



## PLANNING COMMISSION ACTIONS

August 30, 2010

7:00 p.m.

City Council Chambers

701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, CA 94025

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Teleconference with participation by Commissioner Kadvany from:  
59 Windmill Lane  
Amagansett, NY 11930  
(Posted August 26, 2010)  
(Did not participate)

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### CALL TO ORDER – 7:03 p.m.

**ROLL CALL** – Bressler (Vice Chair), Eiref, Ferrick, Kadvany (**Absent**) Keith (**Departed at 8:25 p.m.**), O'Malley (Chair), Riggs

**INTRODUCTION OF STAFF** – Deanna Chow, Senior Planner; David Johnson, Business Development Manager; Justin Murphy, Development Services Manager

### A. PUBLIC COMMENTS - None

Under “Public Comments,” the public may address the Commission on a consent calendar item or any subject not listed on the agenda within the jurisdiction of the Commission. When you do so, please state your name and city or political jurisdiction in which you live for the record. The Commission cannot respond to non-agendized items other than to receive testimony and/or provide general information.

### B. CONSENT - None

Items on the consent calendar are considered routine in nature, require no further discussion by the Planning Commission, and may be acted on in one motion unless a member of the Planning Commission or staff requests a separate discussion on an item.

### C. REGULAR BUSINESS

1. **Review of Gross Floor Area Zoning Ordinance Amendment/City of Menlo Park**: Review, comment and possible recommendations regarding the one-year review of Zoning Ordinance amendment relative to the clarification of gross floor area. ***Deferred from the meeting of August 23, 2010. COMMISSION ACTION:*** The Planning Commission recommends the following items to the City Council:
  1. M/S Riggs/Ferrick to recommend to the City Council the following modifications to the definition of gross floor area (GFA); 6-0, with Commissioner Kadvany absent:
    - **Modify subsection 16.04.325 B(7):** To exclude the last floor of stairwells, except for floors with roof access.
    - **Modify subsection 16.04.325 C(3):** To exclude pedestrian circulation areas, such as stairwells, elevators, and walkways, within parking garages.
    - **Modify subsection 16.04.325 C(6):** To exclude trash compactors, chutes, and recycling rooms in multi-family developments, limited to a maximum percentage as determined by

staff. Where outdoor trash and recycling receptacles are also provided on multi-family residential projects, no exclusion shall apply.

2. Unanimous consent to review the definition of GFA in one year to allow time for more case studies and to consider whether additional modifications to the definition are warranted. The Commission subsequently noted that the impacts of atriums would be part of the review.
3. M/S Riggs/Bressler to recommend to the City Council that consideration should be given to the creation of a planning project to discuss the pros and cons of freestanding parking structures, such as the open space factor; 6-0, with Commissioner Kadwany absent.
4. M/S Bressler/Ferrick to recommend to the City Council the following modification to the definition of GFA; 6-0, with Commissioner Kadwany absent:
  - **Modify subsection 16.04.325 B(7):** To include only the first floor of an elevator in gross floor area.

#### D. STUDY SESSION

1. **Study Session/Willow Business Area and M-2 Zoning District Area/City of Menlo Park** – The City is considering a multi-phase approach to planning for the M-2 (General Industrial) Zoning District with an initial focus on the Willow Business Area (WBA) located in the vicinity of the intersection of Willow Road and Bayfront Expressway. The goal of the effort would be to streamline planning and building permit processes to reduce turnaround time and increase certainty of standards for zoning review of permit applications to remodel and expand buildings. The purpose of this initiative is to provide greater opportunity for business development that benefits the City's fiscal sustainability in the Willow Business Area. The purpose of the Planning Commission study session is to provide input regarding the proposed work program, which includes community outreach and environmental review, for the potential Zoning Ordinance Amendments regarding the following:
  - Create new thresholds for review procedures for the use and storage of Hazardous Materials based on materials and quantities with updated requirements and specific criteria.
  - Update requirements for roof-mounted equipment on existing buildings to create more practical solutions for addressing potential visual and noise impacts.
  - Update requirements to allow an increase in the maximum sign area for larger parcels in M-2.
  - Create a new zoning district for the Willow Business Area consistent with the General Plan in order to streamline approval process for tenant improvements involving a change of use for preferred uses or construction of new square footage for preferred uses.

Staff made a presentation to introduce the agenda item, noting that this meeting represented an opportunity to learn more about this multiphase proposal prior to Council authorization of the work program. The Commission listened to public comments from two speakers and asked clarifying questions of staff. The Commission expressed general support for the work plan with the understanding that (1) staff would be conducting outreach to residential neighborhood groups in the vicinity of the M-2 zoning district and (2) none of the proposed changes would result in an increase in the maximum allowed floor area ratio. Commissioners also provided remarks, which are summarized as follows:

- Retaining a separate City Hazardous Materials specialist may be redundant given the Fire District's Hazardous Materials specialist. If the role and responsibilities of the Fire District's Hazardous Materials specialists were clarified and memorialized, then there may only be a need to retain another specialist for unusual chemicals.

- As an additional work program item, it may be worthwhile to explore an “ombudsmen” position within the City to coordinate plan check and permitting processes across City Departments and Divisions and across non-City agencies (e.g., Fire District, utility companies, etc.) that touch the construction process.
- If the City is going to exchange discretion for specific standards, then issues to be addressed should include: noise (e.g., differentiating between steady and repetitive noise), lighting (e.g., minimizing spill over on adjacent properties), chemicals (e.g., odors or release of poisons), landscaping (e.g., changes to the perimeter of a site that could affect mature trees).
- Research other cities that may have good zoning requirements to model.

## E. COMMISSION BUSINESS

### 1. Update on pending planning items.

#### A. El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan (Phase II) Process

## F. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### ADJOURNMENT – 9:44 p.m.

#### Future Planning Commission Meeting Schedule

Regular Meeting	September 13, 2010
Regular Meeting	September 20, 2010
Regular Meeting	October 4, 2010
Regular Meeting	October 18, 2010
Regular Meeting	November 1, 2010
Regular Meeting	November 15, 2010
Regular Meeting	December 6, 2010
Regular Meeting	December 13, 2010

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