

REGULAR MEETING OF THE
CULVER CITY
PLANNING COMMISSION
CULVER CITY, CALIFORNIA

September 27, 2023
7:00 p.m.

Call to Order & Roll Call

Chair Jones called the regular meeting of the Culver City Planning Commission to order at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers and via Webex.

Present: Stephen Jones, Chair
Andrew Reilman, Vice Chair
Nancy Barba, Commissioner
Jennifer Carter, Commissioner
Darrel Menthe, Commissioner

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Pledge of Allegiance

Commissioner Carter led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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Public Comment - Items NOT on the Agenda

Chair Jones invited public comment.

Ruth Martin del Campo, Administrative Clerk, indicated that no requests to speak had been received.

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Receipt of Correspondence

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER BARBA, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MENTHE AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION RECEIVE AND FILE CORRESPONDENCE.

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Consent Calendar

Item C-1

PC - Approval of Draft Planning Commission Meeting Minutes of August 23, 2023

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER BARBA, SECONDED BY VICE CHAIR REILMAN AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION APPROVE THE DRAFT PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES FOR AUGUST 23, 2023 AS WRITTEN.

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Order of the Agenda

No changes were made.

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Public Hearing Items

Item PH-1

PC - Consideration of a Site Plan Review and Administrative Use Permit (P2022-0361), to allow demolition of a 24,448 sq. ft. office building and construction of a 3 to 4-story, 63,693 sq. ft. office building with 3 subterranean parking levels and 182 parking spaces at 8960-8966 Washington Boulevard and a Class 32 CEQA Exemption

Jose Mendivil, Associate Planner, provided a summary of the material of record noting that the applicant had submitted a letter with requested changes and staff had comment on the changes.

Cecilia Jaroslowsky, MIG Consulting, discussed architectural design; mobility; the CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) Class 32 In-fill Categorical exemption; and public outreach.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding the proposed street widening in front of the Project Site; the bus stop; the Mobility Improvement Fee Mitigation Fund; distance from the bus stop to the intersection; available Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures to choose

from; the MOVE Culver City Pilot Project; requirements that were in place when the application was submitted; available options listed in the staff report; other large developments on the street that have widened the street; and concern with conflicts between bicycles and cars.

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER BARBA, SECONDED BY VICE CHAIR REILMAN AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION OPEN THE PUBLIC HEARING.

Chair Jones invited public comment.

The following members of the public addressed the Commission:

Lina Lee, Lindblade Media Center, presented the project on behalf of the applicant team; discussed the process; the transformation of the corridor; the design process; massing and scale; consistency; project location; providing a positive pedestrian experience; the ground floor setback; and project feasibility.

Trevor Abramson, Abramson Architects, provided background on himself; discussed other projects he has done in the City; project attributes; dynamics of the area; development opportunity at the Project Site; zoning constraints; height differences; the roof deck; the floor plan; the façade; specific conditions; and materials.

Dana Sayles, three6ixty, provided an overview of supplemental information; asserted that the project was zoning code compliant and did not request any deviations; discussed technical studies demonstrating no impacts and no mitigation measures necessary; consistency with the character of the corridor; origination of the project before the comprehensive parking amendment was adopted; bicycle parking; lack of housing in the City; people who need to drive from non-transit rich areas; marketability; proposed occupancy of the project; meeting office demand; providing a reasonable and feasible project with flexibility if the number of parking spaces needs to be reduced; providing convertibility and adaptability; encouraging mobility in the project; supplemental submission letters; applicant response to conditions of approval in a letter submitted to the Commission; she requested that: language regarding the trash enclosure in Condition No. 5 be modified, Condition No. 7 requiring a traffic signal be deleted, Condition No. 8G

requiring other potential TDM measures be removed, Condition No. 9 regarding the bus stop be revised, Condition No. 12A requiring a lot tie covenant be removed, Condition No. 12C requiring utility easements be removed, Condition No. 13B requiring repaving of Washington Blvd be removed, Condition No. 13D requiring a 5 foot dedication be revised, Condition No. 13E requiring pedestrian access to the sidewalk during construction be removed or revised, and Condition No. 14B prohibiting closer of Washington Blvd be revised. She also discussed the voluntary public art amenity; redesign of MOVE Culver City; safety issues; cluttered narrow sidewalks in the City; she proposed that they provide the five foot dedication to create a 10 foot sidewalk and no street widening to provide a better pedestrian experience; discussed an in lieu fee for the value of the dedication area that would not otherwise be widened; the plan check submittal process; the Site Plan Review; the City debate about mobility and infrastructure; applicant responsibility; and she asked for approval of the project with modified conditions.

Andrew Flores expressed concern with projects that do not come to fruition and he requested that the applicant speak to project feasibility and constructability to continue the vitality of the corridor and the downtown area.

Discussion ensued between the applicants, staff, and Commissioners regarding sidewalk width; cyclist feedback; public comment regarding parking; proximity to the Metro; location of the trees in front of the project; existing trees on the site; the applicant request that the City specify a maximum number of 182 parking spaces to allow for flexibility; tandem parking; the required parking attendant; approval of a Parking Management Plan prior to issuance of the Certificate of Occupancy; submittal of the project prior to current code standards; the minimum required number of parking spaces; and AB 2097.

Commissioner Barba reported meeting with the applicant.

Additional discussion ensued between the project applicant, staff, and Commissioners regarding estimated daytime occupancy; agreement to have no more than 182 parking spaces; applicant support for option 2 in the staff report that does not require a bus stop or street widening; concern with being presented with multiple options at the last minute; the option for the City to pay for the bus stop, but the applicant to

reserve space for it; concern that the Transportation Department would have sole discretion; compliance with the TOD (Transit Oriented Development) program; impacts of the bus stop to multiple agencies; the impetus for the bus stop; clarification that there is no space for a bus stop in front of the building without modifying the streetscape of the building; mobility; the shared bus/bike lane; lack of a shelter at the current stop; increased ridership; safety concerns; queues extending into the intersection; concern with disrupting a place for pedestrians to congregate; clarification that the five feet of additional setback is for planters and art on the private property; and the inability of the City to locate a bus stop on private property.

Further discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding clarification that the widening of the street and the bus stop were two separate conditions that were not connected; straightening out the road to be consistent with the other dedications that occurred along Washington Boulevard with other projects; accommodating bike lanes that existed before MOVE Culver City; City Council adopted Bicycle and Pedestrian Action Plan; required widening that originates from the bike lanes required by other projects to provide the bicycle lane as part of those previous projects' mobility enhancements; the certain width required for streets and corridors; items that the City can require of projects that are subject to discretionary review by the Commission or the City Council; the current property line vs. the new property line; the Circulation Element of the General Plan; efforts to meet standards on Washington Boulevard; and the bike lane required by the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan as approved by the City Council.

MOVED BY VICE CHAIR REILMAN, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BARBA AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING.

Andrew Maximous Public Works Mobility and Traffic Engineering Manager and Sammy Romo, Public Works Engineering reiterated the intent of the bike lanes and indicated being available to answer questions.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding cutouts; pedestrians; concern that cutouts attract vehicles; concern with old policy to widen the streets; support for removing the standard condition from the project and adopting

a version that does not require street widening; inconsistent dedications; creating confusion for developers and applicants; the evolution of the widening along the Expo TOD area; taking an incremental approach; creating a safer environment for pedestrians; integrating bus stops into developments; support for option 4 with the City paying for relocation of the bus stop; creating an inviting pedestrian environment; support for keeping the sidewalk wide; encouragement for the City to work with the applicant; the incomplete bus stop at Higuera St and Washington Blvd.; differences between options 3 and 4; bus stop compliance vs. streetscape; a recommendation to modify Condition No. 4 to involve additional City departments in order to make a wholistic determination; ensuring that language regarding City responsibility for payment is examined ; the feeling that widening streets leads to higher speeds; the dangers of weaving in and out of widened portions of the street; clarifying language regarding options; the TOD Visioning document recommending 15-20 feet sidewalks; the purpose of the dedication to leave the option open for dedicated bike lanes; development of the property to the east; and likelihood of the developer widening the street in the future.

Dana Sayles, applicant representative, indicated that the applicant had agreed to the dedication, but did not want to widen the street for a bike lane that was not going in; asserted that they wanted to make the area pedestrian friendly; and she encouraged staff to merge the language from Conditions No. 3 and 4.

Further discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding providing flexibility; wording regarding the bus stop; finding consensus; changes to option 4; and adding language to indicate that the project may be required to upgrade.

Susan Herbertson, Senior Planner, reported that the applicant had requested a short recess to share proposed revised language for Conditions No. 3 and 4.

Additional discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding proposed language changes; consultation with the Transportation, Current Planning, and Public Works Departments; clarification that the City bears the cost; standard conditions; previous instances where projects were required to install and cover the cost of bus stops; and

projects that are required to do work on infrastructure in the public right of way.

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Recess/Reconvene

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER MENTHE, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BARBA, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION CALL A BRIEF RECESS.

The Planning Commission recessed from 8:56 p.m. to 9:13 p.m.

MOVED BY VICE CHAIR REILMAN, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MENTHE AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION RE-OPEN THE MEETING.

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Item PH-1
(Continued)

PC - Consideration of a Site Plan Review and Administrative Use Permit (P2022-0361), to allow demolition of a 24,448 sq. ft. office building and construction of a 3 to 4-story, 63,693 sq. ft. office building with 3 subterranean parking levels and 182 parking spaces at 8960-8966 Washington Boulevard and a Class 32 CEQA Exemption

Staff summarized modifications to Condition No. 9 including changes to the first sentence to indicate: "The Project may be required to reserve space for a new bus shelter and any other required amenities", rather than "shall be required" as stated before; the next sentence clarified that the final design would be coordinated between the relevant departments; the third and fourth sentences clarify that reserving space for a bus stop shall not be deemed as non-compliance with the streetscape plan or the Public Art Program; and the final sentence specified that the streetscape plans would be finalized prior to the issuing of permits.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding lack of clarification regarding payment; agreement to delete "mutually agreed upon"; consensus to replace Condition No. 9 with the newly agreed upon language; staff recommendations regarding other amendments proposed by the applicant; staff

disagreement with the requested change to Condition No. 5 and recommended the 10 foot space be available in front of the loading door; built-in flexibility; the Final Waste Management Plan; the required concrete pad; agreement from Public Works to delete Condition No. 7 as requested by the applicant; retaining Condition No. 8G which is a standard condition for potential future TDM measures; clarification that this is the last opportunity for the Commission to impose Conditions of Approval as part of the Entitlement process; imposing Conditions of Approval to address a nuisance; allowing the applicant to come up with something else that might be more suitable and consistent with the Mobility Element; widening the choices for the City and the applicant; proposed alternate language to "other replacement measures consistent with the City's mobility measures as approved by the Director"; concern with ambiguity and uncertainty; staff support for retaining Condition No. 12A as staff drafts the covenants, not the applicants; addressing the two separate lots; staff proposed a change in the language for Condition No. 12C to read: "The applicant shall demonstrate that easements and utility conflicts have been resolved prior to building permit issuance"; retaining Condition No. 13B to address wear and tear during construction; staff agreement to revise Condition No. 13D regarding restriping to accommodate a bike lane in front of the site; staff support for retaining the five foot dedication; the standard street width for the arterial; the adopted plan calling for a bike lane; straightening out the street with the next project; potential widening in the future; agreement to strike out conditions that talk about the widening but to retain the dedication; the Commission decision not to require the widening; staff suggestion to include language to indicate: "applicant shall dedicate five feet along the project's frontage on Washington Boulevard but shall not be required to widen the street"; a suggestion to strike language requiring the dedication; the approved Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan; clarification that widening is not required to put in a bicycle lane; discretionary hearings; requirements from different departments furthering City improvement goals; the City requirement that is normally applied; special conditions; the importance of requiring the dedication; and concern with widening lanes and increasing traffic fatalities.

Lina Lee, Lindblade Media Center, indicated that they would not voluntarily dedicate a five foot right of way but did not deviate from project design standards, and she asserted that

the property to the east of them will never dedicate because it will not be redeveloped.

Additional discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding requiring a five foot dedication with discretionary action for the building to the east; providing space for dedicated bike lanes; the feeling that the street widening accommodates cars and not pedestrians; the Circulation Element of the General Plan; efforts to achieve the City's goals and objectives; Code required consistency with the General Plan and policy; approval of the project as currently sited; the current property line; the inability of the property owner to shift the building closer to the sidewalk; maximizing pedestrian access; concern with asking the applicant to give real property to the City without compensation; giving up property rights; the easement for street improvements similar to what is required for utility infrastructure for public benefit; and the inability to construct over the five feet.

Lina Lee, Lindblade Media Center, expressed appreciation for agreement to remove references in the project approval and noted that the project had been designed with the dedication.

Further discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding support for striking the language regarding striping a bicycle lane; staff support for maintaining language in Condition No. 13B regarding pedestrian access along the project frontage during construction; complaints from the public for allowing sidewalk and street closures; rerouting pedestrians around construction; the final Construction Management Plan (CMP); impacts on the current lane lines; closure during excavation; and concern that requiring pedestrian access at all times could shut down the street during excavation.

Lina Lee, Lindblade Media Center, indicated their intent for flexibility to allow coordination with Public Works to decide the best outcome between pedestrian and vehicular access during project phasing; discussed deferring until there is a finalized CMP; comparisons between the proposed project and the Synapse Building; additional access points with the proposed project; and not taking more pedestrian access than is necessary.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding allowing sole discretion of the City; maintaining pedestrian access and at least one car lane in each direction; temporary closures during the day; flexibility with maintaining pedestrian access due to additional access points available; repeated issues with pedestrian access related to large developments; concern with putting the burden on staff to mitigate the situation; safety issues with pedestrians walking in the street to get around the construction site; and the suggested amendment to Condition No. 13B requiring one eastbound and one westbound vehicle traffic lane on Washington Boulevard during construction hours, with all lanes available during periods of no construction, and allowing partial or full closure if approved by the Public Works Director.

Lina Lee, Lindblade Media Center, asserted that maintaining constant pedestrian access and two lanes of traffic would make the project infeasible.

Dana Sayles, applicant representative, stated that there were not two traffic lanes because of MOVE Culver City; she discussed logical reality and necessity; and she requested the flexibility to work out a plan with Public Works to provide access for pedestrians and vehicles to the maximum extent possible at all times.

Additional discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding clarification on the wording of the proposed condition; moving the bus/bike lane to the left; the potential need for a complete shut down; nighttime construction; and continued diversion after construction hours.

Lina Lee, Lindblade Media Center, stated that they were requesting flexible language to defer the details at the discretion of Public Works for future coordination; discussed concern with getting a final CMP in conflict with conditions; finding the best usage for pedestrian and vehicular; shortening construction time; and the goal of having a mutually agreed upon CMP prior to building permit issuance.

Further discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding alternate proposed language to indicate: "The final Construction Management Plan shall allow at least one east bound vehicle traffic lane and at least one west bound vehicle traffic lane on Washington Boulevard. Partial or full

closure of Washington Boulevard as may be necessary to construct final off-site improvements, may be allowed if approved by the Public Works Director or their designee."

Commission consensus was achieved on the following: retain the original Condition No. 5; accept the applicant's proposed deletion of Condition No. 7; delete Condition No. 8G; incorporate new language agreed upon for Condition No. 9; keep language intact for Condition No. 12A; utilize agreed upon new language for Condition No. 12C; retain language in Condition No. 13B; delete the striping requirement but keep the dedication in Condition No. 13D without the required widening; maintain original language in Condition No. 13E; clarify the intent to keep one lane in either direction open in Condition No. 14B and permit partial for full closure of Washington Blvd at the discretion of the Public Works Director or designee.

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER MENTHE, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BARBA AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION APPROVE THE RESOLUTION WITH THE FOLLOWING CHANGES: DELETE CONDITION NO. 7; DELETE CONDITION NO. 8G; MODIFY THE LANGUAGE OF CONDITION NO. 9, 12C, 13D, AND 14B, REMOVE REFERENCES TO STREET WIDENING IN FINDINGS C AND E, AND DIRECT STAFF TO REMOVE ANY OTHER REFERENCES TO STREET WIDENING IN THE ORDINANCE.

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Public Comment - Items NOT on the Agenda (Continued)

Chair Jones invited public comment.

Ruth Martin del Campo, Administrative Clerk, indicated that no requests to speak had been received.

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Items from Planning Commissioners/Staff

Mark Muenzer, Planning and Development Director, reported that the draft General Plan would be released on September 29, 2023 and posted on the project website, pictureculvercity.com; discussed included elements and policies; implementation

programs; the community Open House on October 5 at City Hall; the hybrid format; the soft launch at Fiesta La Ballona; additional outreach events; hybrid meetings; RSVPs; encouraging public input; and the recent community meeting for 10950 Washington Boulevard.

Vice Chair Reilman indicated that due to the proximity of his residence, he would have to recuse himself from consideration of 10950 Washington Boulevard.

Susan Herbertson, Senior Planner, discussed upcoming agenda items and the date for the next meeting.

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Adjournment

There being no further business, at 10:30 p.m., the Culver City Planning Commission adjourned to a regular meeting to be held on October 25, 2023.

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RUTH MARTIN DEL CAMPO
SECRETARY of the CULVER CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

APPROVED _____

STEPHEN JONES
CHAIR of the CULVER CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
Culver City, California

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that, on the date below written, these minutes were filed in the Office of the City Clerk, Culver City, California and constitute the Official Minutes of said meeting.

Jeremy Bocchino
CITY CLERK

Date