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PIEDMONT PLANNING COMMISSION

Regular Meeting Minutes for Monday, October 11, 2021

A Regular Session of the Piedmont Planning Commission was held October 11, 2021, via ZOOM teleconference consistent with Executive Order Nos. N-25-20 and N-29-20. In accordance with Government Code Section 54954.2(a), the agenda for this meeting was posted for public inspection on September 27, 2021.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Batra called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Rani Batra, Yildiz Duransoy, Doug Strout and Alternate Commissioner Justin Zucker

Absent: Commissioners Jonathan Levine and Tom Ramsey

Staff: Planning & Building Director Kevin Jackson, Senior Planner Pierce Macdonald-Powell, Planning Technician Suzanne Hartman, Administrative Assistant Mark Enea

PUBLIC FORUM

There were no speakers for the public forum.

**EX PARTE
COMMUNICATIONS &
CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

Planning & Building Director Kevin Jackson reported Commissioner Duransoy is recused from the application for a fence design review permit at 305 Sheridan Avenue due to her ownership interest in real property located within 500 feet of the subject property.

Commissioner Zucker disclosed his employer's business relationship with the company of the Property Owner at 305 Sheridan Avenue and indicated that the relationship does not affect the application or his ability to provide a fair and impartial judgment on the application. He related that he has been advised that he is not disqualified from hearing the application.

REGULAR SESSION

The Commission considered the following items of regular business:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Resolution 21-PL-21

RESOLVED, that the Planning Commission approves as presented its meeting minutes of the September 13, 2021, regular hearing of the Planning Commission.

Moved by Zucker, Seconded by Strout

Ayes: Duransoy, Strout, Zucker, Batra

Noes: None

Abstaining: None

Absent: Levine, Ramsey

CONSENT CALENDAR

The Commission placed no applications on the Consent Calendar.

REGULAR CALENDAR

The Commission considered the following items as part of the Regular Calendar:

**Resolution for
Continued Use of
Streamlined Notice
Requirements**

Director Jackson indicated that the City Attorney has determined that a resolution is not necessary and, consequently, no action by the Planning Commission is needed.

**Housing Policy
Development Activity
Update**

Senior Planner Pierce Macdonald-Powell utilized a presentation to update Commissioners regarding materials and public engagement concerning the Housing Element and fair housing issues.

Since the Planning Commission's September 13, 2021 hearing, City staff met with staff from the County of Alameda Department of Housing and Community Development (County HCD) about a possible extension of the Measure A-1 deadline to December 31, 2023 in response to comments from Planning Commissioners and members of the public during the September 13th hearing. The Planning Commission's recommendation for use of Measure A-1 Bond funding is tentatively scheduled for the October 18, 2021 City Council meeting, at which time staff will present information provided by County HCD staff.

On September 29, 2021, a special joint meeting of the Planning Commission and Housing Advisory Committee occurred and was led by the Housing Element consultant team, Lisa Wise Consulting. The consultant provided introductory briefings on State law requirements for Housing Elements in general.

Senior Planner Macdonald-Powell encouraged residents to view the 90-minute video of the September 29th joint meeting, which is available on the City's Facebook and Nextdoor pages, and share the link to the video via social media. A link to the video is also available on the resources webpage of piedmontishome.org. If anyone has thoughts or questions after watching the video, they may send them to piedmontishome@piedmont.ca.gov.

On October 5, 2021, Chair Batra was a panelist for a League of Women Voters of Piedmont talk entitled "Understanding Piedmont's Housing Element: Affordable Housing in Piedmont?". Panelists also included Melissa Breach, Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of California YIMBY, and Gloria Bruce, Executive Director of East Bay Housing Organization (EBHO). She thanked Chair Batra for participating in this very important event and spreading the word about the City's work in updating the next Housing Element. A link to this video is available on the resources page of piedmontishome.org.

Upcoming community events and public meetings include the October 21, 2021 workshop about accessory dwelling unit (ADU) and junior ADU prototype plans and incentives as well as objective design standards for multi-family development. Planning Commissioners are asked to attend and participate in the meeting, which is designed to encourage the exchange of information between residents and experts at Lisa Wise Consulting. Posters advertising the workshop will be posted on social media and community bulletin boards in Piedmont.

The first Housing Element community workshop is scheduled for December 2, 2021 and will include initial findings from technical research to help form the basis of new housing goals, policies, and programs, preliminary constraints and housing needs analyses, and population and demographic data.

The Piedmont Is Home website for the Housing Element and all housing policy work is updated constantly and will soon host Housing Element informational videos. Members of the public may subscribe to housing updates via the constant contact page of piedmontishome.org.

Director Jackson reported Chair Batra, City Administrator Sara Lillevand, and Housing Advisory Committee Member Jane Lin shot videos for the Housing Element regarding needs and constraints, components of the Housing Element,

and the basics of the Housing Element. The videos will soon be complete and posted to piedmontishome.org to complement previous videos and to help the public understand the Housing Element process and issues.

There was no **public testimony**.

Chair Batra thanked Director Jackson, Senior Planner Macdonald-Powell, Lisa Wise Consulting, and the League of Women Voters for helping compile great information to educate the public and encouraging residents to participate in the Housing Element Update. She encouraged residents who are considering or have an ADU to join the October workshop and provide input regarding the process, as well as the proposed objective design standards.

**Fence Design Review
305 Sheridan Avenue**

The Property Owners are requesting permission to construct a 5-foot-tall iron fence and two gates within the 20-foot street yard setback along Sheridan and Lakeview Avenues.

Public Testimony was received from:

John Protopappas, Property Owner, reported the purpose of the fencing and gates is to keep their dogs on the property and other animals off the property. The fencing and gates are designed to be installed away from the street and behind dense perimeter vegetation, the hedge on Sheridan Avenue, and the stone wall and redwood tree on Lakeview Avenue. Pedestrians and neighbors will see little of the gates and fence. The fence and gates also protect the original stone pathways that are part of the historic property. One gate will be installed on the main pathway to the house's entryway, and a similar gate will be installed above the stairwell adjacent to the garage. The gates and fencing will be made of iron.

In general, the Commission appreciated the open design of the fencing and gates and the integration of the fencing into existing vegetation. Commissioner Strout noted that the Piedmont Design Guidelines discourage fences or walls in front yards, the Commission previously denied an application with similar circumstances and subsequently approved the application for fencing at a lower height, and the Commission views an elevated house as emphasizing the height of fencing and views vegetation as temporary. Commissioner Zucker and Chair Batra could support 5-foot-tall fencing as vegetation conceals it from passersby, the height is appropriate for the steep topography, the fencing does not impact privacy or natural light, and a 4-foot-tall fence will not deter deer.

Director Jackson noted that three affirmative votes are needed to approve a motion. If three affirmative votes are not possible, the Commission may wish to continue the item to a subsequent Planning Commission meeting. The Planning Commission may allow the applicant to address reducing the height of the fencing.

John Protopappas related that he and his fiancée prefer the taller fence and requested the Planning Commission continue the matter to a subsequent meeting.

Carrie McAlister, Property Owner, added that their two dogs have no difficulty jumping over a 4-foot-tall fence. If the fencing is installed outside the setbacks, it will impact the historic pathways at a few points.

Resolution 246-PL-21

RESOLVED, that the Planning Commission continues consideration of the application for fence design review at 305 Sheridan Avenue to the next available Planning Commission hearing at the applicants' request.

Moved by Zucker, Seconded by Strout

Ayes: Strout, Zucker, Batra

Noes: None

Recused: Duransoy

Absent: Levine, Ramsey

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chair Batra adjourned the meeting at 6:07 p.m.

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