



## PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

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

**APPROVED**

**Wednesday, July 10, 2013**

*(Staff has reviewed the proposed changes against the recorded proceedings and confirms that these Minutes are accurate.)*

### **CALL TO ORDER**

The Planning Commission Meeting of July 10, 2013, was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair Jennifer Pearce.

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by the Commission.

### **1. ROLL CALL**

Staff Members Present: Brian Dolan, Director of Community Development; Janice Stern, Planning Manager; Julie Harryman, Assistant City Attorney; Steve Otto, Senior Planner; Shweta Bonn, Associate Planner; Natalie Amos, Associate Planner; Jenny Soo, Associate Planner; Richard Patenaude, Contract Planner; Mike Tassano, City Traffic Engineer; Steve Kirkpatrick, City Engineer; Kaushik Bhatt, Associate Civil Engineer; and Maria L. Hoey, Recording Secretary

Commissioners Present: Commissioners Nancy Allen, Greg O'Connor, Jennifer Pearce, and Herb Ritter

Commissioners Absent: Arne Olson and Mark Posson

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**a. June 26, 2013**

Commissioner Ritter requested that the first sentence of the second paragraph under "Selection of one Commissioner to replace Commissioner Narum on the East Pleasanton Specific Plan Task Force" be modified to read as follows: "Commissioner Ritter indicated that he would be honored to serve on the Task Force and that is already honored serving as an Alternate "of the Parks and Recreation Commission".

Chair Pearce requested that the last sentence of the Minutes be amended to indicate that Chair Pearce, and not Chair Blank, adjourned the meeting.

**Commissioner Ritter moved to approve the Minutes of June 26, 2013, as amended.**

**Commissioner Allen seconded the motion.**

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

**AYES: Commissioners Allen, O'Connor, Pearce, and Ritter.**

**NOES: None.**

**ABSTAIN: None.**

**RECUSED: None.**

**ABSENT: Commissioners Olson and Posson.**

The Minutes of the June 26, 2013 meeting were approved, as amended.

**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 was no one in the audience wishing to address the Planning Commission.

**4. REVISIONS AND OMISSIONS TO THE AGENDA**

Janice Stern advised that there were no revisions or omissions to the Agenda.

Chair Pearce noted that the Commission would consider Item 6.b., PUD-87/P13-1981, Sares Regis/E&S Ring, before Item 6.a., PUD-97, Ponderosa Homes, and asked staff if the applicants were amenable to that change.

Ms. Stern said yes.

## 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.*

### a. P13-1987/P13-1988, Amerco Real Estate Co.

**Applications for: (1) modification to the approved Conditional Use Permit (PCUP-109) Cor-O-Van Moving and Storage located at 5555 Sunol Blvd to accommodate a U-Haul moving, rental, and storage facility; and (2) Design Review approval to modify the site and building. Zoning for the property is I-P (Industrial Park) District.**

### b. P11-0899, AT&T

**Application for Design Review approval to install a wireless facility consisting of a 55-foot tall monopine and related wireless equipment within the Transportation Corridor behind 2126 Rheem Drive and adjacent to the Iron Horse Trail.**

**Commissioner O'Connor moved to make the Conditional Use Permit findings for Case P13-1987 as listed in the staff report and to approve Cases P13-1987 and P13-1988, subject to the Conditions of Approval listed in the staff report as Exhibit A-1 and Exhibit A-2, respectively; and Case P11-0899, subject to the Conditions of Approval listed in the staff report as Exhibit A. Commissioner Allen seconded the motion.**

## ROLL CALL VOTE:

**AYES: Commissioners Allen, O'Connor, Pearce, and Ritter.  
NOES: None.  
ABSTAIN: None.  
RECUSED: None.  
ABSENT: Commissioners Olson and Posson.**

Resolutions Nos. PC-2013-32 approving Case P13-1987, PC-2013-33 approving Case P13-1988, and PC-2013-33 approving Case P11-0899 were entered and adopted as motioned.

## 6. PUBLIC HEARINGS AND OTHER MATTERS

Item 6.b., PUD-87/P13-1981, Sares Regis/E&S Ring, was considered before Item 6.a., PUD-97, Ponderosa Homes.

**a. PUD-87, P13-1981 Sares Regis/E&S Ring**

**Applications for: (1) Planned Unit Development (PUD) Development Plan approval to construct 345 apartment units, an approximately 38,781-square-foot retail center consisting of four buildings, new surface parking, and related site improvements on an approximately 16-acre site located at 3150 Bernal Avenue (southeast corner of Bernal Avenue and Stanley Boulevard); (2) Development Agreement; (3) Affordable Housing Agreement; and (4) Growth Management Approval. Zoning for the property is PUD-HDR (Planned Unit Development – High Density Residential) and PUD-C (Planned Unit Development – Commercial) Districts.**

Shweta Bonn stated that she would present the staff report and described the background, scope, and key elements of the proposed project; and the applicant's presentation would focus on the differences between what was presented at the December 12, 2012 Work Session and the current proposal.

Commissioner O'Connor asked Ms. Bonn to go over the changes made since the Work Session.

Ms. Bonn highlighted the changes, noting that details would be provided by the applicant's presentation:

- The residential architecture in Clusters 1 and 3 has incorporated more craftsman-style elements.
- Building E3 in Cluster 3 is now all three stories.
- The corner of Stanley Boulevard and Bernal Avenue has been modified to include wing walls and a large tree as a focal point.
- An additional tot lot has been added in Cluster 1.
- An additional bus stop was added 400 feet west of the Stanley Boulevard/Bernal Avenue/Valley Avenue intersection.
- Changes to the commercial area include an increased thickness to the cornice, a reduced overhang to the eave, and a more traditional lighting element.

Commissioner Ritter pointed out that on page 20 of the staff report, staff noted that the project does not meet the parking requirements for the commercial portion of the project but that the parking on the site will adequately serve the proposed commercial shopping center.

Ms. Bonn stated that was correct. She indicated that the Commercial Neighborhood zoning for the property requires one parking space for every 180 square feet of floor area, and the proposed ratios in both retail options come out to about one parking space for every 200 square feet. She noted that in each situation, the traffic study looked at the Institute of Transportation Engineers standards and found that it would be acceptable. She added that there is some internal trip capture based on the assumption that some residents living in the apartment units would walk to the commercial uses.

Brian Dolan stated that following that vein, one of the reasons staff is comfortable with this is that in a shopping center, the standard applied out of the zoning ordinance is for every square foot, as if these were all one individual building built by themselves. He noted that the chances are that not all the occupants are going to be at 100-percent capacity at the same time. He further noted that usually, people would go to a couple of different places and not necessarily everybody going to one spot at the same time. He added that there is some efficiency in a small shopping center. He pointed out that it is not always perfect, as in the case of the Safeway shopping center on Bernal Avenue, where the end of the shopping center that has the most concentration of restaurants has a little congestion at lunchtime and maybe even at dinnertime. He added that he thinks that has to do with the mix of restaurants.

Commissioner Allen inquired if some of the zoning use changes referenced on pages 14 and 15 of the staff report are changes staff is recommending at this stage or something staff is looking to the Commission for input. She further inquired if staff is comfortable with these changes.

Ms. Bonn replied that the applicant is proposing to have these uses as permitted uses and that staff is comfortable with these changes and has incorporated them in the Conditions of Approval. She indicated that there are a couple of modifications; an example would be the hours of operation at convenience markets, which has been incorporated as a condition of approval.

Chair Pearce noted that this was something the Commission went over at the Work Session.

Commissioner O'Connor agreed.

#### **THE PUBLIC HEARING WAS OPENED.**

John Pringle, E&S Ring, Applicant, thanked staff for a great deal of effort and collaborative work with the applicants over the last two-and-a-half years, starting with the Task Force meetings through the rezoning process and appearances in front of Planning Commission on multiple occasions. He added that staff was also involved in helping them organize community outreach multiple times, and the plan has evolved to what they think is a terrific plan and great for the community. He introduced the project team present tonight and available to answer questions: Ken Rodriguez of Ken Rodriguez and Partners, Project Architect for the retail development; Rob Steinberg of Steinberg Architects, Project Architect for the residential development; Ken Bush of Sares-Regis, the Lead Project Manager since the beginning of this year; Paul Letierri of Guzzardo Partnership, Landscape Architect; and Frank Auf de Maur, property owner, who has been trying to develop the site for many years and has auctioned the land to E&S Ring. He then handed the floor over to Mr. Steinberg.

Rob Steinberg stated that he will limit his presentation to a few of the changes that have been made subsequent to the last meeting. He started by saying that they organized this project as a series of three different villages, so there would be variety between the different housing options, knitted together with a series of open spaces, including wide-open community spaces like the village center hardscape, a plaza as well as a large common green that would be appropriate for throwing a ball around, a whole series of neighborhood open spaces, an additional tot lot on the far left, and other active, greenbelts that begin to tie and knit all these together as well.

Mr. Steinberg continued that to reinforce this idea of the village, there are a variety of heights that are shown with different colors, with lower heights around the perimeter. He noted that in response to the Commission's concerns about the arches and the thinness of the plaster that connected the bases, the arches have been eliminated, and the bases are a little bit more solid, sitting on brick bases, with a variety of different roof forms to them. He displayed a rendition of the leasing center and the recreation center and how that integrates with the buildings and gives the variety of heights and character to the community. He then showed the proposed entry from Bernal Avenue, noting that in response to the Commission's concerns about the corners being a little bit weak and the inverted "L"-shape trim on the balconies, they have really anchored the ends with some special detailing, using a variety of materials, starting with a brick base.

Mr. Steinberg then presented a slide showing the view of the buildings from the Bernal Avenue entry. He stated that the body of the building is horizontal lap siding which gives a nice shadow pattern, stucco, and enhanced dormers, which really gives one a feeling for the quality of the buildings, a sense of the brick, the wood trim, and the accents. He noted that he thinks they have really been able to capture the character of Pleasanton in a way that will make this a very compatible part of the community.

Mr. Steinberg stated that one of the Commission's issues with the garages was that they were a little flat and that needed to be enhanced. He noted that they have added a variety of balconies -- single and double balconies -- trellises, and brick, which provide some richness to the courts as people come into their individual garages.

With respect to the entry sign on the corner of Bernal Avenue and Stanley Boulevard, the project's landscape architect did a masterful job by introducing paving and seating using warm, rich materials, and more mature trees and the arbor, all of which set a tone of permanence and quality.

#### **THE PUBLIC HEARING WAS CLOSED.**

Chair Pearce thanked the applicant for a great presentation, concise and to the point.

Commissioner O'Connor disclosed that he had met with Mr. Pringle to go over some of the new changes.

Commissioner Ritter disclosed that he also met with Mr. Pringle and thanked him for showing him the property. He noted that on one of the exhibits it states the entryways to the residential buildings are all internal corridors and stairways that lead to the particular units. He indicated that safety is always an issue with women and children and corridors and inquired if that is going to be an issue at all.

Mr. Pringle replied that he does not have an issue with opening the corridors to the open air. He noted that the majority of the 8,000 apartment units that the E&S Ring family owns, some dating back as far as 1959, have interior hallways and virtually no crime. He indicated that it depends on the neighborhood and added that the individual apartment units will have individual alarm systems as an amenity.

Commissioner Ritter addressed the traffic issues and stated that staff has confirmed that based on the analysis, there is not going to be traffic issues even with the East Pleasanton Specific Plan site coming on in the next 20 to 30 years. He asked Mike Tassano, City Traffic Engineer, to address that.

Mike Tassano stated that he thinks Commissioner Ritter is asking if the development of the East Pleasanton Specific Plan area was considered in the traffic study. He indicated that the East Pleasanton Specific Plan Task Force is underway right now trying to determine what is actually going to be out there. He noted that for the last 20 years, staff has always assumed that something big is going to be out there, and has added a good deal of "Research and Development" and "Office" in the area for the traffic study. He continued that with the General Plan Update, staff actually added in some "Retail" and "Residential" and used all of that; and through the Housing Element Update, staff took all of that land use and added some more "Residential" and "Retail" on top of what was already there. He noted that the current analysis, through the traffic study using the Housing Element Update, already includes a whole lot of traffic on the East Pleasanton Specific Plan area. He stated that he has been to all the East Pleasanton Specific Plan Task Force meetings, and the numbers, even the highest end numbers, only come up to what is currently in the General Plan. He indicated that he feels very comfortable and confident that the analysis includes the correct amount of traffic.

Commissioner O'Connor asked Mr. Tassano to confirm that although it looks like there is going to be additional traffic, no efficiency at those intersections will be lost and that the levels of service are remaining the same.

Mr. Tassano replied that was correct. He stated that as with the East Pleasanton Specific Plan, staff has always assumed that there would be some use on the Auf der Maur property. He noted that staff had initially assumed "Office" for a while; and then with the Home Depot proposal, that was actually a larger trip than the "Office" was. He indicated that the current analysis is a combination of the two and is about the same as what was anticipated to go through the area. He confirmed that there will be no loss or gain, which is what is expected and what is in the General Plan.

Commissioner Allen noted that this is a really unique site in terms of being the intersection to major bike trails, the connection to the Iron Horse Trail, and a major connector on Bernal Avenue to the South Livermore Valley. She inquired what special consideration has been given to bike safety, not just in terms of signage but of things that might potentially be structurally related or landscape-related to protect children and adults.

Mr. Tassano replied that there are different things staff looks at with both pedestrian and bicycle safety. Referring to Commissioner Allen's comment about the Iron Horse Trail that runs from this property and then on street routes by there, he noted that the East Pleasanton Specific Plan is probably going to shift that alignment to the east, which will then create a complete off-street separated facility for that.

Mr. Tassano continued that what staff did with this project is look at how people would get into their site: a destination with 345 residential units and retail. He noted that with respect to child safety, the project has wider sidewalks where young children ride their bikes. He added that bike lanes are planned for Bernal Avenue. He indicated that one of the standards staff wants to try to hold on to when it moves forward with these types of projects is to make sure that dense residential have wider sidewalks so people can walk and children bike safely.

Chair Pearce stated that she was thrilled to have reached this point, having been on the Planning Commission so long and seeing a variety of iterations for this site. She indicated that this is a great use for the site and expressed her appreciation for the applicants' receptiveness to the Commission's comments and concerns at the Work Session. She noted that the architect has stepped up and thinks the project it looks great.

**Commissioner O'Connor moved to find that the conditions described in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15162 have not occurred as described in the Addendum to the Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SEIR), including the adopted CEQA Findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations, and the Addendum to the SEIR are adequate to serve as the environmental documentation for this project and satisfy all the requirements of CEQA; and that the proposed PUD Development Plan and Development Agreement are consistent with the General Plan; to make the PUD findings for the proposed Development Plan as listed in the staff report; to find that the exceptions to the Housing Site Development Standards and Design Guidelines as listed in the staff report are appropriate; and to recommend approval to the City Council of Case PUD-87, subject to the Conditions of Approval listed in Exhibit A of the staff report, and of Case P13-1981, the Development Agreement for the project.**  
Commissioner Ritter seconded the motion.



**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

**AYES:** Commissioners Allen, O'Connor, Pearce, and Ritter.  
**NOES:** None.  
**ABSTAIN:** None.  
**RECUSED:** None.  
**ABSENT:** Commissioners Olson and Posson.

Resolutions Nos. PC-2013-35 recommending approval of Case PUD-87 and PC-2013-36 recommending approval of Case P13-1981 were entered and adopted as motioned.

**b. PUD-97, Ponderosa Homes**

**Application for Rezoning of an approximately 2.1-acre site at 4202 Stanley Boulevard from C-F (Freeway Interchange Commercial) District to PUD-MDR/OS-PH & WO (Planned Unit Development – Medium Density Residential/Open Space – Public Health and Wildland Overlay) District and for PUD Development Plan approval to retain the existing residence, remove the washroom structure with residential unit, storage accessory structure, and the 32 mobile home spaces (hook-up, concrete pads, etc.), to construct 12 detached single-family homes.**

Janice Stern presented the staff report and briefly described the background, scope, and key elements of the proposal.

With respect to reincorporating the walkway back in the plan, Chair Pearce inquired if, without that walkway, potential residents would have to go out to Stanley Boulevard and walk along a portion of Stanley Boulevard that does not have any sidewalks to get around and get over to the park.

Ms. Stern replied that there was some discussion about that, as well as about the existing residence at the front of the lot facing Stanley Boulevard and whether or not that should be retained. She added that there was also discussion about not making a decision on this until the Historic Preservation Task Force had reached its conclusion. She confirmed that that section of Stanley Boulevard currently has no sidewalk but will eventually have one.

Commissioner O'Connor inquired what the proposal was for the existing house at the corner.

Ms. Stern replied that the proposal is to keep it on the corner lot. She added that it is her understanding that there is no commitment at this time to improve the house, rehabilitate or repaint it, or anything else, other than to fence it.

Commissioner O'Connor inquired if the house would be purchased by Ponderosa.

Ms. Stern replied that Ponderosa's intent is to have a Parcel Map that takes it out of the development such that Ponderosa does not purchase it as part of its option to develop.

Commissioner O'Connor inquired if the home would then be retained by the current landowner.

Ms. Stern said yes.

Commissioner Allen stated that it looked like some of the trees that Mike Fulford, City Landscape Engineer, is recommending to be retained were rated "3" which means they are in poor condition, but "moderately" so. She inquired what the thinking was on retaining them, given their condition.

Ms. Stern replied that she believes that given the right conditions, those trees would certainly stay. She noted that it is certainly worth considering retaining some of them, if possible, such as the tree that is on the creek slope, which would not be in anybody's way and would not be a big problem in that location.

#### **THE PUBLIC HEARING WAS OPENED.**

Pamela Hardy, Ponderosa Homes, Applicant, thanked staff for working with Ponderosa on this project over the course of the past year. She stated that she thinks the staff report provides a pretty good, detailed analysis in providing information to the Commission relative to lot coverages, floor area ratios, and continuity of the project within the Downtown area. She indicated that she would like to touch a little bit on the background of the project; but before that, she would like to make some brief comments by way of housekeeping; and then introduce the project architect, Mark Rutherford with Bill Hezmalhalch and Associates; and then come back and address some of the draft Conditions of Approval for some discussions.

Ms. Hardy stated that it was in May of last year that Ponderosa held a neighborhood meeting and invited everybody on Stanley Boulevard to come to the old Wagner home and take a look at our then proposed project. She indicated that they have been working on this project for over a year now and had some fairly good support at that time from the neighbors who wanted to see the old mobile homes removed from the premises. She added that they also heard from various members of the Historic Preservation Task Force who expressed concern with then proposal at that time to demolish the existing house. She stated that taking away from that information, they continued to refine the project and turned to the Planning Commission in November of last year for a Work Session where they continued to gain guidance and direction from the Commission through its thoughtful comments that helped them to refine, along with the staff's comments, the site plan that Ponderosa has brought before the Commission tonight.

Ms. Hardy continued that given the community's continuing interest in the retention and preservation of the existing home, and sensing through her attendance at the Historic

Preservation Task Force meetings that the Task Force had a strong interest in not only this house but in the preservation of other homes in the Downtown area, Ponderosa went back to the seller/landowner and changed their contract to allow the owner to retain the home and create a .228-acre lot upon which that house will remain. She indicated that she is not sure if the representative for the property owner will be able to attend here tonight, but she thought it was safe to say that the property owner, upon close of escrow once Ponderosa obtained project approval, intends to take that cash flow and do some remedial work to the house to make it safe; and Ponderosa will then work with the owner on some marketing or outreach to see if they can find someone who would want to restore that house, either as a residence or perhaps approach the City subsequently with a land use change to some other kind of transitional use in that area, such as a professional office.

Ms. Hardy stated that she does not know at this point what will happen to the house and emphasized that the house is going to remain under the ownership of the existing property owner. She confirmed that staff is correct that Ponderosa will not own that property and would not own the house; therefore, it is not part of Ponderosa's development application, and what remains is a proposal of 12 new lots and detached single-family homes, in addition to the retention of the existing house.

Ms. Hardy then turned the floor over to Mark Rutherford, Project Architect, to briefly go over the architecture of the houses.

Mark Rutherford, William Hezmalhalch Architects, Project Architect, stated that he has done a number of projects working with Ponderosa Homes, and typically in starting out with the projects, they look at the site. He noted that this is an infill site with the constraint of being perpendicular to Stanley Boulevard, and they had to look for the best layout as far as providing homes that would fit within the context of having a strong curb appeal that characterizes the surrounding Downtown Pleasanton. He indicated that their initial direction was to do some smaller two-story homes of 2,200 to 2,600 square feet with front porches on some of the homes, providing a variety within the neighborhood itself, even with only two elevation styles, three floor plans with one of the floor plans modified for lot 12, seven elevations and six color schemes and material schemes for the 12 homes.

With respect to the design, Mr. Rutherford stated that they looked at other traditional styles of Pleasanton and went through the Downtown Historical Guidelines, settling on the craftsman style and the cottage with a variety of roof pitches to kind of distinguish and give them that eclectic mix within the neighborhood: lower pitch roofs for the craftsman and a higher pitch for the cottage, a variety of materials with lap siding for all of the craftsman homes, lap-siding on all four sides, and stucco with stone material on the cottage style.

Mr. Rutherford noted that a lot of the Downtown neighborhoods in Pleasanton have rear garages, but because of the size of the lots and the constraints of the site, these homes are going to have garages that are up front. He stated that to mitigate that, they have

the garage pushed back off of the front façade, providing deep, heavy shadows across the front, and with upgraded carriage-style garage doors with windows on them. With respect to massing the front of these homes, the houses have a very approachable, single-story element up front with the porches and quite a bit of detail, and strong proportions and articulation as far as the step-backs from the first floor, the second floor, the pot shelves, the bay windows, some handrails at the wrap-around porches, tapered columns as opposed to just posts at the craftsman elevations, extended overhangs on the craftsman elevations from 18 inches to 24 inch, window trim full-wrap on all four sides of the house, plus the window break ups also on all four sides, and colors that give more of a historical color combination that fits the Downtown area.

Ms. Hardy stated that she hoped the Commission clearly understands that they have been working closely with the project architect and with staff on making these refinements with the architecture, that they really are listening to the Commission and the community so that a lot of these architectural changes do really represent what they think are great enhancements, some of them coming at a considerable cost to them. She added, however, that they think when all is said and done, the houses are richly designed, they incorporate a lot of the elements that are found throughout the Downtown area, and they will have a very consistent look with the streetscape, admittedly in a transitional neighborhood, particularly with the house fronting on Stanley Boulevard, with the full wrap-around porch that is really going to give a great frontage elevation entry to the project site.

With respect to the trees and in response to Commissioner Allen's comments, Ms. Hardy stated that she did see the staff comment that the City arborist had recommended some additional trees to be retained onto the site. She indicated that she greatly respects Mr. Fulford and does not disagree with him, certainly with retaining the trees in the creek, and that they planned on retaining the other trees that Mr. Fulford recommended off-site. She noted that there are two Ash trees along the east property boundary that abut Mr. Swift's property and that she briefly touched base with Mr. Swift about them. She stated that she does not know what Mr. Swift's sense of the trees is, but her sense is that those two Ash trees are really big trees that will completely dominate the backyard of those two houses. She added that trying to prune those trees is problematic as the clearances from the building are difficult, for one. She noted that if this were a typical application and they applied for a tree removal permit, she was pretty sure they would have no problem removing them, but in the context of a larger development, there might be a different feeling. She indicated that they are really not supportive of retaining those trees as they will create a lot of problems in the long run. With respect to the palm tree, Ms. Hardy stated that if the City or somebody is really interested in relocating it, they will be happy to dig it up and drop it off. She noted that they are not going to alter their plan to save the palm tree. She noted that of the 29 trees being removed from the site, 18 are heritage trees, rated 4 of 5 for suitability, not one of which are native trees. She added that in terms of replacement, she counted up to 36 new trees in a combination of the front and side yards, about a two-to-one replacement for the removal of the heritage trees. She stated that she thinks they are doing pretty good on this in removing some older trees that are non-native, some are

not in good condition, some that have been hacked and pruned are asymmetrical and not in balance. She concluded that, all in all, there will be a lot more greenery and a lot more healthy vegetation than what is there now.

Ms. Hardy then addressed the question of the pedestrian walkway, noting that they had previously shown it on the plan; however, the Planning Commission, back in November, had indicated that there really was not a great deal of support for that, and as they did not have support for it either, they eliminated it from the site plan. She noted that they recently learned from staff that there was a change of course and that the walkway was added in a response to the Climate Action Plan (CAP); but they remain opposed to the walkway. She indicated that she did take a look at it, and with all respect to staff, she thinks the connectivity portion of the CAP is really intended to provide pedestrians and bicyclists connections in more conventional subdivisions where really the intersections and blocks are a lot bigger, an average, per the CAP plan, of nine intersections per square mile, which is double that in the Downtown area.

Ms. Hardy continued that she wanted to address the “why” of the pedestrian issue. She noted that Ponderosa is conditioned to build a sidewalk on Stanley Boulevard on the site’s frontage to the west to connect to the existing sidewalk located one lot over from the site, and that lot does not have anything. She indicated that they still remain opposed to the pedestrian walkway because, first, they think it is not necessary; and second, they think it presents a safety and security element for their buyers. She added that should the Planning Commission disagree with them on that, they would at the least say that it should be gated and should be limited to the exclusive use of only the residents and not be a public use connection.

Commissioner Ritter thanked Ms. Hardy for showing him the property. He asked her to reiterate what she told him regarding the analysis of moving the house or retrofitting the house, what challenges that presents, and what could happen with that existing house.

Ms. Hardy replied that they had Ward Hill perform his analysis of the project in addition to a cultural analysis. She indicated that there was some discussion about picking up the house and moving it forward, or what would it take to make the house stable. She noted that two teams of specialists in moving and restoration of historic or older homes came out and did an exhaustive review, looking at the structural integrity of the building, the foundation, termites, mold, water damage, and a whole host of elements; they also looked at code upgrade requirements. She indicated that the cost of picking up the house and moving it is just cost-prohibitive, and the degree of which the improvements to the house would need to be made to bring it up to basic safety and code is also very great. She added that it is a relatively small house, about 1,900 square feet: one room at the entrance, the bedrooms off to the side, with an add-on old bathroom, kitchen, and the porch circa 1950, and an illegal unit upstairs. She noted that anybody today who would want to live in that house today would probably want to gut the entirety of the house; the floor plan is just not conducive to today’s lifestyle; the floor of the back half of the house is lurching and is about ready to fall off; they would probably want to do an addition in addition to remodeling the house. She further noted that all told, it would

have to be somebody who was really committed to renovating that house at that location in that neighborhood.

Ms. Hardy stated that she would like to think that Ponderosa's project and the construction of the new homes would give some degree of confidence to somebody who might be interested in purchasing that house on that lot, given the new development that surrounds it as opposed to the old mobile home that is there now. She noted that there are commercial properties to the west, residential to the east, and commercial across the street. She added that she thinks they are moving in the right direction and that they could work with the property owner to do that shout-out to somebody who might be interested in it. She reiterated that Ponderosa exhaustively evaluated that, spent some money to do that exhaustive review, and came to this conclusion that it would be better that the property owner retain the house on that lot and Ponderosa take the hit in the reduction and scale back of the project from 14 to 12 homes as a result of retaining the house.

Ms. Hardy then addressed the following conditions of approval:

- Condition No 3: Reconsider allowing pools provided they meet the accessory standards.
- Condition No. 8: Clarification on the wording, which is a little unusual. In offering the dedication of the trail easement closest to the creek, Ponderosa will be preparing some instruments for the purveyance of that easement; however, the homeowners association is not going to be responsible for the maintenance or construction of that easement.
- Condition No. 14: Flexibility on the condition to have raised mullions on the windows. Ponderosa understands where staff is coming from to provide additional relief on the windows, but they evaluated the STC ratings of the windows which are very thick, and they are very costly to do. A buyer buying a new home is different from a buyer buying an old home; there is a maintenance factor in this. Buyers do not want the maintenance of the raised wood mullion, as they are difficult to clean. Ponderosa is really opposed to that and would like to work with staff on that to see if the same objective could be achieved but not in that way.
- Several conditions regarding Green Building and Title 24 conditions throughout the entire document: It is unclear, but the way it is written leads to the belief that Ponderosa needs to be 25 percent in addition to the new 2014 Code. For clarity purposes, Ponderosas will comply with the Title 24 2014 Energy Code.
- Condition No. 31: The requirement to make a \$30,000 payment towards the Bernal Park Fund. Ponderosa is not opposed to making that payment but wants to state for the record that it is voluntarily agreeing to that as a condition of approval and that it should be considered as a public amenity. There is no nexus requirement to require that cash payment as a result of the impacts of this project.
- The gate and public walkway use was already addressed earlier: Ponderosa is opposed to the pedestrian walkway because it is not necessary, and it presents a safety and security element for their buyers. If required, it should be gated and

should be limited to the exclusive use of only the residences and not be a public use connection.

- Condition No. 79: Ponderosa will comply with the Green Points Version 4.2 but would like the flexibility to work with the Director of Community Development such that instead of mandating that Ponderosa has 87 points at this pre-preliminary stage when they have not even had their internal specification meetings, they could have a range of say 80 to 90 points, rather than having to find out once they get into the construction drawings that they have come up with 86 points and would have to come back and burden the Planning Commission with that one point variance.
- As commented on earlier, Ponderosa is opposed to retaining the two Ash trees on the east property boundary.

### **THE PUBLIC HEARING WAS CLOSED.**

Chair Pearce inquired if staff has been in discussions with the applicants about their proposed modifications to the Conditions of Approval or if this is the first they are hearing of them.

Ms. Stern replied that staff had heard of a few of those with which they had reached some agreement and which are reflected in the staff memo that the Commission has received. She added that she thinks the balance of them would need to be discussed at the staff level or by the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Allen referred to page 13 of the staff report that states that the General Plan requires Medium-Density-Residential-designated properties to provide amenities such as dedication of park lands if they exceed the midpoint density of this land use designation. She inquired if the applicant has done its fair share in terms of what is being required, or is this a point that is still being negotiated.

Mr. Dolan replied that staff has stated in the approval that Ponderosa has done enough, essentially, in providing the trail easement at the back. He added that he believes Ponderosa is actually getting credit for not tearing down the house. He noted that the project started with the house leaning and there was some interest in having it maintained; and with this new option, Ponderosa leaves something on the table and avoids tearing down the house to give the City the opportunity to come up with a preservation strategy. He indicated that if the Commission requires the condition of the connection to Vervais Avenue, that could be added as well. He stated that he thinks Ms. Hardy's interpretation of that particular Climate Action Plan requirement is accurate, but he thinks it has applicability in this location for some of the same reasons it would apply in a major subdivision, although, granted, the lot sizes are smaller, because what it does do, in addition to providing a shortcut to Main Street, is that it gives direct access to the site of what is a little open space area now but is supposed to be developed as a park. He pointed out that this particular project has no open space provided, unlike a similar project that was approved by the City right across the street that did provide a little open space area, and this makes that connection another reason to require that.

Commissioner O'Connor inquired if staff would be amenable to having that pedestrian walkway connection private to the residents of this community only.

Mr. Dolan said yes.

Commissioner O'Connor stated that if staff is amenable to keeping it private and having a locked gate, he does not really see any reason why people outside the development should be walking through the court and why the Commission would want to have public access.

Chair Pearce commented that was fine and thinks that is a decent compromise. She stated that she does not want people in the development having to go out to Stanley Boulevard, where there is currently no sidewalk, and have to walk around to it. She added that if staff is amenable to that compromise and the applicant sounds like they are as well, that sounds like a good place to be.

Commissioners Allen and Ritter agreed.

Chair Pearce then asked the Commissioners for their comments on the Ash trees.

Commissioner O'Connor stated that if the floor area ratio (FAR) is okay and the size of the house versus the lot, then he would like to retain the Ash trees; but the trees are big and consume the backyard, and for this size of lot and home/lot combination, it is a wrong tree to have there.

Chair Pearce commented that it feels like the tail wagging the dog. She stated that if the Commission agrees that the trees are important, and Mr. Fulford is fairly conservative in his estimation of what should be in her reading over the years of the tree reports the Commission has had, then it seems like, perhaps, the argument goes that this is not the plan that should be approved.

Commissioner O'Connor commented that he believes these trees came up as marginal, as 3's or 4's.

Chair Pearce stated that she is just throwing it out there. She noted staff did not say that all the trees needed to be saved, but if the tree is, in fact, too large for the backyard as proposed, then maybe the proposed backyard is what is not appropriate.

Commissioner Allen stated that she thinks heritage trees are important and need to be protected. She indicated her support for Chair Pearce's statements.

Chair Pearce stated that she understands the distinction between native and non-native trees, but it is not a distinction that is made in the City. She noted that heritage trees are simply a function of size and if we are taking down a significant number of them, and there are a few that are recommended to be saved, she is in support of that.



Commissioner Allen asked what the numbers of the two Ash trees.

Commissioner O'Connor stated that he cannot make out the numbers.

Ms. Stern stated that she thinks it is 353.

Chair Pearce asked if they are 353 and 356.

Commissioner O'Connor commented that then they are both 3's.

Commissioner Allen noted that if they were 1's, then it would be a different story, but a 3 is in the middle.

Commissioner O'Connor agreed. He added that in any of these backyards other than the ones along the creek, even with the smallest floor plan, the trees would still dominate the backyard.

Chair Pearce stated that that is the problem and that it is a site plan issue.

Commissioner Ritter commented that Ms. Hardy stated that none of the trees, or a few of those trees, that Ponderosa is asking to take out were native and were planted years ago.

Chair Pearce stated that the Commission had the same conversation a few years ago with the trees across the street with the DiDonato property. She then addressed the architecture and stated that it looks great and appreciated the improvements made. She noted that the Commission asked that the architecture of the houses in the vicinity be reflected in the architecture of the proposed houses, and the applicant did a great job.

Commissioner Allen agreed, noting that she likes the idea of the craftsman and the cottage style together as it adds an element of class.

Commissioner Ritter stated that he really likes how the applicant did lot number 12 which backs up to Stanley Boulevard and where they made the house really look like Pleasanton. He indicated that he is new to the Commission here but that he is still disappointed that nothing is being done with the existing house.

Chair Pearce stated that she will go first on this because she is on the Historic Preservation Task Force and have had countless conversations with the applicant on this. She indicated that when she first met with the applicants on site, she recommended that they wait until the Historic Preservation Task Force had finished its work. She noted that she felt this project was premature, ahead of the finalization of that work, because this is within the Downtown Specific Plan Area. She indicated that she appreciates where the applicant is going with regard to the house, but she still

believes the application is premature. She stated that she may have been in support of this if the applicants had come back with a plan for the house as opposed to a simple bifurcation and see what can be done. She noted that the house was a big topic of conversation at the Work Session, and while she wants to support this project, she has to say that without an actual plan for the house, she cannot do so, regrettably.

Commissioner Ritter stated that he sort of agrees in the sense that this house was built in 1912; the applicants have already done tons of expenses to figure out it is unmovable, and nothing in the criteria shows that the house is historic for Pleasanton. He added that he doubts the remodels done in 1960 were permitted, so it is unsafe and seismically not sound. He noted that he is with Chair Pearce that there is this great company that can develop a beautiful entrance to this whole property, but is not including that first corner lot as part of this project. He emphasized that something has to be done there, and in his opinion, he does not know if it can just be put off to the side and have some developer say they are going to do something later without knowing what is going to go there.

Chair Pearce stated that Commissioner Ritter brought up a good point about the integration of the lot within the site. She noted that when the Commission first looked at it, it had talked about the site as a whole; but bifurcating that point does something to the overall feel of the site.

Commissioner Allen agreed. She stated that she thinks the Commission is at the point where there is a benefit. She noted that this is not a subdivided property in terms of that house right now being bifurcated. She added that the City has a unique opportunity to keep this house and have the site developed in the right way; so it poses a problem of having an old house that is not even going to be painted or have a new roof line or anything. She indicated that she would be open and be much more amendable to supporting this project if she saw a plan where at least the house was upgraded with a new roof and was looking acceptable, even if the inside was left old. She added that it is more about the visual exterior than its structural integrity.

Commissioner O'Connor stated that the Commission discussed at the Work Session that if something were done with that home, it might be an amenity to the rest of the development and could be an added draw for this development. He added that the Commission also talked about density, what it should be if the house would not be restored and what it could be if the house were restored. He noted that the Commission started with the proposed 14 homes, went up from there, and came back down to about a 14-unit density and about the same amount of open space between the homes. He added that when he was listening to Ms. Hardy go through some of the conditions that Ponderosa did not like, he did not find too many of them that he would absolutely say the Commission cannot do anything with. He indicated that he thinks he could buy into that laundry list if something could be done with the house.

Chair Pearce agreed.

Commissioner O'Connor stated that he thinks that is the tradeoff the Commission is looking for, maybe not for every one of the conditions, but he would be a lot more amenable to the changes that Ms. Hardy is looking for if something could be done with this house. He indicated that he has not thought about just the visual look to the house as opposed to the integrity of the home; but he is not looking for a full remodel, he is not looking for somebody to rebuild it, but if were safe and sound and had some visual appeal to match the rest of the development or the rest of the neighborhood and did not look like it was falling down, he would be a lot more amenable to all the rest of the changes mentioned.

Chair Pearce stated that her sense is that the applicants are looking for an up or down vote, and she thinks the applicant can see the direction in which the Commission is headed. She asked Ms. Hardy if this is still what they want or if this is something where if the house situation is a concern, they can go and work on it and the Commission can continue this item.

Ms. Hardy replied that they would like to have an action by the Planning Commission tonight, and if her understanding is correct, they go to the Council next as the Planning Commission is the recommending body to the Council.

Chair Pearce asked Mr. Dolan if this goes to the City Council.

Mr. Dolan said yes.

Chair Pearce asked Ms. Hardy if they want a vote.

Ms. Hardy replied that they would ask the Commission to render its decision so they can then go to the City Council.

Commissioner Ritter stated that this beautiful development is coming in, and Stanley Boulevard is getting upgraded, and wondered if there is a way to take that lot 13 and maybe somehow make that entrance into a park and then upgrade that house. He indicated that he knows that the City is waiting for the Historic Preservation Task Force to assess, but he thinks this is the grand entrance to this development, and it needs to be done right.

Chair Pearce agreed.

Jeff Schroeder, Ponderosa Homes, stated that they have spent a lot of time on what to do with this house. He indicated that, frankly, it is not their business, they don't know that business, and it is a different business than their business. He noted that it is pretty expensive to move it, as Ms. Hardy had stated earlier, and so they figured that is not going to work. He stated that the property owner's representative is not here tonight, and they were hoping he was going to be here. He further stated that they told him they were willing to work with him, but he already has some people who are interested in the property, who might be interested to turn it into some sort of commercial use, an office

space, or something along those lines. He stated that they are not opposed to that, although it is not ideal; but as Ms. Hardy stated, it is pretty unlikely that anybody is going to want to live in this house as it is just too outdated. He added that they have already taken a huge hit trying to make this thing work with two less lots and the expenses involved in dealing with this house and leaving it as is. He stated that they do not have the financial ability to do this project and continue to spend more money on that house. He added that they do not know what it is going to take, and someone else who can use that house can better figure out what needs to be done and how much needs to be spent on it. He further added that that is just where they are at and that they have just exhausted their options here.

**Commissioner O'Connor moved to deny PUD-97.**

Chair Pearce asked Mr. Dolan if that is all the Commission needs to do.

Mr. Dolan replied that is correct, to be able to write it up, and as long as there is the understanding that it is all about the house and the fact that there is no plan for it.

Chair Pearce stated that she wants to be clear regarding what she heard the Commission said that it is supportive of the connectivity with the gate as a private connectivity; that the concern is about the plan, or lack thereof, for the house, and the concern about, not only the house's location to the street but with regard to this project and its gateway aspect.

Commissioner Allen agreed.

Commissioner O'Connor added that he thinks the big concern is that there is no plan for the house, so it could sit there and just deteriorate; and then nothing that has been discussed by the Commission will be achieved.

Chair Pearce noted that the Commission really likes the architecture of the new houses.

Commissioner O'Connor agreed and added that he is elated with what Ponderosa has done.

Commissioner Ritter inquired if the City Council could vote to get rid of the house and let the development move forward.

Mr. Dolan replied that they will probably talk about options as they move forward. He added that it would not be difficult to take that lot 13 and make it into two lots; but that would obviously not preserve the house.

**Commissioner Ritter seconded the motion.**

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

**AYES:** Commissioners Allen, O'Connor, Pearce, and Ritter.  
**NOES:** None.  
**ABSTAIN:** None.  
**RECUSED:** None.  
**ABSENT:** Commissioners Olson and Posson.

Resolution No. PC-2013-37 recommending denial of Case PUD-97 was entered and adopted as motioned.

**7. MATTERS INITIATED BY COMMISSION MEMBERS**

No discussion was held or action taken.

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

**a. Future Planning Calendar**

No discussion was held or action taken.

**b. Actions of the City Council**

No discussion was held or action taken.

**c. Actions of the Zoning Administrator**

No discussion was held or action taken.

**d. Matters for Commission's Information**

No discussion was held or action taken.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Pearce adjourned the Planning Commission meeting 8:37 p.m.

Respectfully,

JANICE STERN  
Secretary