

SAN ANSELMO PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING OF NOVEMBER 18, 2013

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chair Brasler, Co-Chair House, Commissioners Krebs, Pipkin, Sisich, Swaim

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Cronk

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Brasler called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Brasler announced that Carla Overberger will no longer be serving on the Planning Commission. He introduced Kim Pipkin and welcomed her to the Commission.

OPEN TIME FOR PUBLIC EXPRESSION

No one spoke.

PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Senior Planner Phil Boyle welcomed Commissioner Pipkin and announced that Susan Cronk was also appointed to the Planning Commission. Boyle expressed thanks for Carla Overberger's many years of service and wished her well in her future endeavors.

Boyle reminded the Commissioners of the annual Sonoma State University Planning Conference to be held on the first Saturday in December. The deadline to register for the conference is Wednesday, November 27.

PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

CONSENT AGENDA

Minutes of Planning Commission Meeting July 15, 2013

M/s, Krebs/Swaim to approve the minutes of the meeting of July 15, 2013.

AYES: Brasler, House, Krebs, Swaim

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: Pipkin, Sisich

ABSENT: Cronk

REGULAR AGENDA

UP-1303, DR-1307 Michael Sands, 350 Oak Avenue, 007-181-09: Use permit to demolish the existing single family residence and hillside design review for a new 3,059 square foot, two story, single family residence at 350 Oak Avenue. The project site is located in the R-1-C Zoning District and within the Bald Hill Area Plan (Staff person: Boyle).

Boyle presented a staff report.

Commissioner Sisich asked if sizes of proposed plantings will be stipulated at the time the building permit is issued.

Boyle confirmed that issues such as plant size are generally addressed at the time the building permit is issued. Commissioners can require specific plant sizes as a condition of building permit approval.

Sisich asked Boyle if he feels that minimum sizes for proposed plantings need to be specified in consideration of impacting neighbors.

Boyle noted that the most pertinent proposed planting is next to a property that is considerably lower than the proposed residence, that it is adequate as presented, and that sizes of the proposed plants do not need to be specified.

Brasler advised that he has visited the site and that the difference in elevation between the proposed project and the neighboring property makes it unnecessary to specify plant sizes. He invited the applicant to address the Planning Commission

Architect Michael Sands introduced himself and noted that the project was designed to comply with the Town's requirements; no variances or exceptions are being requested. The design team has tried to be sensitive to the site, views, massing, and effects of height. Sands is happy to answer any questions about the project.

As there were no questions from the Commission, Brasler invited members of the public to speak.

Doug Eggers, Oak Avenue, owns a property adjacent to the applicant's property. He is concerned about the duration of the construction project, specifically the term of the demolition and the anticipated completion date of the project. Eggers also asked about the proposed pool demolition.

As there were no further questions from the public, Brasler returned the discussion to the Commission.

Brasler believes a construction management plan will be provided, addressing requirements such as the hours of construction and parking arrangements during construction.

Sands confirmed that the pool will be demolished at the same time as the existing residence. Sands believes construction will most likely begin mid-spring and will probably be completed within 9 to 12 months.

Brasler noted that as part of the Town's erosion control efforts, there is a moratorium on earthwork between the months of October and April.

Boyle explained that once an application for a building permit is submitted, the applicant has 6 months to secure the permit. Once the permit has been issued, the first inspection must occur within 6 months. If something comes up, the permit holder can request an extension. Once the first inspection occurs, the permit holder has another 6 months to seek the second inspection. This is a way of keeping the project moving forward. Boyle confirmed that a construction management plan would be required and will address parking, hours of construction, etc. with the goal of minimizing disruption to neighbors.

Commissioner Krebs asked Boyle if there is a typical amount required of the applicant for a road bond.

Boyle responded that the Public Works Department is responsible for determining the amount of the road bond. The location of the project and which roads will be used are factors in the determination.

Krebs asked the applicant if neighbors have been contacted and/or presented with materials to be used in the proposed project.

Sands replied that Hopkin has tried to contact all neighbors and to give them materials. He has received no responses, either positive or negative.

Krebs asked if there have been any objections at all to the project so far.

Sands indicated that the applicant's team plans to do some screen planting to soften the effect on the down hill neighbor, although the project is not in that property's view corridor.

Sisich appreciates the fact that the project calls for replacing the existing home with one of a similar size and location and noted that the property's large lot is beneficial.

Krebs generally supports the project. He appreciates the effort to design a home of similar size and proportion in the same area as the existing home without impacting neighbors in any negative way. The project will be an improvement to the neighborhood and he hopes the neighbors appreciate that. Krebs also recognizes that the construction will create an imposition on neighbors and urged the applicant to work with them.

Swaim appreciates the size and location of the project. He asked if there were plans to do any work on the second unit.

Bart Hopkin responded that the second unit is a legal, non-conforming unit. Although it is in poor shape, he hopes to keep it and to complete some repairs.

House is in favor of the project and appreciates that it meets all requirements. She believes it will be a nice addition to the neighborhood. In terms of color, the red is different from what the Commission usually approves in the area, but many of the large water storage tanks in the vicinity are the same color and seem to blend into the hillside. House will be interested to see what the effect is once the project is completed.

Pipkin favors the project for many of the same reasons previously noted: the new house will use the existing footprint, it is not oversized for the lot, and she likes the color accents.

Brasler likes the project and is glad the applicant has been in touch with the neighbors. He urges continued communication with the neighbors and feels confident the Building Department will do a good job of monitoring the project.

M/s, Sisich/House, to move the staff report.

AYES: Brasler, House, Krebs, Swaim

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: Pipkin, Sisich

ABSENT: Cronk

Brasler reminded all of the 10 day appeal period.

House asked if the Fire Marshal had commented on the large eucalyptus tree on the applicant's property.

Sands responded that the Fire Marshal advised the applicant to save the native oak trees, noting that he is not concerned about preserving the pines, eucalyptus, or acacias. There will probably be some thinning of trees; otherwise, Mr. Hopkin will most likely want to live there for a while before making any long term decisions about the trees.

ITEMS FROM PLANNING COMMISSION

Sisich is delighted to see the progress taking place at 790 Sir Francis Drake. He asked Boyle if he has been monitoring the project to make sure the conditions of approval are being met.

Boyle advised that he has been checking on the project, as has the building inspector.

Sisich commented on the plans for trellises and landscaping. He is glad the project is proceeding.

Brasler asked if the second floor is commercial or residential.

Boyle explained that the entire building is commercial; there are two or three residential lots above the commercial building.

House asked if handrails will be installed on the stairs at the project.

Boyle confirmed that the handrails will be installed.

Brasler observed that there have been many good projects approved by the Planning Commission over the past three years and suggested the Commissioners make a spring tour of some of them to see how they've turned out.

Sisich observed that few projects have been coming to the Planning Commission lately and wondered if more projects are being approved administratively than have been in the past.

Boyle responded that some applicants design projects so that they will not need Planning Commission approval, but the overall number of administratively approved projects has not significantly increased. There is generally a decrease in activity during the summer and Boyle has been busy with several smaller projects under review. He is also currently working on two larger projects with incomplete applications.

Pipkin observed that several homes have recently sold in her neighborhood and she expects future activity will take place as some of the homes need work.

Brasler noted that prices are high and many new owners will begin to do work on the homes in the next cycle.

Sisich believes there were many more projects in the earliest years of his tenure on the Commission.

Swaim predicts a lot of projects will take off in the spring.

Krebs asked if the individual tenant signs at the Red Hill Shopping Center are in compliance.

Boyle confirmed that the signs conform to what the Planning Commission approved with a revision to the Master Plan in October 2012.

Krebs asked for a status report on the proposed project at the San Francisco Theological Seminary.

Boyle advised that the applicant and the project engineer met with the building official a month or two ago and sounded as though they were fairly close to applying for a building permit. Also, various individuals have come to the Planning Department inquiring about Seminary properties that are for sale.

Krebs asked if Boyle has received any comment from residents or others regarding the new medians on Bolinas Avenue.

Boyle advised that it is possible the Public Works Director has received some feedback; if so, he hasn't relayed the comments to Boyle. No one has contacted Boyle directly about the medians.

ADJOURN TO THE MEETING OF DECEMBER 16, 2013

Brasler adjourned to meeting of December 16 at 7:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Harris

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