

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

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

**MINUTES**

Chair Roberson called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Community Meeting Room, 177 First Street West, Sonoma, CA

**Roll Call:**

Present:	Chair Roberson, Comms. Edwards, Felder, Willers, Heneveld, Howarth, Cribb (Alternate)
Absent:	Comm. Tippell
Others Present:	Planning Director Goodison, Associate Planner Atkins, 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. Heneveld 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 January 9, 2014 with the changes noted. Chair Roberson seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

**CHANGES TO AGENDA ORDER:** None

**CORRESPONDENCE:** Late mail was received regarding Items #1, #2 & #4. Janet Wedekind submitted two photos for Item #4, distributed at dais.

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**Item #1 – Public Hearing – Consideration of a year-end review of a seasonal outdoor food truck event (Food Truck Fridays) and an application for the 2014 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.

Comm. Howarth confirmed with Staff that the only change is an earlier event start time and that the City's Business license requirement is met.

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

Christopher Johnson, Events Manager, noted that the main change was hiring a private security company for monitoring the rules. The doors were not opened while music was played. He

recognized the resident's concerns of neighborhood compatibility and is satisfied that all vendors have visibly displayed business licenses and that the doors are not open while music is played.

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

Comm. Howarth stated he was satisfied with the changes proposed.

Comm. Howarth made a motion to approve the 2014 outdoor food truck event for the Sebastiani Winery with an earlier start time. Comm. Edwards seconded. The motion carried unanimously (Comm. Tippell absent).

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**Item #2 – Public Hearing – Consideration of a Use Permit to operate a mobile food trolley on a commercial property at 455 West Napa Street**

**Applicant/Property Owner: TIP'S Tri-Tip/Innovative Properties & Development LLC.**

Planning Director Goodison presented staff's report.

Comm. Willers stated he was concerned about access and parking.

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

Andrew Pryfogle, applicant, stated that he had expanded his business from selling at the Farmer's Market to include catering. He is optimistic that his trolley food truck would fit into the City landscape at its proposed location. One of the four parking spaces would be eliminated as illustrated in the submitted photos. He noted that the handicapped space was placed incorrectly and this would be revised.

Comm. Henevald confirmed that there would be two service windows in the trolley for taking orders and serving food. The existing business would provide electrical access and no generator would be used.

Comm. Cribb is pleased with the applicant's statement that a licensed contractor will develop a plan for more lighting built into the trolley itself, as he is concerned the current lighting levels at the back of the site might not be adequate for the proposed use.

Comm. Howarth discussed with Planning Director Goodison whether the proposed parking complies with the normal standards. Planning Director Goodison noted that the existing parking arrangement is adequate but that the alternative parking plan submitted by the applicant this evening appears to have deficiencies.

Chair Roberson clarified with the applicant that it will take approximately a half hour to prepare the trolley for business, will typically be operated by two to four employees, with food service taking approximately 5 minutes.

Comm. Cribb confirmed that the applicant had not contacted Safeway.

Planning Director Goodison asked about the logistics associated with moving the trolley in and out of the lot since it will be also used for catering at winery events.

The applicant stated that although the trolley would be taken off-site during the day in conjunction with other events, it is their hope that the Planning Commission would authorize it to be kept overnight on the property.

Comm. Felder questioned whether there will be sufficient parking for employees. The applicant stated that, in many cases, the employees carpool or ride bikes, which should help ease parking demand.

Nick Grimm Café Scooteria/Sorento Imports business owner, said that there is sufficient lighting and electrical hookup for the trolley with sufficient room in the back for his scooter storage. He stated that he was wrapping up work on some scooter upgrade projects, which, when finished, will help keep the parking lot clear.

Kevin Mourdich, Hyde Road, spoke in support of the applicant.

Peter Krause, neighbor, is of the opinion that the trolley will fit into the character of Sonoma.

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

Comm. Willers is not opposed to the concept but would like the trolley removed during the hours when it is not in operation. In his view this is necessary in order to maintain consistency with the concept that this is a mobile operation, as well as to ensure adequate parking for the drive-through use. He is concerned with about the potential for conflicts between cars that are parking and pedestrians and suggested that a revised parking plan be developed that places the trolley in a different area of the site.

Comm. Howarth agreed with Comm. Willers that an improved site plan and parking analysis should be done.

Comm. Henevald suggested that additional outdoor lighting will likely be necessary.

**Chair Roberson reopened the item to public comment.**

Mr. Grimm stated his appreciation for the input and agreed with Comm. Willer's idea of providing parking in front of the site for improved visibility and traffic flow.

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

Comm. Willers a made motion to continue the item to the next regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting. Staff will work with the applicants to develop a revised parking proposal. Comm. Howarth seconded. The motion carried unanimously (Comm. Tippell absent).

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**Item #3 — Public Hearing — Consideration of an Exception to the side yard setback requirement to construct a residential addition at 19330 Natalina Court.**

**Applicant/Property Owner: John Ryan**

Planning Director Goodison presented staff's report.

Comm. Howarth confirmed with staff that the garage, as modified, meets the standard for off-street parking.

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

John Ryan, applicant, noted that he had scaled back his proposal in order to meet the FAR standard and has written support from the adjacent neighbor affected by the proposal.

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

Comm. Felder made a motion to approve the exception to the side yard setback requirements to construct a residential addition. Comm. Edwards seconded. The motion carried unanimously (Comm. Tippell absent).

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**Item #4 — Discussion/Business — Review of staff response to concerns raised by Janet Wedekind regarding the elimination of a driveway cut at 639 Third Street West and the lack of covered off-street parking.**

Planning Director Goodison presented staff's report.

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

Janet Wedekind, neighbor, appreciated Planning Director Goodison's helpfulness in responding to her questions. However, she disagrees with staff's interpretations of the Development Code provisions concerning the abandonment of a non-conforming use and the removal of redundant driveways. She reviewed the code sections in question and stated her arguments as to why a covered parking space should have been required and why the driveway on the Vigna Street frontage should have been removed, rather than the driveway cut on the Third Street frontage. She does not feel that these provisions were properly interpreted and is concerned that inaccurate information may have been provided to the City. She objected to having a driveway adjacent to the rear setback of her property, as in her view it is a remnant of the former commercial use that should have been removed upon the conversion of the property back to a residential use. She stated her concern for potential liability as a property owner with respect to cars backing from the driveway.

John Peterson, a resident of the neighborhood, expressed agreement with the positions stated by Janet Wedekind.

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

In response to a question from Comm. Howarth, Planning Director Goodison stated that on the issue of covered parking, while this is a non-conformity associated with the conversion of the property back to a residence, a covered parking space would only be required if the property owner proposed to expand the area of the residence, which did not happen with the renovation implemented by the property owner. On the issue of the driveway cut, the guidance in the Development Code suggests that when a driveway cut is to be removed, the cut on the more heavily trafficked street should be chosen for removal. In making this choice, the Public Works Department acted in accordance with the guideline and within its allowed discretion.

Comm. Felder asked whether the bricks at the back of the driveway shown on the landscaping plan were also on the building plan. Planning Director Goodison stated that he was not sure, but that as a landscaping element it would be necessary to show the bricks, nor would it be possible for the City to require their installation of the property owner if he chose not to do that.

Comm. Edwards stated that the changes made to the property are a massive improvement. He noted that there are other residences in Sonoma that lack covered parking. He stated that he supported staff's interpretations.

Comm. Cribb noted that with the shopping center across the street, the decision to keep the driveway on Vigna Street was the prudent choice, because traffic on Third Street West is much heavier.

Comm. Willers stated that in his view, retaining the driveway on Vigna Street and removing the driveway on Third Street West was the better solution, due to the difference in traffic volumes. He stated that current rules do not require consultation with an adjoining property owner, but while that might be considered a gap in the process, it was his view that staff had interpreted the policies as written correctly and the result is a safer solution. Had this come before the Planning Commission, he would not have supported maintaining the driveway on Third Street.

Comm. Felder stated that while he did not like the expanse of paving in the rear yard, especially adjoining another residence, that is not something that the City regulates and he can find no basis on which to say that staff interpreted the Code provisions incorrectly. That said, he can understand the neighboring property owner's unhappiness with the outcome.

Chair Roberson stated that in his view, staff had interpreted the Code provisions correctly and he agreed that, given the difference in traffic volumes, it was safer to have the driveway cut on Vigna Street. While he felt it would be desirable to have a separation between the brick area and the driveway, that was not something that the Commission could dictate.

Comm. Edwards made a motion to uphold staff's determination with respect to the requirement for the removal of a driveway cut at 639 Third Street West and the determination that covered off-street parking was not required in conjunction with the change to a conforming use. Comm. Willers seconded. The motion was approved 6-0-1 (Comm. Tippell absent, Comm. Felder abstained).

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**Item #5 — Discussion** — Discussion of appeals of Planning Commission decisions.

Planning Director Goodison presented staff's report.

Planning Director Goodison stated that the City Council is respectful of the Planning Commission's decisions. While there are contrasting decisions from time-to-time when it acts on appeals, the Council always takes the Planning Commission's recommendations very seriously. On major items, such as the Mission Square project and Nicora Place, there has been a high level of agreement between the two bodies. He also noted that a joint study session with the City Council is scheduled for February 24th to discuss wine tasting facilities, a meeting that the Council set because it wished to hear directly from the Planning Commission on that issue.

Chair Roberson is disappointed with the City Council overruling the unanimous Planning Commission decision on the AT&T cell tower.

Comm. Felder noted that AT&T made a very poor presentation to the City Council and left many questions unanswered.

Comm. Cribb suggested that there should be some greater threshold for the filing of an appeal. Under the current rules, pretty much anything is subject to appeal for any reason.

Comm. Willers appreciated the processes adhered to by the Planning Commission and City Council. He noted that State law sets a low threshold for filing an appeal. He noted that, as an elected body, the City Council is subject to different pressures and acts in a different role than does the Planning Commission.

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

John Peterson, resident, appreciated the Planning Commissioner's frustrations when diligent work is done and not respected. He thanked the Commissioners for their continued high level of public service to the community.

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

No action was taken.

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**Issues Update:**

1. Joint study session with the City Council on 2-14 at the SCC on wine tasting facilities.
2. City Council meeting on 3-3 PC appeal for fence exception at 639 Third Street West and DRHPC appeal for 408 First Street East.
3. The update of the Housing and Elements are underway so the Planning Commission will be seeing items related to this work shortly.

Comm. Howarth distributed some materials explaining the concept of "cottage housing." He felt that this could be a good option in Sonoma.

Comm. Willers concurred that this type of housing could fit in well and address needs that are not being met in typical new housing developments.

The Planning Commission agreed that this concept should be explored and incorporated as part of the Housing Element update.

**Comments from the Audience:** Shawn Montoya, Petaluma resident, supports a cottage housing review, noting that it had been employed successfully in the City of Petaluma.

Comm. Edwards made a motion to adjourn. Comm. Felder seconded. The motion was carried unanimously (Comm. Tippell absent).

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m. to the next regular meeting scheduled for 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 13, 2014.

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

Approved:

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Cristina Morris, Administrative Assistant