



PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

City Council Chamber
200 Old Bernal Avenue, Pleasanton, CA 94566

DRAFT

Wednesday, February 8, 2017

CALL TO ORDER

The Planning Commission Meeting of February 8, 2017, was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Acting Chair Nagler.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Adam Weinstein.

1. ROLL CALL

Staff Members Present: Adam Weinstein, Planning Manager/Deputy Director of Community Development; Julie Harryman, Assistant City Attorney; Steve Otto, Senior Planner; and Kendall Granucci, Recording Secretary

Commissioners Present: Commissioners Justin Brown, Greg O'Connor, Herb Ritter and Acting Chair David Nagler

Commissioners Absent: Commissioner Nancy Allen and Chair Jack Balch

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - None

3. MEETING OPEN FOR ANY MEMBER OF THE AUDIENCE TO ADDRESS THE PLANNING COMMISSION ON ANY ITEM WHICH IS NOT ALREADY ON THE AGENDA

There were no members of the audience wishing to address the Commission.

4. REVISIONS TO THE AGENDA

There were no revisions to the agenda.

5. **CONSENT CALENDAR**

Consent Calendar items are considered routine and will be enacted, approved, or adopted by one motion unless a request for removal for discussion or explanation is received from the Planning Commission or a member of the public by submitting a speaker card for that item.

There were no Consent Calendar items.

6. **PUBLIC HEARING AND OTHER MATTERS**

a. **P16-1771, Larry McColm**

Application for Design Review approval to remodel an existing, partially demolished commercial building and construct related site improvements at 30 West Angela Street. Zoning for the property is C-C (Central Commercial), Downtown Revitalization, Core Area Overlay District.

Adam Weinstein presented the staff report and described the scope, layout, and key elements of the proposal.

Commissioner Ritter: I know they don't have a restaurant application per se yet, but do they know the hours they are thinking about being open. The reason I'm asking is to see if we can tie that to the parking so when they're not open there those spaces become public parking spaces, or is that something that's been talked about?

Weinstein: No lease has been signed at this point so we don't have any idea of what use will actually be occupying the building. Shared parking is something we always like to promote but I think that's outside of this application and requires coordination with the applicant.

Commissioner Brown: Well, I had a few questions that I shared with staff. One question/comment I had and Adam has already answered it, but I just wanted it for the record, our City guidelines don't include the outside space in determining the parking requirement. And in this case the outside square footage is 996 square feet which is pretty substantial so if you add that in, even though it doesn't demand it, the parking requirement would be 14 which is still a lot less than the 24 so I'm okay there.

I had a minor detail which was around the grease receptor. I noticed it was in the middle of the main parking lot and the comment I made to Adam was it had 150 gallons at some point. Not being in the petrol industry, I don't know what that looks like, but at some point there will be a truck with a hose and a pipe pumping that out presumably at some point during regular business hours and could that also be moved to the back. And then, I had a couple of other questions regarding color palette but I'll save those.

One question I did have from the presentation was given that....I don't know if it's one wall or two walls that remain. I know two walls are being taken out and the site is in quite disrepair and the roof doesn't look like it's had any shingles for a while. I'm just wondering why we're trying to save that north wall when it limits design and it's not

structurally sound and in my rough opinion, 50 percent of the building itself is already down, why we're limiting the design due to that north face structural integrity.

Weinstein: So the applicant can probably best address the question, but we went through several design iterations for this project. You probably noted in the staff report that initially we received applications for a three-story mixed use project, so something dramatically different from what is currently being proposed was proposed at that time. Over time, the design was really dialed back into something from our understanding of what the applicant desired was just something that was extremely cost effective that utilized what is left of the building to the extent possible but still created a useful space that can be re-activated and can accommodate the use, so my understanding, and the applicant can correct us if I'm wrong, is that cost is really driving this site program. He is really trying to use the building to the extent possible, even though not much of it is left.

Commissioner Brown: Okay and my other observation was obviously triangular outside seating kind of limits the number and placement of tables and so on and so forth. I'm just wondering, given it's not a historical resource, was whether any sort of different design orientation of the building would result in an even better presentation of the outdoor seating and more options for the potential future lessor of that space.

Weinstein: We could imagine 20 different design configurations on this site. I think in this particular case we really tried to work with the applicant to keep the existing buildings and that seemed to be one of the major objectives of this latest version of the design.

Commissioner Brown: Fair enough. I will hold further questions and ask the applicant.

Acting Chair Nagler: Any other questions? Okay, let's hear from the applicant. Mr. McColm, thank you for coming this evening.

THE PUBLIC HEARING WAS OPENED.

Larry McColm, Architect: My name is Larry McColm at 350 Main Street, Suite H, Downtown Pleasanton. I've owned that building at 350 Main since 1990 so it'll be 27 years this June. We've been in town since back in 1982 and so we're one of the old timers now. Back in the Ken Mercer days and Brian Swift—you probably know all of those names.

So anyway, I'm here to answer any questions. We've been working on this for about a year total. The site has been vacant for over a year and it's structurally sound and we removed non-structural interior improvements and the old windows. So everything you see there is completely structurally sound. We've had a structural engineer look at it and it's actually built very well.

If we were to remove like say the north wall, any component of what structure is there that kicks in CBC 2016 which opens up a can of worms that you've never seen before. In other words, raise the whole thing and just forget it because nothing is going to be salvageable. We proposed to the structural engineer to cut open....we want to have some nice doors facing out to Angela Street. He went through the whole thing and we

paid him a lot of money to review that too, and it came back that it's not feasible to interrupt any part of that structure or it will kick in the current code to respond to the whole thing. It won't pass current codes even though it's built very well. It's a solid structure.

So this is what we ended up coming to. It was really a two-fold possibility—take it down and build a whole new building and we went through almost a year on that and then this was pushed back, pushed back and we spent a lot of time spinning wheels on trying to get the new building point and it just wasn't going to happen. I think the site is just too small and the planning director felt it was just too much mass to put a new building there. We would need to square it up with the street and he just didn't like it. So we realized after about 8 or 9 months we had to throw in the towel because we were wasting a lot of time and money trying to get a new building there. It's sad because it was going to be a beautiful building and the building that we had proposed was going to be a nice addition to downtown and the PDA really wanted it. But that chapter is now closed.

So we are now left with renovating the existing structure and just working the best we can. I would say that we are putting the best amount of makeup and lipstick we can to make this a beautiful project; the best that we can with what we have and it is what it is. It was built as a courthouse and the Pleasanton Municipal Court was there and they had a little jail cell for people with drunk driving or whatever and in fact, one of the police officer's daughter was the one that came out to this site and she said she remembered when her Dad used to have to appear in court in that building in the 1960's so it's going way back.

But this is what we're left to work with is the existing structure and we also hired a designer out of Walnut Creek to give us three different concepts and we took the best of those after running it through staff, the best of those of each of those and put them together and this is what they came up with. A lot of effort has gone into this to put the best face on this building as we possibly can and I'm here to answer any questions that you might have.

Acting Chair Nagler: Great, thank you. Thanks for putting in all that work? Questions?

Commissioner O'Connor: So the only downside I saw with the design was that big blank wall because it's so prominent to Angela, and if there is no way to break through it and do something with some windows or whatever, I don't know how creative you and your architect might get. I don't know if you could do a false window look. I don't know if you could do a mural; something of interest. I know it will help you and the diners in that outside area not to just have a big blank wall.

McColm: If I could respond to that; what you're looking at now is just a big blank wall. What we're going to have is a complete pergola that comes out to the sidewalk and then the pergola will have a nice brick planter with plants such as privet or something like that and flowers too. Those will grow up enough that I think between the pergola and the planter, it's a minimal amount and it's going to be recessed now in the back of the pergola; the outdoor dining area. It will not be as prominent as what you're seeing now.

Commissioner O'Connor: And I agree with you from the street, but I'm talking about your diners who are sitting in that covered area. It would be nice if they had something other than a blank wall to look at.

McColm: Right, so we've dressed the wall too with a nice plank siding and trim. We're adding a storefront glass on the west end of the wall so you see that that's an opening now. That will be where people go out to the outdoor dining area. We dressed it up I think as best as we can. You won't see the block that you see now. It will dress that up and I think it's going to be very attractive. I think it will be a huge improvement over what we have there now.

Commissioner Brown: Well, I just have a comment. I don't want to be at all disrespectful because I imagine you've done a ton of work and spent a ton of money and you come to this group. Just from my own perspective, it seems to be aesthetically brown on brown on brown, a brown façade, brown pergola. I'm not looking for anything wild or anything outside of the DSP guidelines, but my personal preference would be to have seen some variety. For example, I think of the Starbucks building it's got a mix of brick and light tan color, it's got some textural components and color components that I felt aligns nice, but again, that's just my opinion.

Acting Chair Nagler: On the color board, there are some lighter colors so maybe you can describe where those appear.

McColm: Well, first of all, these were colors that staff preferred because we originally submitted it with.....I can show you what we originally submitted. They rejected this and this was a little more colorful. We had some red tones. If you've ever been to the Cooperage in Lafayette, we took their colors because their building is very similar to this building. It's got the long sloped roof that comes down a little low. It's got a lot of similar features of this building, so we took a lot of design elements from the Cooperage in Lafayette and we used their colors, but staff does not like those. They wanted to go back to earth tones so they chose these.

Commissioner Brown: So my comment is made more at staff. It's just my personal opinion and I'm also basing it on some of the newer buildings you see in Danville as well; kind of that recent farmhouse restaurant in Danville where they had a lot of outdoor seating and a similar kind of concept.

McColm: Sideboards in Danville? Almanac?

Commissioner Brown: Almanac.

McColm: We looked at those, as well.

Commissioner O'Connor: So just for clarification, the color board looks like the siding is a much lighter color from what I've seen.

Acting Chair Nagler: These colors, where do they appear? It indicates as the siding. The way it's rendered here looks much darker.

McColm: Yeah, I think he has colors there. If you look at the lower...

Acting Chair Nagler: Oh, so it's painted this color but it's this material.

McColm: Yes, that's the material and the paint color is below.

Acting Chair Nagler: Okay, so you don't see this is what's painted.

McColm: Right.

Commissioner O'Connor: Right, but the one to your left, the one on the corner is the trim?

McColm: That's the body color and then the darker one is the trim.

Commissioner O'Connor: So we're getting even different looking colors....

McColm:yeah, this is what I was showing you that we had proposed originally. These are the Cooperage colors from the Lafayette building that we were originally....staff said they didn't like the red. It's called Fire Weed and it's a deep, almost like a burgundy color. It's a deeper red.

Commissioner O'Connor: Maybe we should talk to staff?

Weinstein: If the Commission wants us to work with the applicant to liven up the colors a little bit, that's fine. I think we saw some red in the original proposal which struck us as something that's different than most buildings in Downtown. So we suggested veering a little more towards a more conservative color palette and maybe it went too far, so we're happy to work with the applicant to freshen things up a bit.

Commissioner Ritter: Just to lighten it up. Just one other question—your roof is metal?

McColm: Yes, a standing seam metal roof.

Commissioner Ritter: And it's a dark color which attracts heat. Has that been a consideration of concern? I mean a dark metal roof—it will just be a hot box out there.

McColm: Yeah, it will be hotter than a light roof but a light roof is going to really stand out. I think we'd be better off to add additional insulation to the ceiling and deal with it that way because I think if you go with a light roof it's going to not look right and that's the concern with that.

Acting Chair Nagler: Okay, so you're hearing staff's sentiment, but we'd like to add more variation to the color.

Commissioner O'Connor: Well, even the colors that Justin was passing around, I think the painted color was lighter than what we're seeing in this picture.

McColm: I don't want to confuse anybody but I wanted to pass these around. These were the concept sketches from the designer we hired out of Walnut Creek. He's done a lot of buildings in Lafayette Walnut Creek, and Danville. He's done a lot of those restaurants with outdoor seating type of thing. He came up with these three designs—there's A, B and C. These are sketch designs. They took the best of the elements that staff and ourselves preferred and put them together in one so we got that tower feature which is the iconic feature of the project and that came from him; Jackson Designs.

Acting Chair Nagler: And that raised roof?

McColm: The raised barn? They got into structural issues with that again, and the structural engineer said nope, you can't do that. You'd have to tear down the whole building to do that and so we're back to this. We couldn't do that. It would look great.

Commissioner Brown: I know we kind of passed the sketches around. I mean, the other comment I was going to make and normally our Acting Chair is the one that leans on the aesthetic comments, was whether or not there could be any additional feature added to the main tower. I know in this sketch here you've got some sort of window or some other feature on the tower which in the proposed rendering you do have this Main signage on both sides.

McColm: The signage will be a separate application. That's specified in conditions of approval.

Commissioner Brown: I guess in general, I'm finding that the design needs a little more kick; either the color or additional dimensions. Like I said, I want to be consistent with the DSP and goals and I think you can do that. You've got some other ideas that I think are pretty interesting like this one diagram here. Again, this is not design from the dais here but me providing comment. You've got some vertical paneling versus horizontal paneling and then it's all horizontal paneling.

Acting Chair Nagler: That would be a staff question.

Commissioner Brown: Again, these comments are partially to staff.

Acting Chair Nagler: Right, so I think what you're hearing is encouraging you, and we're trying to help, to push back on staff a little bit to make the building have more variation in its finishes, more contrast in the coloring, right? And staff will certainly work with you in that way. Any other questions?

Commissioner O'Connor: Again, I'm happy with the design. I do think it needs to be lightened just a little bit so it's not all dark on dark. But like Justin said, I do like this tower better. It looks taller. It incorporates some glass, some windows but it's not a deal-breaker for me.

Acting Chair Nagler: I'm sure you've seen staff's suggestion for an additional condition of approval that you would be asked to work with staff on breaking up the exterior wall in some way. But what we're hearing from you is that it's basically a non-starter in a conversation. Is that right?

McColm: It's a non-starter. If we're talking about cutting into any portion of that wall the whole building needs to come down and that's where we're at on this. Then we're back to doing this proposal which was turned down nine months....we've been back five or six times with variations of this one. Do you want to see this? Well, it's dead anyway and we just have wasted too much time on this. This building has been vacant for almost two and one-half years and it's an eyesore Downtown and it's not for the lack of trying.

The simple concept is we're going to improve an existing building. It's a 3,000 square foot renovation. It's not a new building. We're probably not even going to change the use. It would be the same use as it was before and as simple as I've tried to keep that concept, it has gone on over a year. So I just don't have any more time for it.

Commissioner Nagler: That's fine, so you've answered my second question. Thank you for anticipating my question. Thank you very much. Mike, would you like to speak?

Mike O'Callaghan: Commission, Michael O'Callaghan, 125 W. Neal Street. I've been a builder here in town since 1974 and had my hands on most of the buildings in town and I've built quite a few of them including 350 Main, 200 Main Street, the Round Table Pizza building a couple of times, and sat on the Design Review Committee for the PDA for a number of years, had my hands in all of the discussions regarding the existing Downtown Design Guidelines. I sat through that process, on and on and on—I've earned these grey hairs. I am not beyond pushing back on staff, as they will well tell you, but next time I think I will take you with me because if there's any more on this project, you're going to end up with a dead player.

A couple of points I'd like to bring up for the record. It's not a change of use. We don't have a change of use on this project until we bring in a tenant that is a different use than the restaurant use that was there. So if we have another restaurant use then there's no change of use from what was there. A change of use triggers some code upgrade issues, especially with fire sprinkler systems and so forth.

Larry already covered the point....I'm the one that did the demolition to the building. Don't put my name up on a sign because it's going to just sit there looking ugly for a long time. But all of the structural walls were left so you know, Larry's very correct about opening up any of the structural walls triggers code upgrades.

The sump for a future potential grease trap and a grease trap pumper-outer-person, they usually come in the middle of the night. I've put a number of them in. I put one in behind 55 Angela. I built that building. You can park a car in that grease trap that's back there, but we have very limited flow grade and so if it worked out any sump would go in the planter directly adjacent to the west wall of the building. A pump truck would come in the middle of the night. No one wants those guys around. They smell and they have to be cleaned up behind them and so forth.

Color schemes—I think you guys all are on the right point there. 350 Main Street just went through a color change, very subtle colors but I don't know, I've painted that building a couple of times. I've remodeled it a couple of times and I think they've pulled

it off. It looks a lot better than it did and they're kind of subtle colors. Any questions regarding construction?

Acting Chair Nagler: No? (Commissioners nodded).

O'Callaghan: And Larry was right on the insulation values for the roofing and so forth. Most jurisdictions that I work in go with darker roof schemes and the developer just has to bite the bullet and insulate them a little bit better.

Acting Chair Nagler: Thank you very much.

O'Callaghan: Thank you.

THE PUBLIC HEARING WAS CLOSED.

Commissioner Brown: I was just going to add one thing. He talked about probably having to eliminate the other parking space and moving the dumpster into the back. I think there's also a door that opens into the parking and if there is opportunity to offset it such that this might also be a consideration as well. It opens out. I had some questions in terms of the number of patrons and so on, but I think it's premature and it's not necessary relevant to the application so I'll delay those.

Acting Chair Nagler: Any general comments about this?

Commissioner Brown: First of all as a resident now of eight years I know we had the, I think it was Joy Chinese restaurant there and it's been vacant for a long time and like you said, it's a bit of an eyesore now. I'm thrilled to have a design to review that's going to immensely improve the appearance of the downtown and draw people in. I like the idea of the outdoor seating as staff correctly pointed out. That's one of our guiding principles of the DSP and we want to make good pedestrian flow and outdoor dining and so on. It does that. I understand your reasons for wanting to re-use the existing building footprint and so on. My only reservations are more around just the aesthetics that you already covered. I'd like to see a potential tweak to the tower to add an additional feature maybe, but overall, I'm very supportive of having a current active use of that space so close to the Downtown so thanks very much.

Acting Chair Nagler: Thank you.

Commissioner O'Connor: I've made all of my comments.

Commissioner Ritter: I'm good with a motion. I'd like to just compliment on the openness. I think it's really great to have outdoor/indoor so it feels like your outdoor and indoor. One thing when they do design it for noise, I want it so they will be able to have music inside as an option so we don't have to go through that noise Downtown issue.

And the bike rack, maybe look at public art bike racks? That's an idea that we've done in other parts of the City that look good, but I'd like to make a motion?

Acting Chair Nagler: Before you do, let me just also say that you guys have done a very good job I think of taking this structure and making it attractive. I particularly appreciate the use of brick on the outside of the building and trying to give it different heights, and without beating a dead horse on the finishes and colors; we're encouraging you to work with staff. I can speak on behalf of the Commission to pursue something different, but having said that, there are obviously Downtown Design Guidelines and we're not looking for a pink building with purple trim, right? So, it's something that potentially gives more depth to the appearance of the building, right? But I think you guys have done a great job in designing it. I appreciate the fact that you tried to do more on the site. The site certainly could stand to have a more substantial building on it, but you are making a strategic decision about how to best proceed, so I appreciate that too.

**Commissioner Ritter moved to approve Item 6.a., P16-1771, subject to the conditions of approval as listed in Exhibit A, with the recommendation for staff to work with the applicant on revising the colors of the building.
Commissioner O'Connor seconded the motion.**

ROLL CALL VOTE:

AYES: Commissioners Brown, Nagler, O'Connor, and Ritter
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: None
RECUSED: None
ABSENT: Commissioners Allen and Balch

Resolution No. PC-2017-01 approving Case P16-1900 was entered and adopted as motioned.

7. MATTERS INITIATED BY COMMISSION MEMBERS

The Planning Commission requested staff to consider revisions to the content required on the Planning Commission speaker cards.

8. MATTERS FOR COMMISSION'S REVIEW/ACTION/INFORMATION

a. Reports from Meetings Attended (e.g., Committee, Task Force, etc.)

No discussion was held or action taken.

b. Future Planning Calendar

Weinstein: So we actually have a fairly busy agenda for the next meeting on the 22nd, although some of the items will be on Consent. We have the Lund Ranch Vesting Tentative Map which you almost heard a couple of months ago. We have a design review application for a single family residence on Sycamore Terrace, we're probably going to bring back the accessory dwelling unit item, and we'll be talking about the Planning Commission's recommendations for City Council priorities as well. And then last but not least, there is an application for design review for a new building at 19 Wyoming Street.

Acting Chair Nagler: So all that's for the next meeting?

Weinstein: Yes, all of that is for the next meeting. We'll try to figure out which ones should be on the Consent and which ones shouldn't so the meeting is not overwhelming. And there's also the possibility of moving things around, but that's the tentative schedule for now.

Then, just to give you a heads up for the March 8th meeting date, the big item for that meeting will be a work session on the Spotorno project, which you know is out at Happy Valley. It's off of Alisal near the golf course. It's a 39 single-family unit project and it's at a very conceptual stage right now so we just want to get your basic comments on the conceptual site plan for that project and we'll also be taking comments on the scope of the EIR for that project. It's a big enough project with the potential for environmental impacts that we're doing a relatively big environmental review document, so we'll want to get your comments on that. And then we'll also be bringing back the Downtown Parking Strategy Implementation Plan. Some changes were made since you last saw it so we just want to present it to you for a recommendation to Council on adoption.

Acting Chair Nagler: And somewhere in there you will be bringing the Ponderosa project?

Weinstein: Yes, yes, Ponderosa right now is scheduled for March 22nd, so the meeting after, or three meetings from now.

Commissioner O'Connor: A question for you on the work session, you said that's a pretty large one. Does that include any kind of a General Plan Amendment or any kind of a zoning change?

Weinstein: Yes, lots and lots of legislative changes. We can probably go into more detail at the meeting, but General Plan Amendments, amendments to the Happy Valley Specific Plan, rezoning, changes to the Urban Growth Boundary—I think those are the big ones, so yes, suffice to say, the project requires quite a few changes and some distinct policy documents.

Acting Chair Nagler: And if at the next meeting we are going to bring back the accessory dwelling unit policy, you'll make sure that Commissioner Allen has the information that she requested well in advance of that meeting so we can have an efficient conversation?

Weinstein: Yes, absolutely. We're putting together the comparative information right now so we'll have that out well in advance of the meeting to everybody, including Commissioner Allen.

Acting Chair Nagler: Okay, thank you.

c. Actions of the City Council

Acting Chair Nagler: Something happened last night, what was that?

Weinstein: Irby Ranch was approved and the Planning Commission got a lot of kudos from City Council as well. They were really pleased with your thorough review of the project and the five or so recommendations that you made for enhancing the project. Those enhancements were made. They range from open space to reallocating parking, and the City Council really, at least from their comments, really appreciated the work that you guys put into it and really felt it made the project better. When the project was presented to Council last night, they didn't really have that many questions or any real major concerns about the project, and there was only one very small amendment made to the conditions of approval. They really remained as you saw them before, so kudos from the City Council.

Nagler: Great, thank you.

d. Actions of the Zoning Administrator

No discussion was held or action taken.

e. Matters for Commission's Information

No discussion was held or action taken.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Acting Chair Nagler adjourned the meeting at 7:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kendall Granucci
Recording Secretary