

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES OF JANUARY 9, 1989

The special meeting of the San Anselmo Planning Commission meeting was called to order at 8:00 p.m. on January 9, 1989 in the Council Chamber by Chairman Sias. Staff present: John Kottage, Director of Public Works/Planning.

A. ROLL CALL

Commissioners present: Julin, Harle, Kroot, Yarish, Sias
Commissioners absent: Hayes, Manning

B. PUBLIC HEARING

1. C-221 - M. S. Partnership, La Mancha Development Company, 805 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, A/P 6-082-14, design review of a new commercial building in a C-3 District, and review of proposed mitigated Negative Declaration.

Jerry Kler, Architect, Ron Hodges, Landscape Architect, and Lennard Lane, applicant, were present.

John Kottage presented the staff report, noting that the traffic study is not complete but will be for the next scheduled meeting.

Jerry Kler presented a 3 dimensional scaled model of the site, noting that he has not submitted new colors at this time because this is just a discussion of the design concept.

Ron Hodges explained that the trees fronting Sir Francis Drake Blvd will be Sycamore trees, which will break up the mass of the parking lot. The corners will be aristocrat pears and the shrubbery will be small scale shrubs to break up the parking lot. The rear will be small eucalyptus, approximately 30' to 35' at maturity with shrubbery underneath. All plants are based on East Bay MUD recommended list of drought resistant plants.

Lennard Lane generally agreed with the mitigations but questioned item 5 that suggests a maximum of 4 businesses at this site. He felt 1,500 square feet per business might be too large and preferred 1,000 square feet, or a maximum of at least 5 businesses. He added that Cal Trans has publishes a document on traffic volumes per use and suggested the Town evaluate this document before making a decision.

Mr. Lane felt that there needed to be a clearer understanding of the types of uses will as discussed in item 6 that will be acceptable to the Town to provide him guidance on future rental.

Mr. Kottage explained his reasoning for the four businesses on the site, stating there are 17 spaces available, 2 spaces per employee per store, would only leave 9 left for the customers. With regard to giving guidance to the specific types of uses on the site, it is difficult at this time because the Zoning Ordinance which will provide this guidance, is in the process of being developed and is not yet available. He was willing to review the Cal Trans information as suggested by the applicant.

Mr. Lane did not agree with Mr. Kottage's assessment of employees using the parking area. He said they would park off site and the lot would be policed to ensure the lot would be used for customers, not employees. He noted that the site has more parking spaces than what is required in the Code. Also, this is a three frontage site and on street parking is available. Lastly, he has agreed to widening Sir

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Francis Drake and creating the bus lane and this should offer some parking mitigation.

Commissioner Kroot asked how the building's signs would be approved at the time of the use permit. Mr. Kottage said it could be approved by staff if they were standard signs, however the Commission could require they come before the Commission to set a theme.

Commissioner Julin indicated that the motion of continuance stated that there be a theme for the signs and she would like to have some general guidelines in terms of color and theme for these signs. Commissioner Yarish thought restrictions on signs design could inhibit individuality and good design.

Commissioner Kroot thought the landscape plan was excellent, five tenants for the site was agreeable. He did not think however, that the facade was appropriate for San Anselmo in that the design was jazzy and noisy. He would rather see something more subtle and referenced the HUB Shopping Center and Red Hill Shopping Center. He still would like to see the cross sections through the building showing the placement of mechanical equipment, noting that 22 feet was quite high. He would like to see a use permit obtained for each tenant and the traffic study completed by staff.

Commissioner Yarish thought San Anselmo has a "postage stamp collection" environment and therefore was not quite so against the proposed facade with its articulation. He would like to see cross sections to see how the building height was developed and how it will affect the neighbors. He had no objection about the landscaping, he would like to see uses that are low traffic generators for the site and thought it a good idea to obtain the Cal Trans documentation. He thought five tenants on the site would be an adequate limit.

Commissioner Harle thought five tenants on the site would be acceptable, and the applicant has a good point in wanting specific guidance for the types of uses, adding that it is good business planning to know what is acceptable. With regards to design, he had no strong objections, noting that the applicant should be allowed to have a breath of taste.

Commissioner Julin thought 4 or 5 tenants would be fine for the site based on the traffic study determinations. She thought the design was out of place in San Anselmo and the architect was going in the wrong direction from the first set of drawings. She saw one long diagonal across the site along Sir Francis Drake and would like to see it broken up. Perhaps staggering the store fronts or breaking it up with landscaping. She would also like to see a lighting plan for the parking area.

Chairman Sias wanted to see the traffic flow study but thought 5 tenants seemed reasonable. He agreed that there should be an established criteria for the types of uses and thought the Cal Trans information might be helpful. He would like to see cross sections of the building to determine if the height is justified. With regard to the facade, he felt there were too many angles, it was too busy and noisy and did not fit into San Anselmo. He would like to see some color samples, the concepts of what is anticipated for signage and with a lighting plan.

Mr. Kler said there is no specific style in San Anselmo and that it is human nature to want things designed according to the specific tastes of an individual Commissioners. However, that may make it difficult to come up with an acceptable design. He said there was no public input on the design in

a negative way and wondered how the Commission knew what was appropriate for San Anselmo.

Commissioner Kroot said he thought the facade was interesting but was not appropriate in that most visible location in San Anselmo. The original facade was calmer and was in fact better than this one. The architect went in exactly the wrong direction, did not lower the facade and did not produce a cross section of the building. His real interest is in lowering the building, and was not so concerned whether wood or stucco was used.

Mr. Kler asked if the design was really going to be so detrimental to San Anselmo. He did not think that diagonals or angles would be a detriment. The height proposed is 22 feet, which is well below the 35 foot height requirement for the Town.

Chairman Sias said both designs seem too high and the new design calls attention to the details. It is his feeling that the design should blend in and be of a smaller scale. This is a commercial project in the middle of an area where a residential, apartment and other commercial developments, so it is important to be sensitive to all of them. He added that it should blend in with what he calls a "quite valley" atmosphere.

Commissioner Julin also referenced the building on Sir Francis Drake that houses the stained glass shop as an example of what she considered acceptable. It has a wood exterior.

Commissioner Harle said the Commission should allow a range of design and then let the applicants go with it as long as the facade isn't offensive. Design review should be mostly protective and he would like to give leeway to applicants.

Commissioner Yarish agreed largely with Commissioner Harle's interpretation on design review, adding that although earth tones were popular in the 1970's, it is not his intent to impose monotonous colors for today's designs. However, he doesn't want to create an eyesore for the Town.

There was a discussion as to whether the applicant wanted to continue the application or have the Commission take a vote. The consensus of the Commission was to deny the application if the applicant was unable to make the necessary changes to the building. Commissioner Kroot wanted to allow the applicant time to digest what has been discussed. Mr. Lane agreed that they wanted to continue the item but did not think there was a need for this to drag on.

Mr. Kottage listed the following concerns that needed to be addressed at the February 6th meeting as follows:

1. Design to be reconsidered based on the concerns heard tonight by the Commission;
2. Specific colors need to be provided;
3. There should be a theme for the signs;
4. Cross sections to be provided showing relationship to the mechanical equipment;
5. Cal Trans information to be provided for analysis by staff;
6. Lighting plan for parking lot (to include the type of posts);
7. Traffic Study to be furnished by staff.

Mr. Kottage stated that he will do the best he can to provide guidance regarding the uses allowable at the site. However this may be premature. The proper forum for discussion details of future uses is the up coming zoning revision which will emerge from the new General Plan. Any future use of the building should conform with the up coming zoning revision, the precise nature of which is not known at this time.

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M/S Kroot, Yarish to continue C-221 - M. S. Partnership, La Mancha Development company, 805 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, A/P 6-082-14, design review of a new commercial building in a C-3 District, and review of proposed mitigated Negative Declaration, to obtain the information on the 7 items just listed by staff. To continue to the meeting of January 23, 1989.

All ayes. Motion unanimously passed.

Mr. Lane requested a continuance to February 6th meeting, because he was going to be out of Town on January 23rd. The consensus of the Commission was to continue the item until February 6, 1989.

Mr. Lane said he will produce some examples of signage from a previous project to show the Commission

C. WORKSHOP

Discussion of Proposed elimination of the Story Maximum from the Residential, Professional and Commercial Districts.

John Kottage presented the staff report, adding that perhaps an alternative method could be to have two height limits triggered by the slope of the land; a 35 foot height limit for land with a slope of 15% or greater and 20 to 25 feet height limit for slopes less than 15%

Commissioner Harle suggested adopting the UBC definition with the proviso of variances where the lower story is unfinished.

Commissioner Kroot said the UBC changes every three years and the definition in the UBC does not mean habitable space, and we should not tie the Town code to it. The UBC uses the word "story" to describe height above grade regardless of whether or not there is a floor involved.

Commissioner Harle wanted to keep the change as small as possible, suggesting a wording change to "habitable floor" instead of "stories".

Commissioner Kroot agreed with Commissioner Harle, noting the Town's code generally works well now, we just need to provide a better definition.

Chairman Sias agreed there should be a clearer definition and include some protection for the hillside.

Commissioner Yarish pointed out that the Conservation Zone in the General Plan will protect the hillsides vistas.

Dixie Manwaring, 111 Crescent, strongly supported the two story height limit.

The general consensus of the Commission was that any ordinance revision should not allow more than two habitable floors without a variance.

Mr. Kottage said he will draft a revision to the ordinance and prepare the necessary noticing for a public hearing.

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

M/S Julin, Yarish, to approve the minutes of December 19, 1988 with the following amendment: page 2, paragraph 7, should read "She did not agree".

Motion unanimously passed.

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The special meeting of the Planning Commission was adjourned at 10:30 p.m. to the next regular meeting of February 6, 1989.

BARBARA CHAMBERS
ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY/TECHNICIAN