

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

July 11, 2018
7:00 p.m.

Call to Order & Roll Call

Chair Sayles called the meeting of the Culver City Planning Commission to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Dana Sayles, Chair, AICP
Ed Ogosta, Vice Chair
Kevin Lachoff, Commissioner
Andrew Reilman, Commissioner
David Voncannon, Commissioner

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Pledge of Allegiance

Sol Blumenfeld, Community Development Director, led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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Public Comment - Items NOT on the Agenda

Chair Sayles invited public input.

No cards were received and no speakers came forward.

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Order of the Agenda

Chair Sayles asked that Item A-1 be brought forward so that she could be sworn in and allowed to participate in the meeting, with the selection of Chair and Vice Chair deferred to later in the meeting.

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER VONCANNON, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LACHOFF AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT ITEM A-1 BE SPLIT INTO TWO PARTS AND BROUGHT FORWARD ON THE AGENDA.

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This item was considered out of sequence.

Action Item

Item A-1

PC: (1) Administration of the Oath of Office to Appointed and Reappointed Commission Members; (2) Selection of the Chair and Vice Chair; and (3) Selection of the Committee Members

Susan Herbertson, Senior Planner, administered the Oath of Office to Dana Sayles.

The balance of the item was deferred to after the Public Hearings.

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Public Hearings

Item PH-1

Consideration of a Zoning Code Text Amendment, P2018-0124-ZCA, Amending the Zoning Code as it Relates to the Standards and Requirements for Height Projections, Including Culver City Municipal Code (CCMC) Section 17.300.025

Gabriela Silva, Associate Planner, provided a summary of the material of record.

Vice Chair Ogosta indicated the need to recuse himself from the item as he is working on a project that would be affected by the item, and he exited the dais.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding smaller projects; requiring shielding in residential areas; original requirements; changes in solar technology; age of the code; encouraging solar; rooftop restaurants and lounges; elevator and mechanical projections; guard rails; and allowable exceptions to the height limit.

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER VONCANNON AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LACHOFF THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION OPEN THE PUBLIC HEARING.

THE MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: LACHOFF, REILMAN, SAYLES, VONCANNON
NOES: NONE
RECUSED: OGOSTA

Chair Sayles invited public comment.

No cards were received and no speakers came forward.

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER REILMAN AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER VONCANNON THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING.

THE MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: LACHOFF, REILMAN, SAYLES, VONCANNON
NOES: NONE
RECUSED: OGOSTA

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding the desire for setback of solar from the building edge; solar as part of the 15% coverage maximum; concern with allowing up to 19 feet rather than 13 feet for structural elements; use with multi-family; potential neighbor issues related to adding 19 feet on smaller projects; infill projects; exceptions in commercial areas; carving smaller scale developments out of the exception; evolution of the neighborhood; clarification on the origin of the 19 foot figure; other jurisdictions researched; different elevator systems; different heights and clearances needed; elevators to the roof; the height exception needed for the elevator at the Ivy Station project for the roof deck pool; making the code more responsive to the condition; limiting the exception for an elevator running to the roof with the overrun; the guardrail and parapet as a co-terminus; lowering the building so that the top of the elevator overrun stops at the height limit; the setback; the parapet; massing; origin of the item to address creative architecture; concern with increasing height; confusion with the height that was proposed; projections for equipment vs. architectural necessity; the practice of Culver City to be better than the standards; standards from the City of Los Angeles; handling stairs and

elevators differently than mechanical and other projections; avoiding a 20 foot elevator tower on a two story building; counting the parapet in the height; finding a middle ground; the importance of setback requirements; concern with small lots; clarification on height limits in different zones; potential increases with density bonuses; clarification that the community benefits incentive only applies to mixed use; determining appropriate projections; solar trellises; occupied roof; accommodating solar; providing options to architects; whether the setback is important in a commercial corridor; concern with residential abutment; industrial repurposed for office use; instances where setback can be problematic; solar panels vs. elevator overruns; concern with the abuse of a broad definition; the Comprehensive Plan; concern that the amount of the projection seems out of scale; a suggestion to split the item in two to allow for consideration of solar panels separately from overall height limits and to allow participation by Vice Chair Ogosta; handling the issue in residential areas; having the exception only apply to non-residential zones; whether the intent is to have an absolute threshold for elevator overruns; setting the limit of the occupiable space; concern with limiting the occupiable space; allowing the developer a choice; proximity to the edge of a building; making allowances for projections in multi-family zones; treating mechanical equipment on a roof differently than elevator projections; concern with the liberal interpretations of architectural projections; and the need to further divide up the code provision.

Sol Blumenfeld, Community Development Director, received Commission agreement that staff return at the next meeting with a new document reflecting the following changes: create a new number 1 dealing with new multi-family residential zones, create a new number 2 dealing with non-residential zones, include provisions for trellis structures in residential and non-residential zones, and address the elevator overrun only as it applies to commercial zones.

Further discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding a request that elevator research be provided to Commissioners; cities surveyed; a request to look at examples from Los Angeles county; the reference from Inglewood indicating that no space above the height limits shall be allowed for the purposes of additional floor area; roof top decks; habitable space; an observation that solar panels create a roof; clarification that there are no Floor Area

Ratios considered; whether creation of a new space creates floor area; and support for keeping the setback provision where appropriate.

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER VONCANNON AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LACHOFF THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION CONTINUE THE ITEM TO JULY 25, 2018 WITH DIRECTION TO STAFF TO MAKE THE AGREED UPON REVISIONS.

THE MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: LACHOFF, REILMAN, SAYLES, VONCANNON
NOES: NONE
RECUSED: OGOSTA

Vice Chair Ogosta returned to the dais.

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Item PH-2

Administrative Site Plan Review and Tentative Tract Map No. 77092, P2018-0056, for the Development of a 9-Unit Townhome Style Condominium Subdivision at 4051 and 4055 Jackson Avenue in the Medium Density Multiple-Family Residential (RMD) Zone

Jose Mendivil, Associate Planner, provided a summary of the material of record noting a correction on attachment 3 of the project summary: the proposed front setback is 17 feet, not 15 feet as noted.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding notes from the community meetings; attendance; and addressing comments.

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER LACHOFF, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER VONCANNON AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION OPEN THE PUBLIC HEARING.

Chair Sayles invited public input.

The following members of the audience addressed the Commission:

Shaquille Patel provided a presentation on the project; discussed existing conditions; revisions made in response to

issues raised at the community meeting; architectural building objectives; setbacks; and elevations.

Discussion ensued between Mr. Patel and Commissioners regarding inconsistencies between documents; the metal gate; the rollup gate at the garage entry; elevator access; wheelchair access; the raised planters; the landscape plan; the barbeque area; the community space; accessible units; staggered pavers; the path of travel; the roof deck; the guard rail; side yards; fire department access; clarification regarding discrepancies between the proposed plans and the PowerPoint presentation; updated plans; accessibility that can be required as part of the final building permit plan; acknowledgement that the elevator and path of travel are incorrect; length of construction; off-site staging; the amount of excavation necessary; decorative urns on the roof; confusion with the labeling of the stairs; and confusion with perspective on some of the drawings.

Rhonda Lilly discussed her proximity to the proposed development; expressed concern with other construction going on at the same time; pointed out the inaccuracy of the rendering depicting four-lanes of traffic; questioned whether people would actually use the underground parking; discussed construction traffic; cut-through use of the street; previous requests for measures to address traffic concerns; displacement of moderate income housing; and she expressed concern with the invasive nature of the development that she felt would not blend in with the neighborhood.

Christine Johnson discussed her proximity to the proposed project; received clarification that the condominiums would be for sale rather than for rent; she questioned whether low income housing was included in the development; expressed concern with new housing that does not address low income needs; noted the success of the current Section 8 housing in the neighborhood; she expressed support for mixed use housing; questioned the height of the wall adjacent to her property; and she expressed concern with loss of sunlight.

Rachel Tann expressed concern with traffic on the cut-through street; discussed parking; Jackson Market; the loss of affordable housing in the area; previous denial of requests for upgrades in the building despite rent increases; families on the street; and changing the character of the street.

An unidentified public speaker discussed growing up in Culver City; living in the building for 15 years; issues with the building that have not been addressed; concern that her daughter would no longer be able to go to school in the City since they were being kicked out of the building; and concern with the loss of affordable housing.

Discussion ensued between Mr. Patel, staff and Commissioners regarding the vacation of the building and month-to-month rents with the property management company.

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

Additional discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding support for a courtyard with units around it; concern with the execution of the concept of creating community; multiple problems with the plans; incomplete documentation, lack of continuity between the plans, and empty keynotes; the fine line between subtle and dull; confusion with the platform in the middle; support for breaking up the project into 4 individual buildings to reduce the mass of the project; encouraging parking cars in the garages; the rollup door; roof top decks; the need to include a fire extinguisher enclosure with barbeque use; clarification that the wall would be six-feet high; and the tentative tract map for the property.

Responding to inquiry, Mr. Patel clarified that the condominiums would be sold; he noted that the walls would be decorative concrete block; he indicated that he is the architect for the project; and he noted that the developer was not present.

Further discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding missing documentation; points to be clarified; whether the Commission needs to see more complete plans before the project moves forward; the issue of affordable housing; purview of the Commission; traffic concerns; the courtyard concept; and chargers for electric vehicles.

Discussion ensued between Commissioners and Mr. Patel regarding requirements of the California Green Code; the conceptual plan; entitlements; site plan review; digging deeper than the intent; coordination issues; code compliance; and design guidelines.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding standard Special Condition 9 requiring infrastructure-ready EV parking stations in all parking stalls; inconsistency of the style with the neighborhood; widespread redevelopment; concern with displacement of long-time residents; information regarding the owner; issues requiring clarification; whether the project is adequate to proceed; multiple concerns voiced by Commissioners; Commission review of additional plans to provide confidence that what is being promised will be delivered; open questions regarding fire access; clarification that the action of the Commission is on the current plans provided by the applicant; corrections to errors and omissions before the item goes before the City Council; the discretionary permit; minimum standards; the higher standard of review beyond the zoning code with respect to environmental impacts and neighborhood consistency; the need to close open issues; higher standards for items in the neighborhood; the unique set of circumstances on the street; Jackson Market; concern with how excavation is handled on a street with a lot of multi-family and market traffic; concern that there is no information about their plans; acknowledgement that mistakes can be corrected; support for redevelopment; support for displaced residents; ensuring that the project is built responsibly; the need to mandate construction parking for the project; coordination with the neighbors during excavation; efforts to get speedbumps on Jackson; support for the two bicycle parking spaces; concern with issues of accessibility and path of travel in combination with other issues; continuing the item; length of the process; previous efforts to improve the plans; aesthetics; improving the courtyard; approving purposeful projects; ensuring that the project fits in with the neighborhood; the strong tradition of courtyard housing in Los Angeles; ensuring the plans are feasible and consistent with the code; plan related items; direction to staff to work with the applicant on items of concern cited by Commissioners; and a request for background information on the process and on improvements to Jackson.

Staff agreed to provide a list of Commission concerns and comments to Mr. Patel.

Additional discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding whether solid doors are required for car storage; the need to show parking on the garage plan; identification of the location of guest parking; concern that the media

rooms could be turned into Accessory Dwelling Units; conditioning the project so that areas cannot be used as a dwelling; clarification on whether the courtyard is meant to be active or decorative; the need for material boards and call outs; articulating the path of travel; a request that the landscape plan be in color; and the need for consistency with renderings.

Sol Blumenfeld, Community Development Director, summarized issues raised by Commissioners regarding poorly documented, under-developed plans; limited renderings; differences between the renderings and the presentation; incorrect information shown on the plan; items shown outside of the property line; landscaped area that refers to a living room; missing keynotes on the roof plan; concern that the keynotes are all over the place; concern with the level of detail provided for the trash chute that was not present in other places; the feeling that the documentation was too casual and inconsistent; the site plan note indicating a 6 foot high metal gate and a roll up gate that are not shown on the plan or the rendering; elevator access and path of travel are incorrect; landscape plan is unclear and needs revision; the barbeque in the middle of the courtyard dominates the community space; a construction management plan is needed; documentation is unclear on landscape urns; clarification is necessary on garage doors; ensuring Fire Department accessibility for the side yards; additional usable space in the courtyards; the need to examine historic uses and look at replacing the barbeque with a fountain; a request to provide the Commission with additional information about Jackson Avenue; EV solar requirements should be reflected on the plan; the need for a construction management plan including excavation and hauling; conditioned construction parking should be included; the Commission request for prior plan iterations; autos in the garages and guest parking should be shown; and the need to include clarification that media rooms cannot be used as bedrooms.

Mr. Patel indicated that the site plan with grading and path of travel had been inadvertently omitted from the set; he discussed blending in with the neighborhood and the prevailing style in the City; and he requested direction.

Discussion ensued between Mr. Patel, staff and Commissioners regarding agreement that the style is dictated by the architect; the focus of previous staff discussion with the applicant on multi-family guidelines used to evaluate

projects; locational and site planning issues; design decisions based on the number of units; and the design process.

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER REILMAN, SECONDED BY VICE CHAIR OGOSTA AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION: CONTINUE THE ITEM TO A DATE UNCERTAIN.

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Action Item

Item A-1
(Continued)

PC: (1) Administration of the Oath of Office to Appointed and Reappointed Commission Members; (2) Selection of the Chair and Vice Chair; and (3) Selection of the Committee Members

Commissioner Voncannon thanked Chair Sayles for her service over the past year.

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER VONCANNON, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER REILMAN AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION APPOINT VICE CHAIR OGOSTA TO SERVE AS CHAIR OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION FOR 2018-2019.

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER VONCANNON, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER SAYLES AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION APPOINT COMMISSIONER REILMAN TO SERVE AS VICE CHAIR OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION FOR 2018-2019.

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER VONCANNON, SECONDED BY VICE CHAIR REILMAN AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION APPOINT CHAIR OGOSTA AND COMMISSIONER SAYLES TO SERVE ON THE BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT.

MOVED BY CHAIR OGOSTA, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LACHOFF AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION APPOINT COMMISSIONER VONCANNON TO SERVE ON THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT COMMITTEE WITH COMMISSIONER LACHOFF TO SERVE AS ALTERNATE.

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Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda

None.

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Receipt of Correspondence

None.

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Items from Planning Commissioners/Staff

Michael Allen, Planning Manager, alerted Commissioners to be on the lookout for correspondence from the Advance Planning Department regarding upcoming meetings or opportunities to participate at public events, and he noted agenda items were scheduled for all upcoming scheduled meetings.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding scheduling; Commissioner absences; the site visit tour of previously approved projects; and the American Planning Association (APA) Summer in the City event on July 14.

Commissioner Voncannon indicated that he wanted to submit a proposal for a presentation at the Planning Academy in Long Beach scheduled for March 2019.

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Adjournment

There being no further business, at 9:41 p.m., the Culver City Planning Commission adjourned to the next regular meeting on Wednesday, July 25, 2018, at 7:00 p.m.

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SUSAN HERBERTSON
SENIOR PLANNER of the CULVER CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

APPROVED _____

ED OGOSTA
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 Green
CITY CLERK

Date