

**CITY OF SONOMA  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING  
November 13, 2014**

**Community Meeting Room, 177 First Street West, Sonoma, CA**

**MINUTES**

Chair Tippell called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**Roll Call:**

Present: Chair Tippell, Comms. Felder, Howarth, Edwards, Heneveld, Roberson, Willers, Comm. Cribb (Alternate)

Absent: None

Others Present: Planning Director Goodison, Associate Planner Atkins, Administrative Assistant Morris

Chair Tippell stated that no new items would be heard after 10:30 p.m. unless the Planning Commission so decides. Any decisions made by the Planning Commission can be appealed within 15 days of the decision date to the City Council. Comm. Edwards led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Comm. Edwards made a motion to approve the minutes of September 11, 2014. Comm. Heneveld seconded. Comm. Willers made a motion to approve the minutes of October 9, 2014. Comm. Edwards seconded.

**CHANGES TO AGENDA ORDER:** None

**CORRESPONDENCE:** Late mail was received on Items #2,3,5 (revisions), 6, as well as a save-the-date flyer for the annual Planning Commissioner's conference.

**Item #1 –Consent Calendar- Request for a one -year extension to an approved Planned Development Permit for a four-unit project (881-887 First Street West)**

**Applicant/Property Owner: Clyde Ikeda**

Item #1 was continued to the December meeting at Planning Commission's request.

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**Item #2 – Public Hearing- Review of a previously approved Music Venue License allowing regularly-scheduled live music performances at Burgers & Vine at 400 First Street West.**

**Applicant/Property Owner: Codi Binkley/Richard Cuneo**

Planning Director Goodison presented staff's report.

Comm. Howarth confirmed with staff there are no changes to the original music license permit and that no calls for service to the Police Department were reported.

Codi Binkley, applicant, is very sensitive to the neighbors and has operated within the noise levels.

**Chair Tippell opened the item to public comment.**

Christopher Johnson, neighbor, is satisfied with the music permit and has never heard any noise from the venue.

**Chair Tippell closed the item to public comment.**

Comms. Roberson and Howarth expressed support for renewing the music license permit.

Chair Tippell appreciated the applicant's commitment to the community in regards to respecting the neighbors' right to enjoy a peaceful neighborhood by not exceeding the decibels allowed in the noise ordinance.

Comm. Howarth made a motion to renew the license, subject to the existing conditions of approval. Comm. Willers seconded. The motion was unanimously adopted.

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**Item #3 – Public Hearing – Year-end review of a seasonal outdoor food truck event (Food Truck Fridays) and an application for the 2015 outdoor food truck event for the Sebastiani Winery at 389 Fourth Street East.**

**Applicant/Property Owner: Foley Family Wines Inc.**

Associate Planner Atkins presented staff's report.

Christopher Johnson, applicant, apologized for not initially verifying that all Food Trucks had Business licenses but he now confirms before every event that the licenses are clearly visible to the public.

Comm. Edwards is pleased with the improvements made in the management of the event.

**Chair Tippell opened the item to public comment.**

No public comment.

**Chair Tippell closed the item to public comment.**

Comm. Edwards made a motion to approve the application, subject to the proposed conditions. Comm. Howarth seconded. The motion was unanimously adopted.

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**Item #4 – Public Hearing – Consideration of a Use Permit to reconfigure the interior**

**space of the Sonoma Cheese Factory to allow for a multitenant marketplace use at 2 West Spain Street.**

**Applicant/Property Owner: Viviani Trust**

Planning Director Goodison presented staff's report.

Michael Ross, project architect, reviewed the proposed revitalization of the site.

Maria Viviani, property owner (family-owned for 83 years), felt that revitalization of the building is necessary.

Comm. Howarth confirmed with the applicant that a new pedestrian pathway is planned that will provide access from the Casa Grande lot to the Plaza.

**Chair Tippell opened the item to public comment.**

Karla Noyes, Sonoma Valley resident, questioned why the temporary BBQ at the Cheese Factory has been in place for years.

Robert Berger, resident, supported the project.

**Chair Tippell closed the item to public comment.**

Comm. Willers inquired about the grandfathered parking spaces and felt the interior renovations would be a good example of improving a historic building.

Comm. Felder recommended that any change in use, including future phases, be consistent with parking requirements.

Comm. Roberson supported the project and the proposed changes to the alleyway.

Comm. Heneveld supported opening up the pedestrian thoroughfares for better pedestrian traffic flow and stressed that sidewalk alignment is critical.

Comms. Tippell, Felder, Edwards, Howarth and Heneveld noted that they had individually met with the applicant.

Comm. Edwards supported the revitalization and felt it would encourage visitors to visit nearby Depot Park.

Comm. Roberson questioned the temporary grill and staff said it would be addressed through the review of the building permit plans.

Comm. Edwards made a motion to approve the use permit, subject to the proposed conditions of approval, and with the direction that the parking associated with the building areas to be demolished will be credited towards future new construction on the site. Comm. Willers seconded. The motion was unanimously adopted.

**Item # 5 – Public Hearing – Consideration of an amendment to the Development Code establishing a review and licensing process for limited short-term rentals within owner-occupied single-family residences.**

Planning Director Goodison presented staff's report.

**Chair Tippell opened the item to public comment.**

Irene Morgan, resident, supports the boarding room concept, but feels the proposed four day per month limitation is too restrictive.

David Eichar, Sonoma Valley resident, questioned how owner occupancy would be determined. He noted that he owns a vacation rental outside of city limits and reviewed the County regulations that apply to vacation rentals.

Pat Collins, Air B&B operator, has not received any complaints from neighbors.

Suzie Hart, resident, TID Board, General Manager/Renaissance Lodge, is concerned with fire and life safety issues and does not support the plan for boarding room rentals.

Joe Henebel, Sonoma Valley B&B owner, is pleased with the discussion of this topic.

Jennifer Gray, resident, is concerned with co-existence with neighboring uses as in her view allowing boarding rooms could result in conflicts with other residential neighbors.

Bill Blosser, resident, envisioned problems with enforcement if the proposed boarding room concept is adopted.

Karen Peterson, resident/vacation rental manager, supports the new ordinance but suggested different limits on the number of days allowed.

Fran Knight, resident, is disappointed with the upsurge in vacation rentals and room rentals and is concerned about their effect on property values.

**Chair Tippell closed the item to public comment.**

Comm. Willers is concerned that an additional option for short-term rental would jeopardize the availability of long-term rentals, which are already in short-supply in Sonoma. He appreciated the work done on behalf of the City Council for this matter; however, he is not convinced that the basic concept is appropriate.

Comm. Felder favored reworking the draft ordinance and agreed with Comm. Willers about his concerns regarding the housing stock.

Comm. Roberson said that residents renting a room on a short-term basis to help with monthly expenses is beneficial and contributes to community diversity.

Comm. Edwards agreed with the concern that this could harm the availability of long-term rentals. He noted that it is already perfectly legal for a homeowner to rent out a room as a long-term rental and that those who need extra income have that option.

Comm. Howarth stated that he was not opposed to the concept but wanted more exploration on the subject.

Comm. Heneveld agreed that the issue needs to be further discussed.

Chair Tippell noted that the consensus of the Commission is that they are not ready to make a recommendation to the City Council at this time and that the item should return to the Planning Commission with additional information so that it may be discussed further.

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**Item #6- Study Session- Study session on a reviewed proposal to develop a mixed-use project (Sonoma Gateway Commons) at 870 and 899 Broadway.**

Comm. Willers recused due to proximity and left the room. Comm. Cribb went to the dais.

Planning Director Goodison presented staff's report.

**Chair Tippell opened the item to public comment.**

Mike Pattison, BSA Architects, reviewed the revised concept and discussed changes made to address previous concerns.

Joanne Braun, 871 First St. West, is concerned with the limited parking in her neighborhood. She noted that the neighborhood had become denser with the development of the MacArthur Village project and that the area was subject to traffic generated by the High School and the Middle School. She is concerned that the tandem parking proposal may not work well.

Tom Anderson, resident, urged the Commissioners to support the proposal for the site as it moves forward through the process. In his view, the project is a good approach.

David Eichar, Sonoma Valley resident, is pleased with the removal of the hotel component but has concerns about the scale of some of the buildings, especially in relation to Broadway.

Lew Braun, 871 First St. West, is concerned about parking and the scale/height of the structures.

Jack Wagner, resident, is concerned with water and energy use in new construction and he encouraged the applicants to employ green building techniques.

**Chair Tippell closed the item to public comment.**

Comm. Roberson is skeptical of the tandem parking. He noted that the live-work concept has not previous been very successful in Sonoma. He is also concerned about the massing of some of the building elements, especially that of the culinary promenade.

Comm. Edwards asked whether delivery trucks would circle back through residential areas.

Comm. Howarth stated that he was glad to see that the abandonment of the valet parking concept. He agreed with Comm. Roberson about massing issues and questioned whether the third-story option provided for in the Development Code should apply to townhome development.

Comm. Cribb agreed that some of the buildings were simply too massive and he felt the circulation and flow for pedestrians was better in the previous design.

Chair Tippell preferred the original design of the culinary promenade and was concerned about the adequacy of the tandem parking.

Comm. Roberson concurred with Comm. Cribb, as he too preferred the variety and character of the previous plan.

Comm. Howarth would like to see a mix of housing unit sizes and asked that a parking study be conducted as part of the environmental review process.

Chair Tippell agreed that a variety of housing types is good for the community and would be a benefit in the project.

Owen Smith, representing the prospective applicants, thanked the Planning Commission for its feedback. He stated that they would incorporate it in a revised proposal and that they would proceed to file a formal application.

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**Issues Update:**

Planning Director Goodison reported the following:

- A special meeting will be held with the Traffic Safety Committee and the Planning Commission on the Circulation Element update on November 20<sup>th</sup> in the EOC room.
- Chair Tippell, Comms. Roberson and Felder expressed disappointment with the City Council's reversal of the Tillem vacation rental decision.
- The Williams-Sonoma grand opening was successful.
- Gary Edwards was thanked for his years of service to the Planning Commission and congratulated on his election to the City Council.

**Comments from the Audience:** None

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 10:20 p.m. to the next regular meeting scheduled for 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, December 11, 2014.

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing minutes of November 13, 2014 were duly and regularly adopted at a regular meeting of the Sonoma Planning Commission on the 11th day of December, 2014.

Approved:

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Cristina Morris, Administrative Assistant