

November 25, 1968

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A special meeting of the Planning Commission was called to order by Chairman John West in the Council Chamber on November 25, 1968 at 8:00 p.m. Representing the City Staff: Charles R. Leitzell

1. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Creighton, Gue, Heinecke, Moore, Perry and West.

Commissioners Absent: Tusler

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 18, 1968

Commissioner Moore moved the minutes of November 18, 1968 be approved as written, seconded by Commissioner Gue and unanimously approved.

3. OLD BUSINESS

A. PUBLIC HEARING - REZONING

- (1) Z-105 Emily Merriman, et al and Ross Valley Company; application to rezone A/P 6-052-21 (84 Madrone Avenue) from Single Family Residence District (R-1) to Planned Development District (P.D.)

Chairman West said at the last meeting the suitability of this zoning for this property was discussed. He mentioned that there was a distinct difference between Planned Development and R-3 zoning.

It was reiterated that Commissioner Perry, being an attorney-at-law, was counsel for the property owners and had no personal financial interest in the application.

Mr. Perry stated that he felt the unique characteristics of the parcel, the old trees, the creek, the location next to Center Boulevard, all indicate the need for special treatment of this parcel. He is not in favor of R-3 zoning, but feels with a Planned Development the City would have control over the complete improvement. He felt the parcel particularly to be suited to P.D. Zoning.

Commissioner Moore agreed the parcel needed special attention. Commissioner Gue said while he approved the P.D. zoning, he would not rule out R-3 for this area.

Commissioner West said he definitely was not in favor of R-3 zoning for this lot. He said better control of density could be obtained by P.D. zoning.

Commissioner Heinecke said he did not think R-3 would be suitable for the area, and he was not sure 24 units were justified.

James McDonald, Building Designer, was present for the applicant. He said a survey had been made, and the property is now staked. The site contains 63,000 square feet. He said there is no construction planned for across the creek and Mr. Lewis, developer, would be happy to designate this as open space.

Fire Chief Sousa had recommended a fire hydrant to be placed at the corner of the property, and Mr. Lewis had agreed to do this. Mr. McDonald reported the Sanitary Sewer will be in the Center Boulevard connection and would have no effect on the Madrone Avenue Sewer Line. Mr. McDonald stressed the intention of the applicant to save as many of the trees on the lot as possible.

Mr. Heinecke asked what percentage of trees were being saved. Mr. McDonald said he was not sure, but far more than half were being saved, and also he intended to have a planting plan which would add new trees. Henry Cole will be the landscape designer for the project.

Commissioner Creighton asked if there was to be a dedication of frontage on Madrone for right of way purposes. He said that both Madrone and Sycamore Avenues come together and compress 54 feet of roadway into 32 feet at this point.

The Chairman asked the staff to make a report on what is needed at this corner.

Commissioner Heinecke asked if the developer had considered the possibility of a subdivision and R-1 use of this property. Mr. McDonald said the basic configuration of the lot makes R-1 development of this parcel impractical since at least two of the probable 4 lots would have to have ingress and egress on Center Boulevard. Mr. McDonald pointed out that the rim of trees on Center Boulevard make a natural buffer. The traffic on Center Boulevard is too busy for R-1 development and there is no recent R-1 development in the area. Also, the property next door is older and not well maintained. This discourages R-1 development.

Mrs. Maude Happersberger, 58 Madrone Avenue, said she objected to the rezoning as it would be too noisy; she felt an apartment house was as bad as a hot dog stand. She is concerned about the overloading of the sanitary sewer; she is also concerned that an apartment would lower the value of the neighborhood and will cause a raise in the taxes.

Mrs. Happersberger said the streets were too narrow to accommodate the additional traffic, and if this lot were to be rezoned, surely the property next door would also apply for rezoning.

Mr. Jack Schmidt, who lives on Madrone and Sycamore said there were a lot of small children in the area, and the added traffic constitutes a hazard.

A letter was received from Mr. Luchessa, 149 Calumet Avenue objecting to the rezoning.

Commissioner Moore said he was amenable to the P.D. zoning; however, he felt it a mistake not to explore the ultimate design of Center Boulevard before final approval. He is disturbed about the overall parking. He said there is not adequate provision for visitor parking, and he felt ingress and egress on Center Boulevard could cause a real traffic problem.

Commissioner Gue also was concerned about visitor parking.

Commissioner West felt it desirable to keep the "no curb parking" restriction on this block of Center Boulevard.

Commissioner West brought up the following points:

1. The Creek area: The plan appears to show a near vertical retaining wall. He said if the wall on the other side was constructed in the same manner, the end result would be a u-shaped concrete ditch.
2. He is concerned with the impact of the overall plan.
3. Madrone Avenue is narrow and will not accommodate parking on both sides of the street.
4. There are 5 streets involved in this key location, and he would like to see a staff report on the several alternatives for Center Boulevard and how they would affect the property.
5. Visitors Parking.
6. Question of boundaries on the creek side. Although, he said, this point is safe because there is no construction planned for the other side of the creek.
7. Possible dedication for right of way purposes.

8. The plan: Approximately 50% of the area is covered by asphalt or exposed aggregate or the pool, ending up with lot coverage of 85 to 90 percent. He would like to see something worked out with less asphalt and more green areas.

Mr. West said the perspective given shows pleasant buildings and is attractive, but he would like to see some ways and means explored to reduce the area devoted to the automobile.

Commissioner Heinecke said he was more concerned about the density of the development. He felt it would make more sense to construct 8 units.

Mr. McDonald said the vertical dimensions should be considered also. The existing trees were the primary reason for the Planned Development. The designers have been working to keep the design as close to R-1 atmosphere as possible. The structures are lower than those on the next property by 6 or 7 feet. A rustic design has been adhered to. He felt it important to keep the pool and social room to maintain the residential atmosphere. He said after many designs, they finally settled on 24 units as logical. All setbacks, buildings heights and coverage are in excess of the new ordinance provisions. It was the intent of the plan to break up the parking and not have a large parking lot. There are 14 covered spaces. He felt this is a realistic plan.

Commissioner Heinecke said it was an attractive plan, but he wondered how the Commission could justify the intrusion of this amount of bulk.

Commissioner West suggested, that if the plan is approved, a tree man should be consulted as to how to keep the trees alive during the construction period.

Mr. Lewis said they plan to take good care of the trees--that they are an asset to the property.

Commissioner Creighton said he was concerned about the density of 23.3 units per acre. The Campbell Master plan indicates a density of 8 to 20 units per acre in this location, with, hopefully, an average of 12. He also felt the pool was needlessly large.

Mr. McDonald said all apartments will look out onto some open space.

Commissioner Gue said there should be some consideration of visitor parking--perhaps 1/2 space per unit. He felt the land lends itself to multiple use.

The Chairman asked the City Staff to prepare a proform of drawings showing what effect development of Center Boulevard would have on the property, indicating 4 lanes of traffic, with and without curb parking, and what it would do to the intersection complex. He asked the Planning Commission to be prepared to vote on the application at the next regular meeting.

B. ADJUSTMENT

- (1) St. Nicholas Church. Further Consideration of Parking Requirement

Chairman West said he had asked to have this item put on the Agenda on his own initiative because as he watched the building progress and observed the area, he saw that off-street parking was not necessary and felt that it would be wise to reduce the required parking and add landscaping instead. The Planning Commission had previously granted a variance to allow 5 parking spaces instead of the required 9. Commissioner West proposed that the institutional parking requirement be waived and 2 spaces be required for the residence.

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Commissioner Perry asked the designer, Mr. Oleg Miram, how many people attended the church. Mr. Miram said there were approximately 40 members, but usually only between 10 and 15 members attend services.

Mr. Perry also asked if the residence had access from the other street, and Mr. Miram said it did not.

Commissioner Moore moved, with respect to ADJ. 379, St. Nicholas Church, 102 Ross Avenue, that a variance be granted for 7 parking spaces, and that there only be a requirement of 2 off-street parking spaces, and that it be recommended to the Design Review Committee the paved area on the north, east and west sides be reduced and given planting treatment. Motion seconded by Commissioner Gue and unanimously approved.

Commissioner Gue said he voted for this because he believed it to be consistent with what has been done for the First Presbyterian Church in the area, and he believes there is adequate off-street parking and adequate adjacent parking in the school yards.

Commissioner West said: "I am voting Aye because I feel that this sets no precedent by reason of the fact that this, being a church use, would have no bearing on similar applications for residential or commercial areas, and further, that the neighborhood situation is distinct in that there is a large amount of curb parking available by reason of the presence of the school and other institutional uses in the area."


Mr. Miram asked, in view of the fact that services are scheduled to start this Sunday, would it be possible to have this area paved at least on the one side.

Commissioner West said to do so would be at their own peril since they do not have the approval of the Design.

Commissioner Gue suggested some temporary provisions such as gravel.

Mr. West agreed a temporary provision would be best.

The meeting adjourned at 10:25 p.m.



JOHN F. WEST
PLANNING COMMISSION CHAIRMAN

