions regarding the functionality of the space as a library.

Vice-Chair Andreani commented that she feels it is important for the library to be functional. She indicated that she feels a completely glass structure would not fit in with the architectural style of the adjacent buildings, and she would like to see additional stucco, plaster, or wood used in the design.

Commissioner Gross stated that the architectural style of the City is very eclectic, and he is not concerned that the style of the library may not match the surrounding buildings. He suggested possibly using patinaed copper, which has a beautiful look as it ages. He indicated that the copper matches well with glass, is very durable under the elements, and requires no maintenance.

Commissioner Seville-Jones commented that having an entrance to the library off of the Civic Center plaza would help to bring people into the plaza area.

Mr. Favaro stated that a great deal of consideration was given to the appropriate location for the library entrance. He said that the placement of the entrance determines the placement of many features on the first floor. He said that they made the determination of the best configuration for the first level, and it seemed more natural for the entrance to be placed off of the main street. He commented that they also felt the design was the best balance for providing access from the different parking lots.

Commissioner Seville-Jones stated that she would want the Use Permit to include language to ensure that no features are added to the roof in order to preserve the views over the building.

Commissioner Conaway suggested adding skylights, sculpting or slope to the roof to provide some articulation and prevent it from being one continuous flat surface. He commented that he does not feel adding a small amount of height would significantly impact views, as it is a small area.

Mr. Favaro said that they had not thought about adding articulation to the roof. He commented that their concept was to design the roof to be as minimal as possible to make it almost seamless with the plane of the ocean.

Vice-Chair Andreani suggested including a system for validating parking for the library at the parking lot across Highland Avenue.

In response to a question from Vice-Chair Andreani, **Mr. Favaro** said that the walk-street on the south side of the library would have bollards and would not be used by vehicles except for limited deliveries to the library.

Commissioner Seville-Jones commented that she would like for language to be included in the Use Permit regarding deliveries and the use of the walk-street. She indicated that there is a concern if pedestrians are not anticipating that cars would use the walk-street.

Director Thompson said that staff always anticipated that the walk-street would primarily be used as a walkway. He commented that more study is needed to determine how it is designed to accommodate a delivery truck.

Commissioner Seville-Jones indicated that she would like more information regarding the anticipated use of the walk-street and regarding the type, number and timing of deliveries that would be made to the library.

In response to a question from Commissioner Gross, **Fred Hungerford**, Chief Deputy of the County Library, commented that the story time program is offered four times a week. He commented that there has not been an issue with a large number of children arriving and accessing the library at one time. He indicated that they have accommodated additional room inside the library for stroller parking. He pointed out that the design of the library is primarily intended to meet public service needs. He commented that they would increase their collection and seating with the new library. He said that the library would include self check-out stations. He indicated that the library would increase from 15 to 46 computers. He stated that their current meeting room is 766 square feet, and it would be increased with the new library to 1,220 square feet. He commented that their primary deliveries occur at night. He indicated that their primary use of the walk-street during the day would be for maintenance crews.

In response to a question from Commissioner Seville-Jones, **Mr. Hungerford** said that it is the practice of the County to adhere to their budget. He indicated that they will reduce the scope of the project in order to remain within their budget if necessary.

In response to a question from Commissioner Seville-Jones, **Mr. Hungerford** commented that they plan to have storytime four times a week and to have a book-mobile parked in the Civic Center 20-40 hours a week in the transition period while the new library is being constructed. He indicated that customers can also place their requests for books online and the items would be delivered each day that they are open. He commented that there are also book loans from other libraries that would be available to Manhattan Beach residents.

In response to a question from Commissioner Conaway, Public Works Director Arndt indicated that construction of the exterior hardscape and landscape area of the building is budgeted, although it is not a large amount. He said that the intent is to tie the project in with the surrounding buildings.

In response to a question from Commissioner Seville-Jones, Director Thompson said that the time line for the project would be longer if a new EIR is needed. He indicated that staff is confident that the existing EIR provides the necessary documentation for the project.

Public Works Director Arndt pointed out that the City Council has directed that none of the City's general fund would be used for the project. He stated that money from property taxes that is received by the County will be used for the project. He pointed out that property taxes to residents will not increase as a result of the project.

Commissioner Seville-Jones commented that she is concerned that cost overruns could result in features that are planned for the library not being included because of the budget.

In response to a question from Commissioner Gross, **Mr. Hungeford** indicated that the community room would be used for library programming, storytime, and author talks. He said that the room would also be available for community use and would be fully equipped with assisted listening, an audio visual projector, sound system, wireless internet access, and computer jacks. He commented that there would also be a system to check out laptop computers for use in the library.

Vice-Chair Andreani stated that she would like for the roof to have some articulation and not be completely flat. She commented that the setback from Highland Avenue could also reduce the appearance of bulk.

Commissioner Conaway said that he supports the use of glass to provide a transparent feel to the structure. He suggested that consideration be given to both passive and active uses for the pocket park. He indicated that he would encourage the architect to also include fun colors and themes from the beach in their design of the interior. He said that he is concerned with the transition of the design from Johnson Favaro to another firm after 90 percent of the design is completed. He commented that he is concerned with the budget for the project and that the design of the structure as imagined is able to actually be constructed.

5. DIRECTORS ITEMS

Director Thompson commented that the City Council agreed with the recommendation of the Planning Commission to gather further information regarding the number of liquor licenses that are issued in the City. He indicated that the item will be brought back to the City Council in March of 2012.

6. PLANNING COMMISSION ITEMS

7. TENTATIVE AGENDA October 26, 2011

- a. Chase Bank- Master Use Permit Amendment, 1130 N. Sepulveda Boulevard**
- b. Food Truck Code Amendment Discussion**

8. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m. to Wednesday, October 26, 2011, in the City Council Chambers, City Hall, 1400 Highland Avenue

SARAH BOESCHEN
Recording Secretary

ATTEST:

RICHARD THOMPSON
Community Development Director