

CITY OF MAN HATTAN BEACH
DRAFT PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
MAY 23, 2018

(DRAFT)

A Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Manhattan Beach, California, was held on the 23rd day of May, 2018, at the hour of 6:15 p.m., in the City Council Chambers, at 1400 Highland Avenue, in said City.

1. ROLL CALL

Present: Burkhalter, Fournier, Chairperson Apostol
Absent: Morton, Seville-Jones

Others Present: Anne McIntosh, Director of Community Development
Michael Estrada, Assistant City Attorney
Eric Haaland, Acting Planning Manager
Nhung Madrid, Senior Management Analyst
Rafael Garcia, Assistant Planner
Erik Zandvliet, City Traffic Engineer
Stephanie Katsouleas, Director of Public Works
Prem Kumar, City Engineer
Mamerto Estepa Jr., Associate Engineer
Rosemary Lackow, Recording Secretary

2. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (3-minute limit) – None

3. CEREMONIAL

05/23/18-1 Recognition of Outgoing Planning Commission Chairperson George Apostol

Chairperson Apostol noted that tonight's meeting is his last for the Planning Commission as his term is expiring and he expressed his appreciation and enjoyment in serving on the Planning Commission and other commissions over the last several years. Commissioner Fournier noted his appreciation in serving with Chair Apostol on both the PPIC and Planning Commission. Director McIntosh presented Chair Apostol with a Certificate of Appreciation and thanked him for his service.

4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

05/23/18-1. Regular Meeting – April 25, 2018

It was moved and seconded (Burkhalter/Fournier) to approve the minutes as submitted. Commissioner Burkhalter noted his vote is not applicable to the portion that covers the item for which he was recused as related to 1208 The Strand.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Burkhalter, Fournier, Chairperson Apostol
NOES: None
ABSENT: Morton, Seville-Jones
ABSTAIN: None

5. PUBLIC HEARING

05/23/18-3. Consideration of a Master Use Permit and Tentative Tract Map No. 082049 for the Development of a Mixed-Use Building at 1701 and 1707 Artesia Boulevard, Manhattan Beach (1701 Artesia, LLC)

Assistant Planner Rafael Garcia provided the oral staff report with the aid of slides, detailing the proposed mixed use project which requires a Master Use Permit and Tentative Tract Map. He gave an overview covering the neighborhood setting and CL (Local Commercial) zoning which allows mixed use subject to a Master Use Permit. Mr. Garcia also went over the applicable standards including parking, and described the project design, which features parking at the lower two levels, vehicle access on both Artesia and Redondo Avenue, commercial medical office space at the second level, and residential condominium uses mainly on the upper two levels. Mr. Garcia reviewed the findings as required for the project, input with other City departments and public input received.

Mr. Garcia responded to questions of the Commissioners with the following information: 1) To his knowledge the commercial medical space has not been leased, but the project can accommodate professional office space; 2) The visibility triangle areas near the corner of Artesia/Redondo and near the driveway aprons are intended to enhance line-of-sight between drivers and pedestrians; 3) The wording of condition one, pertaining to allowed height of future roof solar panels, reflects direction from the Planning Commission not to impose a more restrictive requirement than normal on a similar project approximately two years ago. It has been normal department practice to allow up to 6 inches in additional height without having to submit technical reports proving substantial loss of energy production.

PUBLIC INPUT

Chairperson Apostol opened the public hearing, and invited public input with limits of 5 minutes for the applicant and 2 minutes for all others.

Nagy Bakhoun, Obelisk Architects, architect/applicant, gave an overview of the project with the aid of slides. He noted that the site is comprised of 2 parcels, and that the project presented a unique opportunity to bring together three components on the same site: commercial space, high density residential, as well as more single-family oriented use. He reviewed the orientation of the nine units, the parking layout and noted how the site will be accessed. The applicant's objective is to provide an appropriate use for the zoning, with a functionally sized commercial use and residential condominiums, with buffering provided for adjacent residences. He noted that the higher density and more intense massing of the project (office and single-level condos) are oriented towards Artesia, while the single family-like components (two-story condos) are oriented towards the northerly single family homes. He informed that he held a neighborhood outreach meeting in February and about a dozen interested persons attended; concerns expressed included the loss of trees and street parking issues. After this meeting, the project was modified in a number of ways to address concerns, and the project, which has slope constraints, was made to be in full conformance with the zoning code. He noted changes were made to provide more building articulation along the edges, and landscaping buffer was added, and some commercial space was eliminated.

Mr. Bakhoun responded to a question from **Commissioner Fournier** that a visibility triangle is featured at the building corner at the street intersection to enhance safety. He would however, also support any additional public safety traffic mitigations or measures that the City thinks would improve safety.

Chair Apostol invited other speakers.

Regina Wang, Redondo Avenue resident, two lots away from the project stated there is a pattern of heavy traffic on Redondo as commuter drivers are bypassing Aviation Boulevard and drivers gain speed due to the hill and because the last stop sign is as far away as 2nd Street. She has seen many accidents in the area in the last 20 years and is concerned that by adding more units, more drivers will be added and accidents may increase even more.

Amir Mir, nearby resident on Mathews, is very concerned about an increase in traffic resulting from the project; also does not believe a multi-story mixed use building that includes commercial space is appropriate for the area and is concerned that the project will over burden the streets and schools.

John Schwab, 44-year resident on the west side of Redondo Avenue, is concerned that with the addition of a new driveway serving the project, at least one on-street parking space on Redondo will be removed and he believes that this will have a big impact on neighbors. He is also concerned that the addition of the new condos will increase traffic congestion especially in peak commuting periods, as currently commuter traffic sometimes backs up to Mathews. He believes that the project is too dense and the number of condo units

should be reduced from 9 to 3 or 4.

Chair Apostol closed the public hearing.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION

Commissioner Fournier stated he believes that the proposal is pretty straightforward in that the project meets all zoning standards and the applicant has reached out to neighbors for input. His concerns are mainly regarding traffic safety due to some existing inherent safety challenges and conditions. These types of issues as, or if, they arise, may be able to be addressed separately through the City Traffic Engineer and possibly through the PPIC (Parking and Public Improvements Commission). He will vote in support.

Commissioner Burkhalter observed that the commercial component is 20% of the entire project square footage and questions whether this project mix and design, while meeting the existing codes, (which only minimally address mixed-use) meets the intent of mixed-use which he feels should have synergy between the residential and commercial uses with pedestrian orientation and less dependence on parking.

Chair Apostol expressed concern as to how visitors approaching the site (residential guests, and clients of the commercial use) would know how to get to the appropriate parking area. **Mr. Bakhoum** explained that, per a condition of approval, all spaces will be stenciled with their allowed use and additionally, directional on signs will be installed to clearly mark access to parking areas. Mr. Bakhoum also indicated that he could work with the City Traffic Engineer to see if the northern driveway apron on Redondo can be reduced from 20 feet to see if a full parking space on Redondo can be retained and condition 48 requires that an area be provided for future roof solar panels.

Assistant Planner Garcia explained that the condo owner parking spaces (2 per unit) will be gated at all times but the condo guest spaces will not be gated and the commercial parking area will be secured with a gate only during non-operating hours.

In response to inquiries from **Commissioner Fournier**, **City Traffic Engineer Zandvliet** noted that the northerly apron on Redondo Avenue could potentially be reduced in width to 14-feet, however, he would need to study this to ensure that this would not impair access to guest parking spaces or create any undesirable conditions. Such a proposal can be studied in conjunction with application for a right-of-way permit during the plan-check process. **Assistant Planner Garcia** responded to a question from **Commissioner Fournier** that, should in the future the condominium owners desire to install a gate to secure their driveway access, this would not be prohibited by the code, but Staff would review such alterations to determine whether such an installation would have any adverse impacts, especially to the right-of-way.

Chair Apostol stated that, finding that the project conforms to all existing zoning criteria, he supports the project but he would like to see the City Traffic Engineer work with the project architect to retain a curb parking space on Redondo, if determined feasible, without change to the proposed wording of the draft Resolution conditions.

Chair Apostol closed the public hearing. It was determined that any further questions from the public should be directed to Staff.

COMMISSION ACTION

It was moved and seconded (Fournier/Burkhalter) to **ADOPT** the draft Resolution, **APPROVING** a Master Use Permit and Tentative Tract Map 082049 for development of a Mixed-Use building at 1701 and 1707 Artesia Boulevard. Commissioner Burkhalter in seconding the motion, reiterated that he would like to see the city look further into the possibility of updating the zoning code with respect to mixed-use standards.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Burkhalter, Fournier, Chairperson Apostol
NOES: None
ABSENT: Morton, Seville-Jones
ABSTAIN: None

- 05/23/18-4. Consideration of a Proposed Code Text Amendment to Modify Title 10 (Planning and Zoning) of the Manhattan Beach Municipal Code as it Relates to Commercial Development in the General Commercial (CG) Zoning District Along Sepulveda Boulevard (City of Manhattan Beach)

Assistant Planner Rafael Garcia provided the staff report, noting that on April 25th the Planning Commission considered the recommendations of the Sepulveda Initiatives Ad Hoc Working Group in a study session and tonight is the public hearing on the recommendations. Mr. Garcia reviewed the proposed recommendations focusing on issues of Building Height, Setbacks and Desirable Uses for the corridor and illustrated a map showing the boundaries of the proposed D-8 overlay which would extend the entire length of Sepulveda Boulevard from Artesia to Rosecrans as recommended by the Working Group.

Director McIntosh provided a detailed background as to the direction from City Council and meetings of the Working Group. Ms. McIntosh emphasized that, while the proposed overlay would extend the entire length of the corridor is very unlikely that due to shallowness of lot depths, that properties north of Manhattan Beach Boulevard would take advantage of the proposed 40-foot height limit. She also emphasized that only the five proposed and specific desirable uses would be eligible to take advantage of the flexible development standards, and any proposal that would utilize the D-8 flexible standards would require a Use Permit.

Assistant Planner Garcia summarized the five desirable uses that would be eligible for the flexible standards which include: high end (sit-down) restaurants, hotels, mixed use development, museums, and community theaters. The standards applicable exclusively to these desirable uses include: a height limit of 40 feet, without need of pitched roof or structure parking; an exception to the height limit for roof mounted mechanical equipment; and a decrease of daylight plan setback (based on 60-degree rather than 45-degree angle) that is required along the rear setback abutting an R district. In addition, it is being proposed that within the D-8 overlay, projects that involve a “change of use” but without intensification of use or parking demand and with no addition of square footage, would be exempt from applying for a Use Permit or Master Use Permit.

Mr. Garcia also noted that an updated to the city’s mixed-use standards and commercial parking standards will be following the adoption of the D-8 overlay provisions in the near future.

PUBLIC INPUT

Chair Apostol opened the public hearing, asking that speakers try to adhere to a two-minute limit.

Dan Blakely, long term resident on Oak, has concern about the proposal to increase building height and doesn’t understand the justification for such an increase; believes that the current height limits are compatible with the adjoining neighborhood and shouldn’t be increased.

Stephane Wandel, resident on Oak, supports the code amendment concept, provided uses do not impact nearby homes; is surprised that professional offices are not among the listed “desirable uses” being incentivized since offices are complementary to residents; doesn’t understand why the focus in on retail, hotels and restaurants because these uses have high parking demands which can impact nearby neighbors.

Laura Cipolcari, 1100 block of 2nd Street, believes that this proposal may benefit city coffers, but questions what the benefit will be for the residents.

Rich Franklin, lives one block off Sepulveda and Manhattan Beach Boulevard, and urged that setbacks from streets remain sufficient and possibly expanded for safety purposes, and questions whether additional height is really needed.

Jane Franklin, 11th Street resident, doesn’t like several aspects of the proposed code amendment including: increasing building height, decreasing parking requirements, reviewing new buildings on the “case-by-case” basis as it would be demand continual vigilance on the part of residents, and she does not support allowing a change in tenants without a use permit.

John Policastro, 20-year resident, believes the proposed changes are so significant it should be decided through a vote of the citizens, and not by a few Commissioners and the City Council. He also believes that

the City should wait until the Manhattan Village expansion project and Gelson's are operating to gauge any resulting impacts before such a significant code change is adopted.

Kim Taylor, lives on the east side of Sepulveda Boulevard and has concerns that: traffic would be greatly increased especially on Meadows and that approving this proposal would incentivize a massive amount of development all along the corridor. She questioned that hotels may not be desirable due to the fact that sometimes undesirable activities take place in hotels.

Karol Wahlberg, is very concerned that the beach town atmosphere is being lost, and has concerns specifically about several aspects of the proposal including: allowing changes in use without a use permit review; traffic worsening, alienating east from west side of the town, and impacts from increased building height (i.e. to be higher than allowed for residents). She is concerned about attracting more hotels and is disappointed that the local organization "Manhattan Beach Residents Association" that she is a member of, was not notified or invited to participate. She asked that the process be slowed to allow more residents to participate.

Shannon Whaley, 212 Larsson, bought her property in 2002, aware of potential commercial building height as being maximum 30 feet (or possibly 22 feet). She is concerned that, with the proposal, a future adjacent building on Sepulveda might have an allowed height increase from 22 feet to 40 feet and be as close as three feet.

Pat Ching, owns an apartment building on Second Street east of Sepulveda where the land drops down considerably. She is concerned about impacts of shadowing and loss of privacy for her tenants.

Jacqueline Zuanich-Ferrel, Duncan Avenue near Sepulveda, is concerned about the proposed changes especially the change in character due to the height increase and believes this should be decided by a vote.

Victor Peckham, long term 5th Street resident close to Sepulveda has strong concern about the potential impacts such as loss of more sunlight due to increased height. He believes that the code should remain as it currently is.

Steve Packwood, Oak Avenue resident is against height increase unless it is allowed only for commercial sites that do not back up to residential properties.

Bobak Nayebdadash, stated his family is the owner of the property at 1100 Manhattan Beach Boulevard, currently vacant. He believes that the Sepulveda initiatives project has been well researched by a diverse representative group and is in support of the recommendations of the Working Group and staff. He believes it's important to understand that the proposed flexible standards would have limited application, only to specific uses which have been determined to be desirable for the city. He also emphasized that the proposal is a reasonable evolution of land use as applied to the site owned by his family. He supports the adoption of the draft Resolution.

Seeing no more speakers, Chair Apostol closed the public hearing.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION

Director McIntosh clarified that the proposal will not increase the amount of building floor area on any parcels, therefore building density will not be increased.

Commissioner Burkhalter commented that he feels, based on comments so far, that there is some misunderstanding or misconception about the potential impacts and the number of properties potentially able to utilize the new standards, noting he doubts any properties along the west side of Sepulveda could take advantage and further parking standards and mixed-use standards are to be further studied. He suggested that staff provide more information and outreach to the community and that in some way, other related issues such as parking, mixed-use standards and the City's Mobility Plan, be explained.

Commissioner Fournier stated his concerns; he is bothered by the fact that there are only 3 commissioners present tonight and this decision should be continued so that there is a more balanced review and he is having second thoughts as to whether this should be an overlay on the entire corridor. The overriding concern to him is not tax revenues, but that the corridor retains its vitality. He noted that the idea of

increasing building height is in response to concern that few property owners had the ability to make reasonable return investments. He favors looking more closely as to where the D-8 boundary should be drawn and sensitivity is needed to concerns of neighbors, such as loss of privacy and sunlight.

Chair Apostol noted that this is a very difficult discussion and he agrees that the vitality of the corridor is a priority. He believes that the Sepulveda Guidelines need updating and there needs to be a balance between vitality and impacts. He believes at least some aspects of the height limit need to be updated. He is sensitive to comments that residents have not been aware of this project and agrees that there may be somewhat of a disconnect between the proposed standards and the desirable uses - e.g. why would a restaurant need a 40-foot height?

Director McIntosh explained the formation of the Sepulveda Working Group and meetings that were held and clarified that the intent, using the example of a high end restaurant, is that such a use might be able to take advantage of the 40 feet additional height, not as a stand-alone restaurant, but likely within a multi-tenant building that needs the additional height.

Chair Apostol stated he would be in favor of continuing this matter to allow further discussion before the proposal goes to the City Council.

Director McIntosh suggested that staff look at the dozen or so sites identified in the staff report and look for parameters that can be applied to potential D-8 applicable sites.

Commissioner Fournier noted agreement with having one more meeting and noted that the proposed additional height seems to be the biggest issue and that it seems there hasn't been much input on the subject of mixed-use. A continuance will provide an opportunity to discuss mixed-use.

Chair Apostol emphasized that the parking requirement is typically one of the most, if not the, governing factor in determining building size however the proposal is not to reduce parking. He cautioned against picking and choosing lots that would be part of the overlay, and favors an "across the board" approach in creating the district based on fundamental applicable criteria.

Director McIntosh advised that there is one more regular Planning Commission meeting prior to the date that the City Council is scheduled to consider this matter and the new Commissioner and the two absent Commissioners can participate in that Planning Commission meeting if they view this evening's hearing.

Commissioner Fournier suggested that members of the Working Group be encouraged to participate in this proceeding.

The Commission conducted further discussion as to direction to be given to staff. There was agreement that Staff should explore possible alternatives for the boundaries of the proposed D-8 overlay zone, other than along the entire corridor. Parameters to be explored include a minimum lot size and site dimensions. The Commission also directed that alternatives be presented to the current roof slope and parking location criteria that are applied under the current 30-foot height limit and alternatives to the "daylight plane" setback requirement.

Assistant Planner Garcia emphasized that the proposed code amendment is not proposing to modify or alter any parking requirements at this time.

COMMISSION ACTION

It was subsequently moved and seconded (Fournier/Burkhalter) that the proposed code amendment be continued to the next regular Commission meeting of June 13, 2018 with newspaper notification. It was noted that at the June 13th meeting the Commission may open the matter up again for public comment.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Burkhalter, Fournier, Chairperson Apostol
NOES: None
ABSENT: Morton, Seville-Jones
ABSTAIN: None

Chair Apostol declared a recess at 8:46 pm and the meeting was reconvened at 9:00 pm.

6. GENERAL BUSINESS

- 05/23/18-5. Determination of Consistency Plan with the Manhattan Beach General Plan for Five (5) Newly Proposed Projects of the Five-Year Capital Improvement Program and Adoption of Resolution (City of Manhattan Beach)

Public Works Director Stephanie Katsouleas gave introductory comments, noting that this is the “off-year” of the CIP which has a biennial framework and this year there are only minor modifications to the list of budgeted projects which were adopted in the first year (2017/18). **City Engineer Prem Kumar** provided a detailed summary and update of the Capital Improvement Program, noting that five new projects have been added to the program through the budget process for operational and safety reasons (Strand Resurfacing, Village Field ADA Access, Hydrodynamic Separator Device Installation, Well 11A Variable Frequency Drive Installation and Well 15 electrical Panel Replacement and VFD Installation). The City Council is scheduled to finalize the budget, including the new projects on June 19, 2018.

City Engineer Kumar advised that the action before the Planning Commission is the adoption of a resolution containing findings that five newly proposed projects in the CIP are consistent with the Manhattan Beach General Plan. Engineer Kumar also reviewed the entire list of capital projects by fund, highlighting program or budget changes, completed projects (23 total completed in FY 17-18) and the five new projects.

City Engineer Kumar clarified and provided additional information about various aspects of the CIP program and the projects in a brief discussion with the Commission. **Director Katsouleas** clarified that no projects have been eliminated, but small adjustments and reallocations are made to ensure that projects have appropriate funding. In addition, she advised that by the time the CIP comes to the Planning Commission for consistency findings, all projects have been thoroughly vetted by the City’s Finance Department to ensure funding is available to implement the project.

It was moved and seconded (Fournier/Burkhalter) to adopt resolution No. PC 18-XX (Attachment 1), determining that the new projects are consistent with the City of Manhattan Beach General Plan.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Burkhalter, Fournier, Chairperson Apostol
NOES: None
ABSENT: Morton, Seville-Jones
ABSTAIN: None

- 05/23/18-6. Presentation of a Prototype of the City Council-Selected Citywide Wayfinding Sign Program Theme (City of Manhattan Beach)

Public Works Director Stephanie Katsouleas gave an overview of the history of the wayfinding program, noting that in the fall of 2017, City Council selected a Beach Classic theme for the Citywide Wayfinding Sign Program. The council directed that staff proceed with the final development of the master plan guidelines for future signs; that Master Plan is in final review at this time. Prior to a final presentation and approval by City Council on June 5, the Public Works Department is seeking feedback from the Planning Commission on the Beach Classic theme based on the presentation and prototype Pedestrian Direction Sign presented.

Associate Engineer Mamerto Estepa reviewed the prototype sign, noting that the City Council selected a weathered wood look (not actual wood, however). The prototype shows the type but is not the exact product of sign that will be installed; it was constructed of an aluminum material with sign content embedded. The material is graffiti proof and durable with a life span of 15-20 years. Mr. Estepa reviewed the goals of the wayfinding program as well as the various sign types and how the prototype was developed through the wayfinding consultant. He is looking tonight for feedback as to the general motif.

The Public Works staff responded to questions from the Commission, confirming that murals were part of the wayfinding master plan. Director Katsouleas explained that the rollout will occur over time but the first signs proposed to be installed will be those directing visitors downtown and in the commercial North End areas.

Director Katsouleas explained that although the Council has already chosen the Beach Classic theme, the Commission's input was desired and that any significant feedback would be reported to the City Council when it is presented on June 5th. The Commission as a group endorsed the look of the signs as an attractive style and will be a definite improvement in that the city will have a uniformity in its signs.

05/23/18-7. Discussion of Work Plan Items for Upcoming Joint City Council/Planning Commission/Parking and Public Improvements Commission Meeting

Community Development Director McIntosh reviewed the background of this Work Plan item review, noting that this meeting gives the opportunity for the Commission to better understand the Council's goals. She reviewed briefly the items that Staff has suggested to be discussed including: 1) short-term rental policy; 2) the Governor's 2017 Housing Package; 3) Zoning code update of outdated parking standards (follow-up to the Sepulveda corridor program); 4) the Sepulveda corridor initiatives project; and 5) the Manhattan Village Mall expansion project.

The Commission briefly discussed and confirmed the list of topics as appropriate for the upcoming joint session. Director McIntosh stated it is not yet known how the meeting will be run. This year, the Work Plan is already approved, so the discussion will focus on those items with clarifications made as to what is expected to be accomplished.

She noted that if the Commission has any additional items that are desired to be discussed, to let her know.

7. DIRECTOR'S ITEMS

Rotation of Commissioners: Director McIntosh noted as a "heads up" that this item will be placed on the next agenda. The appropriate nominations will be: Commissioner Seville-Jones who is the current Vice-Chair, as Chair, and based on seniority, Commissioner Burkhalter as Vice Chair.

8. PLANNING COMMISSION ITEMS – None.

9. TENTATIVE AGENDA – June 13, 2018

- a. Variance – 2801 N. Valley Drive
- b. Variance – 2912 Ocean Drive
- c. Use Permit – Mother's Market & Kitchen, 1700 Rosecrans Avenue

10. ADJOURNMENT - The meeting was adjourned at 9:43 P.M. to Wednesday, June 13, 2018 at 6:00 P.M. in the City Council Chambers, City Hall, 1400 Highland Avenue.

ROSEMARY LACKOW
Recording Secretary

GEORGE APOSTOL
Chairperson

ATTEST:

ANNE MCINTOSH
Community Development Director