

**CITY OF SONOMA
PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
October 8, 2015**

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

MINUTES

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

Roll Call:

Present: Comm. Felder, Comms. Cribb, Wellander, McDonald

Absent: Chair Willers, Comms. Roberson, Heneveld , Coleman

Others Present: Planning Director Goodison, Senior Planner Gjestland, Administrative Assistant Morris

Comm. Felder, chairing the meeting in the absence of Chair Willers, 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 to the City Council. Comm. Wellander led the Pledge of Allegiance.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC: Frank Winds, Methodist Church Social Action Group, is working on affordable housing and is pleased with the City's Housing Element of the General Plan and requested implementation of more affordable housing.

Christine Missmer, resident/Sonoma United Methodist Group, is concerned that Sonoma's work force will leave if more low income housing is not offered.

Michelle Richey, Sonoma Valley resident, is disappointed that she cannot afford to live in Sonoma where she works.

Ken Brown, resident, expressed concern about the rights of tenants to have affordable rental opportunities.

Kathleen Kesterke, resident, is challenged to remain in her rental unit since she has experienced a \$350.00 rent increase over time. She would like the Planning Commission to work on a solution to the housing crisis.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: None.

CORRESPONDENCE: Staff reviewed the correspondence received following the distribution of the packet.

Item #1 – Public Hearing – Consideration of a Use Permit to allow a residence to operate as a one-room bed and breakfast, in conjunction with an Exception from the parking standards, at 688 Broadway.

Applicant/Property Owner: Pierrette Duriez

Planning Director Goodison presented staff's report.

Chair Felder opened the item to public comment.

Comm. Cribb inquired if a pull-out parking is an option.

Comm. McDonald confirmed with staff that the home occupation is exempt from parking and that the fence standard is not met but can be added as a condition of approval.

Chair Felder opened the item to public comment.

No public comment.

Chair Felder closed the item to public comment.

Comm. Wellander recommended approval because it addressed the current business use, there is an on-site manager, and there are ample parking spaces on-street.

Comm. McDonald addressed affordable housing needs in the broad sense of limiting short-term rentals in commercial districts since this bedroom could be rented as a long term rental rather than on a short-term basis.

Planning Director Goodison noted that Commercial zoning of the property makes a difference and this allowance helps the owner to maintain the property as a residence.

Comm. Cribb felt the homeowner is within her rights to increase her income potential while maintaining the primary use of the property as residence and he is satisfied with the proposal for a change in use.

Chair Felder agreed with his fellow Commissioners that it is an appropriate use.

Comm. McDonald made a motion to approve the project with the attached conditions of approval. Comm. Cribb seconded. The motion was unanimously approved. (4-0)

Item #2 – Public Hearing – Consideration of a Use Permit Amendment to allow a restaurant use in conjunction with CocoaPlanet's chocolate production facility and retail tasting room at 921 Broadway.

Applicant/Property Owner: CocoaPlanet, Inc./McKibben Holdings LLC

Senior Planner Gjestland presented staff's report. With respect to the revised draft conditions distributed by staff, Planning Director Goodison clarified that invitation-only events would be allowable subject to specific limitations, including a prohibition on third-party rentals, and that the existing driveway is not proposed to be changed.

Chair Felder opened the item to public comment.

Anne McKibben, the applicant, emphasized that their chocolate manufacturing process requires few deliveries which would occur only a handful of days a month. Only one or two additional deliveries per week are anticipated for the restaurant use, which is significantly less than the adjacent Subway and convenience store.

Comm. McDonald clarified with the applicant that she has no intention of erecting a tent in the outdoor garden area but would rather utilize umbrellas.

Lou Braun, resident, confirmed that operations would not include roasting cocoa beans.

Ronald Preston, co-property owner of the office complex to the west, expressed concern about potential noise impacts from the restaurant's outdoor seating area and requested fencing.

Chair Felder closed the item to public comment.

Comms. McDonald and Cribb expressed concern about the proposed restaurant being an intensification of use and the implications of the use permit running with the land. They suggested additional limitations on deliveries and hours of operation to address potential changes in the future. Comm. Cribb stated that a parking plan should be required for events over 40 people, consistent with review of Williams-Sonoma proposal.

Chair Felder confirmed with the Planning Director that the proposed amount of seating can be scaled back in relation to the amount of on-site parking. A discussion ensued clarifying how restaurant parking is calculated and what level of seating would not require an Exception from the parking standards

Chair Felder noted that the commission has the discretion to restrict manufacturing to specific days of the week, and/or reduce the amount of seating so that an Exception is not necessary.

Comm. Wellander suggested reducing the total number of seats to 45 .

The commission further discussed whether to apply limitations on when deliveries could occur.

Chair Felder invited the applicant back to comment.

Anne McKibben, applicant, stated that she cannot tell delivery companies such as UPS when they can arrive on the property. She noted that substantially more deliveries occur on the property to the south without restriction and felt that limiting deliveries to her business would be an unwarranted restriction that could not be fulfilled. She reiterated that the business would not have a lot of commercial deliveries. In addition, she confirmed it is not feasible to manufacture chocolate and operate the restaurant concurrently, but she wanted flexibility in determining which days of the week manufacturing activities would occur.

After some further discussion, Comm. McDonald made a motion to approve the Use Permit with an amendment to the conditions prohibiting deliveries between 7:30-8:30a.m. and 2-3:30p.m., Monday through Friday. Comm. Cribb seconded the motion. In further discussion, Comm. Wellander suggested reducing the seating from 48 to 45 to eliminate the need for a parking Exception. Chair Felder indicated that he could not support the motion as he felt it imposed an undue hardship on the applicant with regard to deliveries, although he would like to reduce the seating to 45.

Comm. McDonald amended the motion to approve the Use Permit with an amendment to the conditions restricting the total amount of combined indoor and outdoor seats to 45 at any one time. Comm. Cribb seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved 4-0.

Item #3 – Public Hearing – Consideration of Exception from: 1) the garage setback standard to allow a garage setback standard to allow a garage addition; and, 2) the fence height standards to allow an over-height fence within a front yard setback at 341 Nicoli Lane.

Applicant/Property Owner: Belinda Rodman

Planning Director Goodison presented staff's report.

Comm. McDonald confirmed with staff that the length of the driveway will be 20 feet following the proposed extension of the garage.

Chair Felder opened the item to public comment.

Belinda Rodman, applicant/owner, was not aware the modifications made to the home were illegal.

Bari Williams, Realtor/Pacific Union, confirmed that when the home was sold, the buyer was not aware that the trellis and the fence had been built without permits.

Chair Felder closed the item to public comment.

Comm. Wellander is not concerned with the proposal to extend the garage, but he is disappointed that the front yard fence guidelines were not met and he expressed reservations with granting a fence height exception.

Comm. Cribb concurred with Comm. Wellander's comments. However, he acknowledged that the fence was a pre-existing condition since 2000 and there had been no complaints or neighborhood concerns.

Comm. McDonald felt the fence height is not visually intrusive. His main concern is the privatization of private yards in the neighborhood.

Chair Felder agreed with his fellow commissioners and supported the application.

Comm. Cribb made a motion to approve the Exception for the garage setbacks and fence height standards as submitted. Comm. McDonald seconded. The motion was unanimously approved 4-0.

Item # 4 –Study Session- Study session on a proposal to develop a 26-unit multi-family project on a 1.86 acre site at 870 Broadway.

Planning Director Goodison presented the project.

Chair Felder opened the item to public comment.

Dan Deibel, Founder/Olympic Residential Group, is in escrow to purchase the property.

Alex Seidel, Seidel Architects, said the intent is to create a more continuous and appropriate urban design character on Broadway where there is now a gap created by paved parking lots and obsolete commercial structures. He anticipated integration of the townhomes having architectural elements that tie into the neighborhood.

Paul Latiri, The Guzzardo Partnership, proposed a pedestrian link to the park and integrating storm water mitigation/treatment upfront. The design team is motivated to coordinate the eastern property with the adjacent parcel owned by the City of Sonoma which is positioned to remain permanent open space.

Michelle Richey, resident, inquired about the cost of the affordable units.

The applicant responded that low income units are \$262,000 and moderate income \$402,000.

Greg Wind, resident, is concerned with the prospect of solar panels and how they might affect the building elevations.

Lou Braun, Heritage Park resident, clarified with staff that the square footage does not include garage space.

Comm. McDonald stated that he would prefer to see a higher density and perhaps a commercial component. At the same time, he felt that the buildings adjoining Broadway were potentially too massive and that a greater setback and/or reduced height should be provided. He suggested that the parking lot on the east MacArthur side of the property should be better integrated into the site and the on-site circulation should be simplified.

Comm. Cribb expressed disappointment that the mixed use aspect was removed and wanted the project to be more inclusive of the community. He sees no recognition of the history of the site in the proposed plan. He agreed with Comm. McDonald that the circulation element for the site is not satisfactory.

Comm. Wellander agreed with his fellow Commissioners that there should be more variety of housing options on the site. He did not object to the “tuck under” parking concept in principle, but he has some concern with the resulting building heights along Broadway.

Chair Felder echoed his fellow Commissioners thoughts that more local character is desired along with more variation in housing unit types.

Dan Deibel, Founder/Olympic Residential Group, stated that his group will strive for local authenticity in a housing project that responds to the Commission’s concerns, but they do not wish to pursue a mixed use development for the site. He envisioned cohesiveness with MacArthur Place in regards to the type of residential setting.

Linda Corrado, resident, stated that she was concerned that mixed messages were being sent regarding the site, as previous proposals—unlike the one under consideration now—were far more massive and did not come close to meeting parking standards. She stressed the need for more affordable units for work/force housing.

Issues Update: Planning Director Goodison reported the following:

- 1.The Housing Authority issued an RFP seeking a development partner for low income residential units at 20269 Broadway.
2. The City Council denied the appeal from Richard Konecky of the Planning Commission's decision for 753 Third Street East.
3. The City Council approved a consultant for the Housing Impact Fee/review of Inclusionary Program to assist in meeting the goals of the City's housing policies and objectives.

Comm. Wellander is optimistic about diverse housing opportunities in the community. He is encouraged by Planning Director Goodison's comments about having the Planning Commission review tree protection measures upfront in the early stages of development proposals.

Commissioner comments: None

Comments from the Audience: None

Adjournment: Comm. Cribb made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:03 p.m. to the next meeting scheduled for 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, November 12 ,2015. Comm. McDonald seconded. The motion was unanimously adopted.

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing minutes of were duly and regularly adopted at a regular meeting of the Sonoma Planning Commission on the 14th day of January, 2016.

Approved:

Cristina Morris, Administrative Assistant