

**MANHATTAN BEACH
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 10, 2021
(DRAFT)**

A. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

A Regular meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Manhattan Beach, California was held virtually via Zoom on the 10th day of March, 2021, at the hour of 3:02 p.m. Chair Morton called the meeting to order, announced the protocol for participating in the meeting and welcomed new Commissioner Robert Tokashiki.

B. PLEDGE TO FLAG

C. ROLL CALL

Present: Tokashiki, Thompson, Ungoco, Vice Chair Fournier, Chairperson Morton
Absent: None
Others Present: Carrie Tai, AICP, Director of Community Development
Talyn Mirzakhanian, Planning Manager
Austin Chavira, Assistant Planner
Athena Henderson, Agenda Host
Nhung Huynh, Agenda Host

D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved and seconded (Thompson/Fournier) that the agenda be unchanged.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Tokashiki, Thompson, Ungoco, Vice Chair Fournier, Chairperson Morton
Noes: None
Absent: None
Abstain: None

Director Tai announced the motion passed 5-0.

E. PRESENTATION - Commendation for former Planning Commissioner Ben Burkhalter

Chair Morton, on behalf of the Commission, presented a commendation to Ben Burkhalter for service as Planning Commissioner, including as Chair, for nearly 3 years. The Commission and Director Tai, on behalf of staff, joined in expressing gratitude and recognition for the many projects Mr. Burkhalter contributed to, and also for being thoughtful, collaborative, inclusive, well researched and well prepared. Former Commissioner Burkhalter by teleconference, expressed his appreciation and good wishes.

F. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION - None

G. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

3/10/21-1 Regular Meeting – November 18, 2020

Commissioner Thompson requested that the minutes be revised in the following three places and provided staff with revised language:

- Page 5: The first paragraph under Commission Discussion.
- Page 6: 8th paragraph down from the top.
- Page 7: The first paragraph that continues to page 7.

Director Tai advised the Commission to vote on concurrence with Commissioner Thompson's requested revisions (Commissioner Tokashiki abstaining), then staff will revise and bring back for approval of the full minutes at the next meeting.

It was moved and seconded (Thompson/Morton) to amend the minutes as stated by Commissioner Thompson. Vice-Chair Fournier indicated that he will abstain as he had recused himself from participating in the hearing for this item.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Thompson, Ungoco, Vice Chair Fournier, Chairperson Morton
Noes: None
Absent: None
Abstain: Tokashiki, Vice-Chair Fournier

Director Tai announced: motion passed 3 (Aye) -0 (No)- 2 (Abstain)

H. PUBLIC HEARING

3/10/20 - Consideration of a Proposed Coastal Development Permit and Use Permit to Allow the Expansion of an Existing Retail Sales Use, Resulting in a Retail Sales Use with 3,310 Square Feet of Sales Floor Area Located at 1113-1121 Manhattan Avenue; and Adoption of an Environmental Determination in Accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (Skechers USA, Inc.)

Chair Morton opened the public hearing and invited staff to make a presentation.

Planning Manager Talyn Mirzakhanian advised that the applicant has requested a continuance in that there is a proposed change in the project and this necessitates that the public hearing be re-noticed; therefore, Staff recommends that the public hearing be continued to March 24, 2021.

It was subsequently moved and seconded (Ungoco/Fournier) that the public hearing be continued to March 24, 2021.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Tokashiki, Ungoco, Thompson, Vice Chair Fournier, Chairperson Morton
Noes: None
Absent: None
Abstain: None

Director Tai announced: motion passed 5 – 0.

03/10/21-3 Consideration of a Use Permit and Vesting Tentative Parcel Map No. 83261 for Three New Condominium Units at 1421 15th Street

Chair Morton opened the public hearing and invited staff to make a presentation.

Austin Chavira, Assistant Planner, presented the staff report. He concluded that staff recommends that the Planning Commission conduct the public hearing and adopt the attached resolution approving the project subject to certain conditions and adopt a determination of exemption under CEQA. Mr. Chavira emphasized that, in addition to meeting all applicable zoning requirements, the project will aid in the implementation of Programs 1-a, 1-c, 3-a, and 3-e of the Housing Element and has been determined to be Categorically Exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per Sections 15303 (h) and 15315 of the CEQA Guidelines.

Responding to **Commissioner Tokashiki**, Howard Crabtree, architect, indicated that he has worked in the City for three decades and has designed multiple three and four-unit residential projects in the last three years.

In response to **Chair Morton, Assistant Planner Chavira** clarified that RM zoning (Medium Density Residential) allows three units on the site and that if the applicant were proposing only two units, then a Use Permit would not be required and the project would require ministerial review only - as a “by right” development.

The Chair invited interested parties to address the Commission.

PUBLIC INPUT

Natalie Robinson expressed concern about the excavation for retaining walls and asked how that is to be handled.

Zach Dean, Manhattan Beach resident, voiced support for the project in that it will add to the housing stock which is needed.

There being no more speakers, Chair Morton invited staff to respond to the comment received regarding retaining walls.

Talyn Mirzakhanian, Planning Manager, explained that tonight the applicant seeks the right per planning and zoning regulations to build the project. In the next phase of plan check, the applicant will be required to show compliance with all applicable building codes including retaining wall construction.

Vice Chair Fournier noted he thought he heard a concern regarding a landfill situation.

Commissioner Tokashiki, explained that he is aware that the area of the project has sloping ground and believes the speaker’s concern was that nearby property retaining walls might be undermined by the construction. He concurred with staff – that this is issue typically checked thoroughly during plancheck when the new construction will be built to code to ensure adjoining grades will be maintained.

Talyn Mirzakhanian, Planning Manager, noted that one written (emailed) comment had been received and has been given to the Commission.

In response to **Commissioner Ungoco, Assistant Planner Chavira** stated that there is one “protected tree” (per the City’s Tree Ordinance) in the area proposed for the driveway and therefore it will be replaced with a new minimum 36-inch box tree.

Chair Morton opened the floor to Commission discussion.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND ACTION

Vice-Chair Fournier and **Commissioner Thompson** stated their support for the project finding that it will meet all applicable zoning and planning requirements.

It was subsequently moved and seconded (Thompson/Ungoco) that the Commission ADOPT the attached resolution approving the project subject to certain conditions and ADOPT a determination of exemption under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Roll Call:

Ayes: Tokashiki, Ungoco, Thompson, Vice Chair Fournier, Chairperson Morton
Noes: None
Absent: None
Abstain: None

Director Tai announced that the motion to approve the project passed 5 – 0 and that the appeal period is 15 days after the Commission decision; the decision is appealable to the City Council.

I. DIRECTOR’S ITEMS

1. Update on previous Commission projects. Director Tai informed that the City Council appeal hearing for the hotel use permit at 600 S. Sepulveda has been continued to April 6th, but it appears

that the hearing will be continued again to a meeting in May.

2. Outdoor Dining/COVID-19 issues. Director Tai informed:

- The county may very soon move into the next, less restrictive reopening tier which might allow some indoor dining. Careful consideration will be made as to whether, due to changed protocols, items will need to be reviewed by the Planning Commission. A metric would be whether a policy decision will require a planning process, if changes are permanent/semi-permanent and if a change will affect the coastal zone. Minimally, increases in dining capacities if conflicting with Use Permits could mean that those permits may need to be reviewed by the planning commission.
- Right of way dining that involves encroachment permits, would typically be reviewed by the PPIC (Parking and Public Improvements Commission) although this could also be heard directly by the City Council.

J. PLANNING COMMISSION ITEMS

Vice Chair Fournier suggested that the “Commission Items” agenda item be moved from the end to the front of the agenda because he feels it is a good opportunity for the public to know what the Commission is thinking about and by coming up earlier, he feels more viewers will have that opportunity. Director Tai stated that she would look into it and like to understand possible scenarios and this topic should have input from the whole Commission.

Commissioner Ungoco stated his opinion that if Commission items were agendized closer to the start of the meeting, it should only be for important announcements, and feels that the main purpose of Commissioner items is to request policy-oriented reports or studies. To do otherwise would be sort of backwards and cited today’s hearing as an example. He also inquired as to whether staff could provide a survey of what other cities are doing (requiring car chargers, solar panels, etc.) to successfully foster green development.

Director Tai responded by suggesting that staff could request the City’s Sustainability Manager, Dana Murray, to put together a fact sheet on what other cities are doing to foster green development. This is an issue that potentially relates to an anticipated policy discussion by the City Council in May/June on the city’s sustainability and/or climate mitigation efforts. The Director also briefly explained the Community Development Department’s currently limited ability in being able to create a baseline or track green development that could assist in setting future targets.

Commissioner Thompson: has visited the Manhattan Village Shopping Center and encourages all to do the same as many things are happening. The plaza is now open and you can eat in the plaza with take-out food. **Director Tai** affirmed that there are several tenant improvements being completed, and the business categories include a variety of retail and several types of eating and drinking establishments. The Director also informed regarding the Fry’s Electronics site: the electronics store has been closed, and “Phase 3” of redevelopment of the overall shopping center site will need to go through its own entitlement process. Staff will keep the Commission informed.

Commissioner Fournier inquired further about the Fry’s site, noting he has learned that the area under the Sepulveda bridge (a planned major improvement) will be a fully enclosed tunnel. He also inquired as to whether the City could compel redevelopment of a site, citing the property at Sepulveda Boulevard and Manhattan Beach Boulevard. **Director Tai** informed that until the property owner exercises his right to develop and submits an entitlement application (Master Use Permit Amendment), the site may be governed by a city “vacant site ordinance” that requires the site to be properly secured and maintained.

Chair Morton commented that he feels that the current agenda position for “Commission Items” is appropriate.

K. TENTATIVE AGENDA – March 24, 2021

Director Tai noted that the agenda will include the continued public hearing for a proposed coastal development permit and use permit to allow the expansion of an existing retail sales use at 1113 – 1121 Manhattan Avenue.

L. ADJOURNMENT TO – It was moved and seconded (Thompson/Fournier) that the meeting be adjourned at 4:10 p.m. to Wednesday, March 24, 2021 at 3:00 p.m. via Zoom/virtual format. The motion passed unanimously 5-0 with a roll call vote.

ROSEMARY LACKOW
Recording Secretary

GERRY MORTON
Chairperson

ATTEST:

Carrie Tai, AICP
Community Development Director