



City of Santa Barbara

PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES

OCTOBER 14, 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, Commissioners Roxana Bonderson, Jay D. Higgins, Sheila Lodge, and Lesley Wiscomb

Absent: Barrett Reed

STAFF PRESENT

Tava Ostrenger, Assistant City Attorney
Allison DeBusk, Senior Planner
Kathleen Kennedy, Project Planner
Timmy Bolton, Project Planner
Kaitlin Mamulski, Associate Transportation Planner
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 the following:

1. The October 21, 2021 Planning Commission meeting has been cancelled.

2. There will be a Planning Commission Special Meeting on October 28, 2021 at 1:00 p.m.
- C. Review, consideration, and action on the following draft Planning Commission minutes and resolutions:
1. September 16, 2021 Planning Commission Minutes
 2. Planning Commission Resolution No. 008-21
604 E Ortega Street (Ortega Park)

MOTION: Wiscomb / Lodge

Approve the minutes and resolutions as amended.

The motion carried by the following vote:

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

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

Public comment opened at 1:05 p.m. and as no one wished to speak, it closed.

Written correspondence from Victoria Valente and Lori Rafferty was acknowledged.

III. CONCEPT REVIEW

ACTUAL TIME: 1:07 P.M.

35 ANACAPA STREET

ZONE: OC/ SD-3, OCEAN-ORIENTED COMMERCIAL/ COASTAL OVERLAY, LAND USE DESIGNATION: OCEAN-ORIENTED COMMERCIAL/ MEDIUM HIGH RESIDENTIAL, APN: 033-112-002, PLN2021-00226, APPLICANT/OWNER: TROY WHITE, TW LAND PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT, LLC/ 35 ANACAPA, LLC

The project consists of a new three-story development on a 0.5-acre vacant lot located at the southwest corner of Anacapa Street and E. Mason Street. The proposal includes two options (airspace condominium map or lot split/ lot-tie agreement) for development of one building consisting of two small hotels, corner market/bodega, various types of restaurants (sit down, coffee shop, and fast casual kitchens), a tasting room, artist studios, an art gallery, and other retail space. The project would require a Parking Modification (SBMC §28.92.110); Coastal Development Permit (SBMC §28.44.060); Development Plan (SBMC Chapter 28.85); two Conditional Use Permits (SBMC Chapter 28.94 and 28.71.030); and a Tentative Subdivision Map (SBMC Chapter 27.07).

The purpose of the concept review is to allow the Planning Commission and the public an opportunity to review the proposed project design at a conceptual level and provide the Applicant and Staff with feedback and direction regarding the proposed land use and design. The opinions of the Planning Commission may change or there may be ordinance or policy changes that could affect the project that would result in requests for project design changes. **No formal action on**

the development proposal will be taken at the concept review, nor will any determination be made regarding environmental review of the proposed project.

Kathleen Kennedy, Project Planner, gave the Staff presentation. Kaitlin Mamulski, Associate Transportation Planner was available to answer questions.

Troy White, Principal, TW Land Planning & Development, gave the Applicant presentation and was joined by Mark Kirkhart, Architect, DesignArc; and Jeff Theimer, Theimer Group. Melissa Turner, Project Manager, DesignArc; and Scott Schell, ATE were available to answer questions.

Public comment opened at 1:24 p.m., and as no one wished to speak, it closed.

Written correspondence from Hillary Hauser (Heal the Ocean), Quinn Spaulding, Pat Saley, and Megan Kunin was acknowledged.

*** THE COMMISSION RECESSED FROM 2:44 P.M. TO 2:55 P.M. ***

Commissioner comments:

Commissioner Higgins:

- Supports the design with two small hotels.
- Likes the idea of distinguishing the hotels with design and different areas on the property in terms of floor plan and room sizes.
- Supports the Condominium Map option if it works for Staff and the applicant.
- Agrees that the lot tie option is awkward, but won't object to it.
- Supports single management of two hotels.
- Likes the fact that the parking is over the Title 28 requirements.
- Believes that land resources shouldn't be used to store vehicles particularly in this area where there is a lot of surface area parking and alternative transportation methods.
- Believes that less parking here is less bulk so would support less parking in the form of a win-win in terms of architectural compatibility.
- Believes that this is a heavily prescribed area in terms of zoning and development regulations and would like to be flexible with the proposed project.
- Doesn't know why we have a limit of 6 rooms. Believes that 12 rooms are an accommodating number based on the lot size and the amenities offered on the lot.
- The City is a partner on gross revenue, so hotel rooms are a direct benefit to the City's general fund.
- Believes that there are opportunities for smaller hotels and to have them look eclectic or separate.
- Looking forward to this project coming back to the Commission.
- Congratulates the design team for taking the time and thinking of something thoughtful.

Commissioner Wiscomb:

- Believes that this project is really exciting and is going to be a model for the Funk Zone.
- A lot of thought has gone into the amenities and features of the project that will truly make it a gathering space.
- Loves the architecture.

- Assumes that in 2004 when the Commission conditioned the OC zone with the 6 room maximum small hotel and room sizes of 300 square feet maximum, they were doing so to create less expensive accommodations in the coastal zone.
- A property of this size shouldn't be penalized by having only one 6 room hotel because it is such a large parcel.
- Supports the two small hotels on the property with condominium map option because the applicant complies with the room size of a maximum of 300 square feet.
- Doesn't support the lot split/ lot tie option because, as Staff stated, it defeats the purpose of the lot split.
- Appreciates Vice Chair Escobedo's questioning and follow-up comments about distinguishing the two hotels. Believes that there are a lot of ways the applicant could distinguish the two 6 room hotels; for example, with architecture, color, and names.
- Supports single management of two hotels.
- Supports shared features in the two small hotels such as elevators and back-of-house services. Space shouldn't be taken up on a development like this by two elevators and two back-of-house areas because it adds expense to the project and it takes away from the amenities that are being offered to the public and the visitors to the site.
- Could support a parking modification. However, is concerned that the outdoor seating plan is lean and hopes that as Staff gets into development review that they will look at and correct that to make sure there is parking for the number of potential seats in that space.
- If Transportation Planning staff is comfortable with the number of parking spaces offered then doesn't think that this site should be penalized for being under Title 28 requirements.
- As long as the site is over parked for Title 30 requirements then that is an important consideration.
- Would be in support of parking modification as long as it has been fully vetted by staff for both the outdoor seating plan and anything else that develops during the project.
- Appreciates the applicant's thorough answers to their questions.
- Appreciates the sustainability aspects of the project which are going to be very important and exciting.
- Of the Conditional Use Permit findings for small hotels, can make the findings for numbers 6 and 7. For number 8, the landscaping is 5% of the project for lot coverage which is insufficient and would like to see more landscaping since the Funk Zone is in transition and this is a major project in the Funk Zone.
- Thanks the applicant team and fellow commissioners for their questions, especially Commissioners Bonderson's question regarding alternative parking lots in the vicinity.

Commissioner Escobedo:

- Supports the design with two small hotels.
- Supports the Condominium Map option only.
- Excited about the project.
- Requests that the applicant make the two hotels distinct by design, signs, or any other way.
- Supports single management of two hotels and is in favor of trying to make this as efficient as possible so that something like this can come to fruition.
- Supports the parking modification and less parking in the future.
- Appreciates the questions for the commission section in the staff report as it helped focus his comments and questions and would like this section included in future staff reports.

- Likes the idea of including a bodega, particularly in downtown projects as we incorporate more housing downtown and in the Funk Zone.
- It is important to have a place, like a bodega and not a liquor store, in walking distance to get groceries.
- Impressed with the design as it relates to gathering spaces.
- Agrees that this is a very intriguing, inviting project.
- Excited about the sustainability component of the project.
- Wants to hold the applicant accountable in terms of the sustainability component and make sure they do more than minimum compliance.
- The project should be an example of how you can design sustainably and make it really interesting.
- Believes that there is an intersection that can be made between art and sustainability to highlight and compliment the fact that this is going to be a forward thinking project.
- Could support less parking if the subterranean parking presents an issue after analysis of sea level rise and flooding.

Commissioner Lodge:

- Assumed that the project was going to be mixed-use commercial and residential.
- Disappointed to discover that the ordinance in the area south of the railroad track does not allow residential and thinks that is unfortunate.
- This project will create low-wage jobs.
- Two years ago the Commission had numerous projects before them for new hotel rooms, so she checked with Visit Santa Barbara and found that there was an 18% increase in hotel rooms in the City and the preceding two years had a decline in vacancy rates.
- The City didn't need new hotel rooms back then and she suspects that is still the case now.
- Believes that the City needs housing. Disappointed with the City's inability to have what the City needs.
- Given with what the owners are allowed to do with the property, believes that it is an interesting project and a possible place for people to gather.
- Believes that the City will need to address non-seasonal Sea Level Rise before the ocean is already there covering the streets.
- Can support two small hotels on the site. It doesn't make sense to have a lot this large and only have one 6 room hotel.
- Supports the Condominium Map option.
- Can support the single management of two hotels.
- Can support the parking modification, especially since under the Title 30 requirements it is over parked.
- Stopped going to the Funk Zone unless it is midafternoon because of the parking situation but she can support the parking modification.

Commissioner Bonderson:

- Excited about seeing a project like this, architecturally.
- Loves the Spanish stairs and grand entrance which is very inviting from all directions.
- Loves how they chose the corner to bring people in and provide a whole new experience in the Funk Zone.
- Pleased to see a project of this type.

- Feels strongly about what Commissioner Lodge expressed about the fact that there are a lot of hotel rooms in the community and not enough housing. She has felt strongly about this years before she joined the Commission and feels that we don't normally have the opportunity to express that.
- This is a very important type of project in a zone that is limiting the ability for housing on the south side of the railroad track.
- Pleased to see that there are condominium options.
- Pleased that the applicant team has spent a lot of energy explaining and expressing a format that allows individual ownership and believes that this is a very positive element.
- Supports the design of two small hotels.
- Agrees that single management of two hotels would be cost-efficient; therefore, supports that option.
- Supports the Condominium Map option.
- Agrees that the City has several parking facilities in the area which is in the project's favor if there is a lack of parking on this property.
- However, agrees with Commissioner Lodge that this is not the most welcoming place if somebody has any type of access issue.
- Parking is not always easy in Downtown or the Funk Zone with regard to having to walk a short distance, which is not always something that everyone can do.
- Even though the City has code requirements for ADA parking, she always likes to make a plea with the applicant to add some additional ADA parking on their property to accommodate needs of people who may not be able to walk a short additional distance.
- Even if the ADA parking spots sit empty some of the time, it is still so important to have those spots available to those who need it so the project doesn't exclude anyone.
- Excited and looking forward to seeing this project again and how it will be developed.

Chair Schwartz:

- Supports providing two small hotels; however, thinks that it is vital that, through creative design, there be differentiators between them.
- Only supports the condominium map option.
- Supports the single management of two hotels and believes that it is essential in order to support the applicant and make this the most cost-effective and efficient project while being beautiful in a Funk Zone kind of way - exciting, stimulating, and role modeling.
- Supports the parking modification.
- Encourages the applicant to try and find ways in both the built environment aspect of the project, but also offering means of transportation, to be creative and figure out how to encourage and make it easy for people to participate and stay on the property without needing an automobile.
- The diversity of offerings and amenities are very important to stimulate people getting up to the second floor which can be a challenge for multi-floored properties, but also to entice and excite locals and visitors with differing kinds of experiences.
- Believes that if we make the City of Santa Barbara enticing to locals, it will automatically attract visitors and this is an important project to keep that in mind.
- Encourages the applicant to incorporate as much of the cutting edge sustainability design on the exterior and bring it into the overall architectural design and make them elements of intrigue and education to lead the way in supporting other new projects that take the risk in doing that.
- The varying elevations and materials brought forward in the concept are perfect for the Funk Zone.

- Heartwarming to see this kind of project coming forward in her last year of being on the Commission.
- Believes that everything from the elevations to the differing rooflines and materials references back to the heart of what makes the Funk Zone funky and to bring that fully forward in a creative way serves the Funk Zone and redevelopment well.

IV. **ADMINISTRATIVE AGENDA**

ACTUAL TIME: 3:33 P.M.

A. Committee and Liaison Reports:

1. Staff Hearing Officer Liaison Report

No report.

2. Other Committee and Liaison Reports

- a. Commissioner Bonderson announced the upcoming State Street Advisory meeting on Monday, October 18, 2021.

V. **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Schwartz adjourned the meeting at 3:35 p.m.

Submitted by,

Gillian Fennessy

Gillian Fennessy, Commission Secretary