



City of Santa Barbara

PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES

SEPTEMBER 16, 2021

1:00 P.M.

This Meeting was Conducted Electronically
SantaBarbaraCA.gov

COMMISSION MEMBERS:

Deborah L. Schwartz, Chair
Gabriel Escobedo, Vice Chair
Roxana Bonderson
Jay D. Higgins
Sheila Lodge
Barrett Reed
Lesley Wiscomb

STAFF:

Tava Ostrenger, Assistant City Attorney
Allison DeBusk, Senior Planner
Gillian Fennessy, Commission Secretary

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Schwartz called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

I. ROLL CALL

Chair Deborah L. Schwartz, Vice Chair Gabriel Escobedo (at 1:33 p.m.), Commissioners Roxana Bonderson, Jay D. Higgins, Sheila Lodge, Barrett Reed, and Lesley Wiscomb

Absent: None.

STAFF PRESENT

Tava Ostrenger, Assistant City Attorney
Allison DeBusk, Senior Planner
Jessica Metzger, Project Manager
Stephanie Swanson, Associate Planner
William Russell, Planning Technician II
Jill Zachary, Parks and Recreation Director
Justin Van Mullem, Capital Projects Supervisor
Jazmin LeBlanc, Assistant Parks Recreation Director
Rich Hanna, Recreation Programs Manager
Ricardo Venegas, Neighborhood Outreach Services Coordinator
Kenneth Kushner, Lieutenant, City of Santa Barbara Police Department
Janet Ahern, City TV Production Specialist
Gillian Fennessy, Commission Secretary

II. PRELIMINARY MATTERS

A. Requests for continuances, withdrawals, postponements, or addition of ex-agenda items:

No requests.

B. Announcements and appeals:

Ms. DeBusk announced that City Council approved the development agreement for the project at 701 North Milpas Street on September 14, 2021.

C. Review, consideration, and action on the following draft Planning Commission minutes and resolutions:

1. September 2, 2021 Planning Commission Minutes

MOTION: Bonderson / Higgins

Approve the minutes as amended.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: 6 Noes: 0 Abstain: 0 Absent: 1 (Escobedo)

D. Comments from members of the public pertaining to items not on this agenda:

Public comment opened at 1:07 p.m. and as no one wished to speak, it closed.

Written correspondence from Sarah Stokes was acknowledged.

III. NEW ITEMS

A. ACTUAL TIME: 1:08 P.M.

SENIOR MOBILEHOME PARK OVERLAY ORDINANCE

The City of Santa Barbara proposes to amend Chapter 30.57 of the Santa Barbara Municipal Code (SBMC) to add a Senior Mobilehome Park (SMP) Overlay to preserve a variety and balance of housing types within the City by providing assurances that existing senior mobilehome parks within the Mobilehome Park Overlay Zone will remain exclusively available to seniors. The proposed ordinance amendment would apply to existing mobilehome parks in which at least eighty percent of the spaces are occupied by, or intended for occupancy by, at least one person who is fifty-five years of age or older, or in which one hundred percent of the spaces are occupied or intended for occupancy by persons sixty-two years of age or older.

Tava Ostrenger, Assistant City Attorney, gave the Staff presentation. Jessica Metzger, Project Manager was available to answer questions.

Public comment opened at 1:17 p.m. and the following individuals spoke:

1. Christel Barros
2. James Ballantine
3. Sharyn Nielson
4. Jesse Espinoza

Public comment closed at 1:26 p.m.

Written correspondence from Sharon Havill, Tuan Luu, Thu Nguyen, Grace Webber and Patricia Pizarro, Allied Neighborhoods Association, Christel Barros, Glenita Uriarte, Jesse Espinoza, Jame P. Ballantine, and Arlecia Salter was acknowledged.

MOTION: Wiscomb / Escobedo

Recommend the proposed Senior Mobilehome Park Overlay Ordinance to the Ordinance Committee with the following revisions and comment:

1. The Ordinance shall get re-chaptered to 30.58 from 30.57.
2. In what will become section 30.58.010 under Purpose, the word “exclusively” be qualified with at least 80% exclusively available to seniors, with City Attorney to determine the exact language.
3. In section 30.58.050.C. Senior Occupancy Restrictions, a reference to principal residence shall be included, with City Attorney to determine the exact language.
4. Correct typos in section 30.58.050.C. with two “in’s” and the lettering in the proposed which would make Conversion not D but F.
5. The Commission recommends that the Ordinance Committee be provided more back-up material and details regarding the research done on the mobilehome parks and the process followed to reach the proposed ordinance.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: 7 Noes: 0 Abstain: 0 Absent: 0

*** THE COMMISSION RECESSED FROM 2:01 P.M. TO 2:15 P.M. ***

B. ACTUAL TIME: 2:15 P.M.

604 E ORTEGA STREET (ORTEGA PARK)

ZONE: P-R (PARK AND RECREATION), LAND USE DESIGNATION: PARKS AND OPEN SPACE APN: 031-172-002, PLN2019-00425, APPLICANT/OWNER: JILL ZACHARY, PARKS AND RECREATION DIRECTOR AND JUSTIN VAN MULLEN, PROJECT PLANNER/CITY OF SANTA BARBARA, PARKS DIVISION

The project consists of the Ortega Park Master Plan, which includes but is not limited to demolition of existing facilities and construction of a new swimming pool, wading pool, water slide, skate park, splash pad, sports courts, shade sails, sports field with synthetic turf, ping pong tables, cornhole, and buildings for restrooms and maintenance. On-site improvements such as fencing, parking, landscaping, dumpsters and related enclosures, and internal walkways are also proposed. Public art would remain a part of the project, with five existing murals proposed for relocation on-site, three existing murals to be re-created, and four existing murals to be re-envisioned. Additional blank space for new murals is also proposed. Right-of-way improvements including street parking, parking medians, and sidewalk installation are proposed. The discretionary land use applications required for this project are: (1) A Front Setback Modification to allow parking within the required 10-foot front setback along East Ortega Street (SBMC §30.40.040.A.1 and §30.250.020); (2) A Front Setback Modification to allow parking within the required 10-foot front setback along North Salsipuedes Street (SBMC §30.40.040.A.1 and

§30.250.020); (3) Planning Commission review to allow select proposed amenities in the “Community Buildings” and “Sports Facilities” park designations (SBMC Table 30.40.030); and (4) A Development Plan to allow construction of approximately 2,052 square feet of net new nonresidential floor area (SBMC Chapter 30.230). The Planning Commission will consider approval of the Mitigated Negative Declaration prepared for the project pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines Section 15074

Stephanie Swanson, Associate Planner, gave the Staff presentation.

Justin Van Mullem, Capital Projects Supervisor, Parks and Recreation Department gave the Applicant presentation. Jill Zachary, Parks and Recreation Director; Rich Hanna, Recreation Programs Manager; Jazmin LeBlanc, Assistant Parks Recreation Director; Ricardo Venegas, Neighborhood Outreach Services Coordinator; Lt. Kenneth Kushner, City of Santa Barbara Police Department; and Michael Hamilton, RRM Design; were available to answer questions.

Public comment opened at 2:49 p.m., and the following individuals spoke:

1. Rubayi Estes
2. Monica Jones
3. Lisa Valencia Sherratt
4. Kathy McGill
5. Julia Mayer
6. Beebe Longstreet
7. Anna Marie Gott
8. Victoria Valente
9. Marina Martinez

Public comment closed at 3:16 p.m.

Written correspondence from Alvaro A. Suman, Claudia Bratton, Danny Meza, Kathy McGill, Paulina Conn, George Nagai, Sean Bolis, Sarah Grewe, Marina Martinez, Micaiah Furukawa, James A. Carson, Victoria Valente, Mattie Shelton, Anthony Pettim Mike Bechtholdt, Jeff Shelton, Miguel Rodriguez, Naren Porter-Kasbati, Sebastian Aldana Jr., Kenneth Rivas, Marina Martinez, Sarah York Rubin, Catherine Brozowski, and Naomi Greene was acknowledged.

*** THE COMMISSION RECESSED FROM 4:10 P.M. TO 4:15 P.M. ***

Commissioner comments (included a request of Planning Commission):

Commissioner Wiscomb:

- Commends the Parks and Recreation Department for the concerns brought up by the public that they have addressed and the ten community workshops and thirteen public meetings making it a well vetted project.
- The Architectural Board of Review has seen the project three times with favorable comments.
- The 23 additional parking spaces with permeable paving is welcomed by the community because parking has always been an issue there.

- The new sidewalks where there are currently no sidewalks on Salsipuedes and Ortega Streets are welcomed and to be able to walk the perimeter of the park and to view into the park is a great asset during the hours the park is not open.
- The solar panels and the water conserving plantings are appropriate.
- Believes that the murals have been handled properly and hopes the Mural Committee will be able to work together to complete the murals and thinks they have done a good job vetting and identifying the different categories of the murals.
- Currently the facilities are aged and underutilized and so she appreciates the multi-generational amenities.
- Safety is of utmost importance.
- Believes that the proposed project has a great mix of recreational opportunities that the community identified.
- Can make the findings and approve Conditions of Approval.
- Would like to add Commissioner Escobedo's comment about regular updates to the Parks and Recreation Commission about the status and condition of the murals in relation to the Mural Implementation Plan to the Conditions of Approval.
- Believes that it is important that the Parks and Recreation Commission take the lead on the murals and determine intervals for any regular updates on the implementation and condition of the murals. It's a public forum and believes it is a more appropriate forum than the Planning Commission for this issue.
- Would like to add to condition eleven that the Parks and Recreation Commission become the purview for the status and condition of the murals.
- Believes that the Parks and Recreation Department are in the business of parks and recreation and should have control over the hours and if there is demand for an earlier opening from the community they will address that.
- Regarding Commissioner comments about exclusivity, noted that the Parks Department has many programs that involve all levels of the community.

Commissioner Higgins:

- Suggested, for Commissioner consideration, adding a condition to require the parking to remain public.
- The Planning Commission is making findings for the project and believes that it would be nice if there were direct follow-up with the Commission, but the Parks and Recreation Commission can handle it.
- Acknowledges and thanks staff, especially Ms. Swanson, for putting together the 1,128-page staff report; it was very well-organized.
- Supports the project and can make the findings.
- Would like to defer to staff on opening and closing parks, as there is a uniform system.
- Wants to remind those who wanted a more extravagant project that the City is a community constrained by the ocean and the mountains; we can't always do more or bigger.

Commissioner Lodge:

- Thanked Staff for their hard work and is pleased that the community has gotten together on the murals.
- Currently there is an 8-foot high fence that curves out at the top to keep people out and 3/4 of the park is already fenced. Therefore, she does not have a concern with the proposed fence.

- Currently the space is being heavily used so to have a better facility where space can be divided up so that more games can be going on - it will be a great benefit to the community.
- Supports the project and can make the findings.

Commissioner Escobedo:

- Believes that it is important to preserve and honor Chicano and Chumash art and provide a space for people who don't always feel like they have a safe space, and Ortega Park has been one of those spaces for families in the neighborhood.
- Believes that having the fencing in all of the spaces feels exclusive, even if 75% park is going to be fenced.
- Would like ABR to take another look at the fencing and provide another opportunity for the community to give their input.
- Believes that this project is a huge net benefit and will provide so much for our youth and others.
- Believes that a facility like this will be so much safer because currently there is nothing preventing balls going into the street and so it is not rare to see parents or kids running into the street.
- Believes that the synthetic turf field will be safer, there will be more use out of it, and it uses a lot less water.
- Believes that the park offers so much to the youth, giving them so many opportunities, and the agency to decide how they want to use it whether it is team sports, swim lessons, Skate Park, or art.
- Looking forward to the Santa Barbara Art Alliance Youth Arts Mentor Program being involved in the mural project and for the youth to be able to express themselves how they want and connecting them to that park so they will take care of the park.
- Highlighted the legal wall suggestion from a public commenter which is a wall where the youth can practice graffiti and others can celebrate it to make them feel like an artist because that is what they are.
- In support of the project.
- Supports Commissioner Wiscomb's comment about having a regular check in with Parks and Recreation Commission and that they get to decide what the intervals are so long as the community gets regular updates on the implementation and status of the murals.

Commissioner Bonderson:

- Supports and is in agreement with Commissioner Escobedo's idea of having ABR revisit and give more guidance about the fence.
- Would like some consideration given to opening up the central promenade that runs halfway through the block alongside of the soccer field. Would like this area to be open 24 hours and have lighting there to make it safe to walk through. Believes that this will break the block up and would assist adjacent neighbors with accessing the park after hours.
- Would like the applicant to consider changing the times of operation, especially during the short winter months, so access to the park or at least areas of the park, can go beyond the short window of sunlight during the winter months.
- Concerned that it seemed that a lot of the answers from the applicant team sounded like they were designing the park to the grant, she believes that the grant

is important, but sometimes the design has to lead and has to be what is best for and most important to the community.

- Through the next phase of the project, would like more consideration to be given to what is best for the community and would like to get community feedback continuously.
- Believes that the park is increasing a lot of activities that require schedules, reservations, punch cards, and other types of membership that make the park exclusive in some ways and is concerned about families and individuals that may not be able to afford that type of service; therefore, she hopes that as part of the grant or as part of the community's preparation to allow the park that there be scholarships or other opportunities that will not be financially restrictive.
- Has no problems with making the findings.
- Believes that it is important whether it is with a fence or financially that no one gets excluded.
- There are a lot of areas in the park that are gated and require entrance fees, for example, the pool area, and if someone is not interested in going into the pool area, going to the skate park or playing basketball, there is very small amount of space remaining, mostly in the central area which is beautifully drawn; further, there are other families in the neighborhood that may like to use park space differently whether it is cultural, family interest, or as a gathering space. The proposed park is interesting and exciting, but doesn't think it serves the needs of everyone in the neighborhood.
- If there aren't enough tables and benches, would like to see them added to the open space accessible for free.

Commissioner Reed:

- Between the recent Dwight Murphy project and this project – it will be an incredible benefit to the City.
- Agrees with the Staff Report that this project is a great balance of goals. It balances the goals of Parks and Recreation, surrounding neighbors and their quality of living, and the City's development standards.
- Finds that the working plan for the murals seems to be community focused and reasonable, and applauds that effort.
- Shares concerns about some of the unknowns like the soil and ground water contamination and how it might impact storm water, but understands that it is outside of the City's control and is confident that it can be navigated without derailing the project.
- Pleased that the project will avoid impacts to the adjacent Junior High.
- As far as the front setback modification, believes that the demand for improved access to parking was a strong request from the public and Staff has delivered that.
- Believes that the project considers the future Eastside Paseo project and the ability to accommodate additional parking.
- Appreciates the creativity to move the parking spaces inward resulting in important infrastructure in the park parcel instead of the public right-of-way and increased drive aisle widths in the street to accommodate future goals.
- Believes that the park amenities under the Planning Commission purview are appropriate and beneficial to the East Side Community and the whole City. Extensive public outreach led to the proposed amenities.

- The development plans meet all of the applicable zoning standards.
- Happy with ABR's feedback and believes that it speaks to the neighborhood consistency.
- Believes that this is a great project.
- Would leave operating hours to Parks staff.

Chair Schwartz:

- Supports the project.
- Believes that improved uses for the park have been an interest for many for a long time and defers greatly to community input and the Parks and Recreation applicant team to know what those uses should be and that they are of interest to the neighborhood and will be used by the neighborhood.
- Resonates with some of Commissioner Bonderson's comments and has lingering questions and concerns.
- Understands that there is a balance between a completely open park space and either a completely closed or a partially closed park space. Believes that safety is critical, but at the same time if everything is fenced in, they are also fencing out casual uses. Doesn't know what the right balance is and has lingering concerns.
- The park needs to be for the greater neighborhood.
- Hopes that as this project moves along through the process that there will be ample opportunity for continued community feedback in public hearings.
- Doesn't feel strongly that the project has to come back to the Planning Commission, but it should certainly go to the Parks and Recreation Commission.

MOTION: Wiscomb / Lodge

Assigned Resolution No. 008-21

Approve the project, making the findings for adopting the Mitigated Negative Declaration, and approving the front setback modifications, park amenities, and development plan, as outlined in Section X of the Staff Report dated September 9, 2021 subject to the Conditions of Approval as outlined in Exhibit A of the Staff Report, with the following revisions to the Conditions of Approval and inclusion of comments in the Minutes:

1. Add Condition to II. D. 2. j. (11) that there be regular updates to the Parks and Recreation Commission about the status and condition of the murals in relation to the Mural Implementation Plan, and that the Parks and Recreation Commission shall determine intervals for regular updates.
2. The Architectural Board of Review (ABR) should study the fencing, gates and entries to ensure ingress and egress points to the park are sufficient at times of operation and perhaps hours when the park is not open.
3. The ABR shall consider that the mid-point path stay open in some way when park is not open.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: 7 Noes: 0 Abstain: 0 Absent: 0

The ten calendar day appeal period was announced.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE AGENDA**ACTUAL TIME: 6:03 P.M.****A. Committee and Liaison Reports:****1. Staff Hearing Officer Liaison Report**

No report.

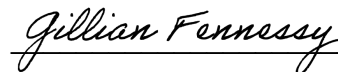
2. Other Committee and Liaison Reports

- a. Commissioner Lodge reported on the September 13, 2021 meeting of the Historic Landmarks Commission Designation Subcommittee regarding the Bungalow Haven Historic District.
- b. Commissioner Escobedo reported on the September 10, 2021 meeting of Residential Multi-Unit Objective Design Standards Working Group.
- c. Commissioner Bonderson reported on the Transportation and Circulation Committee and the upcoming State Street Advisory Committee.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Schwartz adjourned the meeting at 6:07 p.m.

Submitted by,



Gillian Fennessy, Commission Secretary