CITY OF SONOMA
PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING OF
Community Meeting Room, 177 First Street West
November 14, 2013
MINUTES

I hereby declare under penalty of perjury that the agenda for this meeting was posted on Friday, November 8, 2013, on the bulletin board outside the front of Sonoma City Hall, No. 1 The Plaza, Sonoma, California. Chair Roberson called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Community Meeting Room, 177 First Street West.

Roll Call:

Present:	Chair Roberson, Comms. Edwards, Henevald, Felder, Tippell, Howarth, Willers, Cribb (Alternate)
Absent:	
Others Present:	Planning Director Goodison, Senior Planner Gjestland, Administrative Assistant Morris

Chair Roberson stated that no new items would be heard after 10:30 p.m. unless the Planning Commission so decides. Any decisions made tonight can be appealed within 15 days to the City Council. He reminded everyone to turn off cell phones and pagers. Comm. WIllers led the Pledge of Allegiance.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC: No Public Comments

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Comm. Edwards made a motion to approve the minutes of September 12, 2013 Comm. Felder seconded. The motion was unanimously approved 6-0 (Comms. Roberson and Henevald abstained)

Comm. Edwards made a motion to approve the minutes of September 26, 2013 Chair Roberson seconded. The motion was unanimously approved 8-0.

Comm. Edwards made a motion to approve the minutes of October 10, 2013 Comm. Felder seconded. The motion was unanimously approved 7-0 (Comm. Howarth abstained)

CHANGES TO AGENDA ORDER: Item # 1 will not be heard tonight.

CORRESPONDENCE: Late mail was received regarding Item #2 from Daniel J. Parks, Kevin and Joanne Lely, Ned Forrest and Shelia Cole. Staff provided the Revised Conditions of Approval and Resolution relating to Use Permit Approval, Approval of an Exception to Parking Design Standards and Approval of Site Design and Architectural Review.

Comm. WIllers recused himself due to a financial conflict of interest and left the room.
Comm. Cribb recused himself and left the room.

Item #1 – Public Hearing – Consideration of amendments to the Development Code establishing definitions and zoning regulations for wine tasting facilities.

The Item was postponed until the December 12th meeting.

Item #2 – Public Hearing – Consideration and possible action on an application for a Use Permit, Site Design and Architectural Review, and Parking Exception for the Mission Square project, a mixed-use development that includes 3,514 sq. ft. of office space, 14 apartments, and associated parking improvements at 165 East Spain Street.

Applicant/Property Owner: Marcus & Willers Architects/Marcus and David Detert

Senior Planner Gjestland presented staff's report.

Comm. Howarth confirmed with staff that the proposed parking configuration meets current commercial standards, however the residential parking spaces are one foot less in width than would normally be required, which is why an Exception from the parking standards is being requested. Comm. Howarth noted that the Planning Commission has been considering amending the City's parking regulations, including reducing the dimensional standards for parking spaces.

Lori Bremner, the property owner's representative, introduced the project team.

Marcus Detert, co-property owner, (129 Clark Dr. San Mateo) indicated that Lori Bremner and project architects held a neighborhood meeting last week to discuss and view the project.. He feels the project team has adequately responded to the Planning Commission's request for more information at last meeting with the detailed design review submittal. He hopes the Planning Commission will approve the project which he feels respects the historic character of Sonoma.

Kristina Lawson ESQ., project attorney, agrees with the staff recommendation for project approval this evening. She noted that staff's brief oral presentation did not fully convey the lengthy review process for the Mission Square project, which began seven years ago following consideration of a separate hotel proposal for the site. The project has now been reduced to 14 residential units and 3,500 sq. ft. of office space. She emphasized that the Planning Commission certified the EIR for the Mission Square project in July 2013 and that a detailed design review submittal has been submitted for consideration this evening as requested. She addressed recent concerns raised about the well on the property, noting that this is not a new issue and that various cultural resource studies have been conducted, including an on-site archaeological investigation by Tom Origer & Associates, with participation by the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria. She noted that these evaluations did not identify the well as a significant cultural resource and pointed out that the EIR includes mitigation measures addressing cultural resources.

Tim Schramm, project engineer (Adobe Associates, 1220 North Dutton Santa Rosa) addressed the grading and drainage plan for the project, which includes a vegetated swale along the south property line appropriately sized for the treatment/infiltration of runoff from the roofs and parking lot. He estimates there will be 30 trucks of exported soil from the site and referenced the fire truck turning template, noting the Autoturn program was used to confirm the City's fire apparatus parameters are met in terms of access.

Comm. Tippell confirmed with the project engineer that there would be 265 cubic yards of cut/export, including wet and dry trench spoils, but also 698 cubic yards of imported base rock for the drive and parking areas.

Mr. Schramm noted the drainage plan also includes a new catch basin with filterra unit on the west side of the driveway that would accommodate runoff from the driveway. The remainder of site runoff would be conveyed to the bioswale on the south side of the property through curb openings.

Comm. Felder asked for further clarification on the drainage system and expressed concern that surface runoff will flow onto the adjoining properties to the west. The project engineer confirmed the drainage plan includes a drain inlet in the southwest corner of the site to convey overflow from the bioswale north to the filterra unit on the west side of the drive and that these systems have been appropriately sized to meet applicable Low Impact Development stormwater regulations. Comm. Felder indicated that he remained skeptical about the drainage plan.

Comm. Tippell has scrutinized the drainage plan/design and feels it is adequate. However, he noted that asphalt is proposed for all driveway and parking areas and asked if the applicants would consider permeable pavers for the first 50-60 feet of driveway in order to improve aesthetics and enhance groundwater recharge and stormwater filtration. Mr. Schramm noted that additional stormwater BMPs beyond the proposed bioswale and filterra unit are not necessary to meet applicable stormwater requirements and that the site's clay soils are highly expansive which can be problematic for pavers.

Comm. Felder confirmed with the project engineer that an underground storm drain goes from the north through the property and/or along its west side. The exact location has not been plotted yet.

Carol Marcus, project architect (Marcus & Willers Architects), anticipates DRC review of the landscape plan, exterior lighting, signage, and rehabilitation plan for the Pinelli bungalow if necessary. She requested the opportunity to address the Planning Commission at the end of the public hearing to answer questions and also for the project team to address any concerns or questions that may come up through the Planning Commission's discussion. She proceeded to play a virtual tour of the project proposal (an interactive 3D-model video) that illustrated the project features. In general, the architecture and details of the proposed buildings do not attempt to replicate the style of historic buildings in the area, which is consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. Rather they draw from forms, materials, finishes and textures that are familiar to the area and are designed as quiet, simple buildings that are sensitive to the historic district. The new buildings will exceed CALGreen building standards, feature Marvin integrity windows, and have the least invasive type of foundation system possible.

Ms. Marcus emphasized they will be rehabilitating the Pinelli bungalow for office use rather than restoring it. Not all windows will be replaced exactly in kind; however they do not expect major changes to the exterior of the bungalow. She noted they added a colonnade to the west side of Building 1 and selected exterior materials for longevity and low maintenance. She pointed out that the cement plaster proposed for the project is common in the historic district and presented a material and color board to the Planning Commission, as well as a roof sample and window sample. Ms. Marcus explained that Buildings 2, 3, and 4 have double-hipped roofs, and 6" by 6" chamfered porch/'balcony posts to break down their mass. Buildings 5 and 6 would be differentiated by the use of board and batten siding. Building 7 would have "barn" doors on the east/enclosure side and the carports would be white and fully cantilevered to allow for maximum vehicle mobility. She noted the carport spaces would be fully functional with a width of nine feet and that nearby parking for the Mercato complex has 8' by 14' spaces that work. She emphasized there would also be an opportunity for shared parking and requested approval of the parking exception. She noted that neighbors would prefer a CMU wall rather than wooden

fencing for the required noise barrier at the southeast corner of the site. They are happy to accommodate this request; however the footing for a CMU wall could require a reduction in the length of adjoining parking spaces by 2 feet in order to maintain the bioswale on the south side of the site.

Comm. Edwards confirmed with the project architect that the backflow prevention device would likely be located in the landscape area northeast of the Pinelli bungalow and that the number of office tenants could range from one to seven.

Comm. Tippell commended the applicant on the video presentation, which he found very helpful. He inquired whether solar panels or pre-wiring for solar on the carports was considered. The project architect indicated that pre-wiring for solar could be considered and clarified that a common laundry facility is proposed as another “green” feature rather than laundry appliances in the individual units.

Comm. Heneveld confirmed the location of the sound wall required by Mitigation Measure NOISE-4 and that finish color of the carports would be factory applied.

Comm. Howarth does not like the location of backflow prevention devices within front yards, especially in the historic zone, and noted that other cities approach this differently. He does not want this feature to be prominent in the streetscape. The project architect indicated they were open to alternate locations provided the City would allow for it.

Comm. Howarth confirmed that windows proposed for Building 1 are not true divided lights. He noted the depth of the recess/reveal into the building wall for windows on Building 1 and asked the project architect why this detail was not brought into Buildings 2, 3, and 4. The project architect responded explained that it is because 2”x6” construction is proposed for Building 1 whereas the other buildings would employ 2”x4” construction.

Paul Harris, project landscape architect (Imagine Sonoma Landscape, 801 Camelia St. Berkeley) has designed a simple and practical landscape plan with medium to low water use plants and no lawn that uses crushed stone as mulch and boulders to delineate spaces. Different low fence options are presented that draw from local examples. The plan is conceptual at this point and would be refined for review by the DRC.

Comm. Howarth confirmed with the landscape architect that roof drainage would ultimately be directed to the bioswale on the south side of the property per the civil drainage plans. In addition, there would be drainage areas between the buildings lined with river cobble.

Chair Roberson opened the public hearing.

Karla Noyes, resident outside City limits, feels the project is much improved but urged the Planning Commission the keep their standards high to avoid bad and/or cheap designs.

Patricia Cullinan, 425 Denmark Street, has concerns about vibration impacts, drainage, and the design of Building 1. She feels the vibration analysis should have included the Pinni and Viviani buildings. In addition, there should be a pre-construction survey, insurance requirements, and monitoring plan to ensure that vibration levels do not exceed the threshold and cause damage. She has concerns about site drainage and a cone of saturation potentially affecting the Blue Wing Inn building. Building 1 will be the largest on the block and overwhelm the Blue Wing Inn and other structures on East Spain Street.

Mary Martinez, 414 First St. East, says the 100-year flood comes every 10 years to this area and the property currently functions as a drainage swale. She does not feel that drainage has been adequately addressed. She believes that no exceptions should be made to the parking standards, noting that up to seven tenants could occupy the office space thus exacerbating on-street parking impacts.

Barbara Wimmer, President of the Sonoma League for Historic Preservation and resident, at 19060 Junipero Serra Dr., stated it is the position of the League that the project needs further modification to achieve compatibility with the historic setting, particularly with respect to the design of Building 1. She indicated that the project should be designed in a "more historical manner."

Comm. Tippell asked Ms. Wimmer to clarify what a more historical manner would be. Ms. Wimmer stated she doesn't have an answer. She indicated the League is mainly concerned with the design of Building 1, which should be further refined. The remainder of the project is acceptable.

Bob Garant, Board member of the Sonoma League for Historic Preservation and resident at 617 First St. West, clarified that the League does not want to force any particular architectural style for Building 1. However, they feel Building 1 is a rather massive and will overwhelm adjacent buildings. He suggested that Building 1 should be raised on a plinth and concurred with previous comments about possibly recessing the windows and using a different exterior finish. He feels the building has no continuity with surrounding structures and emphasized the main concern is with its massing. The League requests that the Planning Commission to push on this issue.

Comm. Tippell confirmed with Mr. Garant that the primary concern is with the proportion and detailing of Building 1, not about wanting any particular architectural style.

Robert Demler, Vice-President of the Sonoma League for Historic Preservation and resident, at 649 First St. West, noted the importance of site's historic setting. He does not like the design of Building 1, which he feels does not harmonize with or enhance the historic district. In his personal opinion, employing an adobe architectural style for Building 1 like the Blue Wing or Ray adobe would better, preferably with a second floor balcony.

Kimberly Blattner, 426 Second St. East, feels that the project design is less than ordinary and needs more work, especially considering the unique and important location of the site. She believes the property owners are not demanding enough of the project architect. She commented that the residential buildings all look like cheap student housing and requested that the Planning Commission send it back.

Carol Marcus, project architect, disagrees with public comments that the project would overwhelm the Blue Wing Inn. She pointed out that Building 1 and the Blue Wing Inn would not be seen side by side given the intervening Pinni building and noted that Building 1 would be setback 20 feet from the property line along East Spain Street in contrast to the Blue Wing Inn which has no setback.

Tim Schramm, project engineer, argued against the use of permeable pavers to reduce stormwater runoff noting that site soils have been classified as Group C with low infiltration rates. He emphasized that the project Stormwater Mitigation Plan and Preliminary Grading and Drainage Plan employ bioswales in conjunction with other BMPs to meet applicable stormwater

requirements. He noted the drainage design will also need to demonstrate compliance with the SCWA Flood Design and Drainage Requirements through a plan check process.

Comm. Tippell is familiar with the site soil type and proposed drainage design approach, which he feels the project engineer did a good job with. He is suggesting the use of permeable pavers for only a portion of the driveway for aesthetics primarily and only secondarily for stormwater benefits.

Comm. Howarth agreed with some of the public comments about the design of Building 1 and asked the project architect if they had conducted a design study of exterior material/finish options that considered nearby buildings. The project architect indicated they did not perform such a study but considered the durability, sustainability, and overall compatibility of their exterior material/finish choices.

Chair Roberson closed the public hearing.

Comm. Tippell noted that the Planning Commission validated the site plan through the EIR certification process, so he feels the land plan is acceptable. He is also comfortable with the parking exception. He has three issues: 1) the applicant should consider an alternative surface for a portion of the driveway leading from East Spain St.; 2) prewiring of the carports should be required to accommodate future solar; and 3) he shares some of the concerns regarding the design of Building 1. With respect to Building 1, he does not want to direct a particular architectural style but would like to see something a bit different and feels that more design consideration should be required. He is comfortable approving the project tonight, including the parking exception, with the requirement that the design of Building 1 be subject to further consideration by the Design Review Commission.

Comm. Edwards agrees with Comm. Tippell's concerns about the design of Building 1, which he feels does not fit into the historic setting. He believes more work could be done to reduce its mass and suggested a balcony and possibly the use of stone or more wood. He is not convinced that pervious pavers for the driveway make sense given the high groundwater table on the property, as evidenced by the artesian well, which had hot water coming out of it at one time according to Bob Cunnard.

Comm. Felder indicated he no longer has concerns about parking but is skeptical that drainage is adequately addressed despite the project engineer's explanation. He feels that drainage needs to be looked at more closely. He has greater concern about vibration impacts on the Blue Wing Inn and Pinni building and would insist on a condition requiring documentation of their current condition and regular inspections/monitoring by a qualified consultant during grading to ensure that vibration levels do not exceed the threshold identified in the EIR. Regardless, he cannot support the project due to the massing and height of Building 1. He is not satisfied with the design approach given the important historic aspect of the streetscape.

Comm. Henevald concurs with some of the previous commissioner comments but disagrees about the design of Building 1, noting that the hipped roof helps soften it. He commented that the plainness of Building 1 seems to be the main concern of the commission overall. He is not concerned about drainage as applicable regulations and review of drainage plans by Sonoma County Water Agency are stringent. He feels that parking is adequate and that prewiring the carports for solar makes sense.

Comm. Howarth hears from the majority of the commission that there is concern with Building 1 not fitting in. He is comfortable with parking and drainage but cannot support the project without

modifications to Building 1. He likes the suggestion of pavers on a portion of the driveway for aesthetic reasons and feels that construction should be prohibited on weekends since associated noise may adversely impact neighbors during development of the project.

Planning Director Goodison clarified that Mitigation Measure NOISE-5 set forth in the EIR and MMRP prohibits construction activity on Sundays and designated Holidays.

Chair Roberson confirmed with Planning Director Goodison that drainage infrastructure was installed with the Mercato II complex to address flooding in the area and the infrastructure was sized to accommodate development of the subject property. He is predominantly in favor of the project, which he feels is respectful and compatible with the surrounding area in general. The parking exception is reasonable and he agrees that pre-wiring the carports for solar is a good idea. His concerns about drainage have been adequately addressed by the information provided and the drainage plan review process. With respect to Building 1, it should not replicate historic structures and must be a modern building that fits into its surroundings. He appreciates the applicant's efforts to keep Building 1 subordinate to historic buildings in the area, though it may be too muted. Regardless, this design issue should be referred to the DRC for consideration. He is impressed with the applicant's video, which is helpful visualizing the project.

A discussion ensued about the location of the backflow prevention device. Planning Director Goodison suggested a condition requiring that it be located outside the front yard setback subject to review and approval of the Fire Marshall and City Engineer.

Com Tippell indicated he is comfortable approving the project tonight with the requirement that the design of Building 1 be reviewed by the DRC.

Comm. Felder and Comm. Edwards feel the design of Building 1 is too significant of an issue to pass on to the DRC and that it should be resolved at the Planning Commission level.

Chair Roberson feels that the Planning Commission has conducted a thorough review of the project and that the design of Building 1 should be referred to the DRC since it is primarily an aesthetic concern, rather than an issue of placement or massing.

Comm. Tippell made a motion to approve the Use Permit, Site Design and Architectural Review, and Parking Exception with the following amendments t o the conditions of approval:

1. The architectural concept, elevation details, exterior colors and materials of Building 1 shall be subject to review and approval by the DRC to address concerns raised by the public and the Planning Commission
2. The backflow prevention device shall be located outside the 20-foot front yard setback along the East Spain Street frontage, subject to review and approval by the Fire Marshall and City Engineer.
3. The carport structures shall be pre-wired to accommodate solar panels
4. The northerly segment of the driveway shall be designed and constructed with pavers for a minimum length of 50 feet from the driveway apron for aesthetic purposes and stormwater infiltration.
5. Weekly vibration monitoring inspections of the Blue Wing Inn and Pinni Building shall be conducted by a licensed structural engineer during earth-moving activities, contingent upon authorization by the owners of those properties.
6. The limitations on construction hours and other measures set forth in Mitigation Measure NOISE-5 shall be explicit within the conditions of project approval.

Comm. Howarth seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:
Ayes: Comms. Tippell, Henevald, Howarth, and Chair Roberson. Noes: Comms. Felder and Edwards. Comms. Willers and Cribb recused. The motion was approved 4-2.

Comm. WIllers returned to the dais.
Comm. Cribb left the meeting.

Item #3- Public Hearing- Consideration of amendments to Title 19 of the Sonoma Municipal Code to: 1) clarify provisions related to density bonuses and inclusionary housing: 2) modify provisions pertaining to use permit requirements for emergency shelters in the "P" zoning district; 3) establish a definition for Agricultural Employee Housing"; and, 4) allow for residential care facilities in the Mixed Use zone.

Planning Director Goodison presented staff's report.

Comm. Tippell discussed a hypothetical scenario in which a housing development provides for affordable unit referring to two moderate and one low income unit in a different zoning District.

Planning Director Goodison says it only applies to Sonoma Residential Housing.

Comm. Willers believes that clarity is always beneficial in business.

Planning Director Goodison conducted a staff straw poll with all the Commissioners favoring making the necessary changes.

Comm. Tippell made a motion to make a change as defined: Within the Sonoma Residential zone, in cases where the inclusionary requirement results in an odd number of units, the applicant shall have the option of priding the odd unit at either the moderate income level of the low income level. Comm. Willers seconded. The motion passed 6-1 (Comm. Edwards dissenting).

Issues Update:

1. The Planning Commissioners Conference is on 12-7 at Sonoma State University. Please R.S.V.P. to Cristina.
2. The AT&T cell tower was appealed to the City Council based on the issue of EMF.
3. The City Council upheld the Planning Commission's decision to approve the Nicora Place project.
4. The Sonoma Valley Hospital reception/tour was held today for the completed expansion/addition. Another tour can be arranged for those that could not attend.

Comments from the Audience: Robert Garrant, Engineer, (617 First Street West) suggested that the City consider making changes to the placement of the fire sprinkler system requirements, by making an allowance for underground options to be considered.

Comm. Edwards made a motion to adjourn. Comm. Howarth seconded. The motion was unanimously approved 7-0. (Comm. Cribb abstained)

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m. to the next regular meeting scheduled for 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, December 12, 2013.

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing minutes were duly and regularly adopted at a regular meeting of the Planning Commission on the 9th day of January, 2014.

Approved:

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Cristina Morris, Administrative Assistant