



Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

March 12, 2019 6:00 PM

1. ROLL CALL

Commissioners present: Civian, Bottarini, Breznikar, Eddinger, Luks, Petrik, Tracy

Commissioners absent: None

City Staff present: Planning and Building Director Maya DeRosa, Contract Planner Linda Ruffing, City Attorney's Office Deborah Kartiganer, Principle Engineer Curt Bates, Fire Marshal Linda Collister, Administrative Specialist Shawn Sumpter

2. ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS

A. The Commission voted 7-0 to approve the March 12, 2019 agenda.

B. The Commission voted 7-0 to approve the February 26, 2019 minutes with minor changes.

C. Acceptance of Communications and Correspondence

- Ron Grassi
- Mark Bisignani

D. Declarations of Conflicts of Interest: None

E. Disclosures of Ex Parte Communications: None

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

4. OLD BUSINESS

Note this item was continued from February 26 due to the early adjournment of the meeting necessitated by local flooding events.

A. Item

Description:

Continuation of February 26, 2019 Public Hearing on the North Entry Area Plan and Land Use Code Amendments

Note: The public hearing on this item was closed at the February 26, 2019 Planning Commission meeting prior to the emergency adjournment of that meeting due to flooding and imminent road closures. The Planning Commission continued action on the item to the March 12th agenda in order to continue its deliberations and provide direction to staff.

Project

Description:

Area Plan for the future development of a 32 acre site

Location:

16977 Healdsburg Avenue and the adjacent Healdsburg Avenue roadway

Applicant:

City of Healdsburg

Environmental

Determination:

Environmental Impact Report

Consulting Planner Linda Ruffing provided a summary of the previous meeting.

Chair Civian reminded the audience that the public input portion of this hearing occurred during the February 26th session.

Chair Civian asked the Commissioners to address the subject of visitor lodging.

Commissioner Luks stated that having reflected on discussions that occurred during the previous session he had reconsidered and is willing to leave the determination of the number of hotel rooms to the master CUP stage. He reasoned that this would give staff time to work with

the project applicant to address the Commission's concerns about housing. He stated that he would like to see a smaller hotel but would be willing to approve a larger hotel in a project that was well designed and maximized the housing opportunities.

Commissioner Petrik said that he likes Commissioner Luks' concept and would like to hear more about other ideas the Commission may have.

Commissioner Bottarini said he too likes the concept but asked where does it fit into the document. He suggested that it may belong in the guiding principles.

Commissioner Luks stated that he would like to see it in section 20.12 (page 4). He stated that he is not sure that specific language is needed. The discussions so far should give the applicant direction as to what the Commission expects to see.

Commissioner Breznikar asked if Commissioner Luks is suggesting not having a cap on the number of hotel rooms.

Commissioner Luks explained that the cap would remain at 130 but that would be a maximum. The number of rooms actually approved would depend upon the content of the project. This might be facilitated with a development agreement.

Chair Civian asked for a consensus that the developer be encouraged to enter into a development agreement, noting that the Commission likely can't require a development agreement.

Commissioner Eddinger expressed his approval saying that this process is supposed to be about developing an area plan and not designing a project.

Commissioner Tracy stated that he does not have an objection in principle. He expressed concerns that setting a cap at 130 rooms would result in a proposal with 130 rooms which he would not be in favor of. He stated that he would like to see it wrapped up in a master CUP or a development agreement but asked if staff is comfortable with that; is there enough direction.

Planner Ruffing stated that the numbers used in the EIR included traffic generated by a 130 room hotel. If the proposal were to come in with a larger hotel it would not be consistent with the environmental analysis. Providing the cap sets that upper limit.

Commissioner Petrik asked if there was or wasn't a 130 room cap would that play into any California laws that might affect the City's ability to negotiate affordable housing? Which case would put the City into a better position?

Attorney Kartiganer opined that it would not create an entitlement. She stated that you would just want to be sure that it is clear that the cap is really a firm cap. She commented on the earlier discussion about development agreements stating that while may be possible for the Commission to require a development agreement, it has not been tested in court. She noted that there are other communities that are doing it.

Commissioner Breznikar noted that currently there is no inclusionary housing requirement for hotels and asked if the Commission can impose it.

Attorney Kartiganer stated that the subject has been the focus of recent legal discussion and said that she can research the question.

Chair Civian commented that the rate of growth of hotels has shocked a number of people, but, if you don't have the numbers it is hard to compare. He stated that he would personally like to see the City Council develop a per capita hotel room cap. He opined that a healthy economic environment can make a hotel work. He opined that the site is appropriate for a hotel. He stated that he thinks they should stick with a cap of 130 which is in line with the environmental studies. He also stated that he would like to see a more clustered development with a

residential feel to minimize the impact of the hotel. He expressed his support for a 130 room cap stressing the need to provide a well-designed project in order to meet that cap.

Commissioner Bottarini suggested that prior to the use permit for the hotel the applicant has to provide a threshold of residential units. He expressed his desire for 280 residential units.

Attorney Kartiganer asked for clarification about when the units would be required.

Commissioner Bottarini stated that he would build it into a development agreement.

Chair Civian asked how that could happen if the Commission can't require a development agreement.

Attorney Kartiganer stated that the CUP could provide a mechanism for regulating the uses.

Planner Ruffing stated that the master CUP could regulate the thresholds for each of the uses.

Commissioner Bottarini asked for a minimum of 280 residential units.

Attorney Kartiganer stated that she had checked the status of the research on the issue of inclusionary housing in conjunction with hotels. In the context of this particular hotel it is not possible to require inclusionary housing. If a subsequent study were to provide a nexus linking affordable housing to hotels at a certain rate then the Commission could start talking about it.

Commissioner Tracy asked where the provision would be added.

Planner Ruffing stated that staff could work on where it should go. The Commission does not have to figure that out tonight.

Commissioner Luks expressed his concern that stating a minimum would result in a maximum.

Commissioner Eddinger stated that he does not feel a need to state more numbers. Until a project is proposed the numbers don't mean anything.

Chair Civian agreed saying that the limits of the environmental studies should provide a guideline.

Chair Civian asked for consensus for allowing a hotel use in the plan.

A majority consensus was reached to allow hotel use with Commissioners Breznikar and Bottarini dissenting.

Chair Civian asked for a discussion regarding the number of hotel units (rooms).

Commissioner Tracy said he would go along with the 130 room cap and expressed a desire to tie the number of approved units to the number of housing units provided.

Chair Civian asked staff how this could be accomplished.

Attorney Kartiganer stated that there is opportunity to provide appropriate wording in the document upon direction from the Commission.

Chair Civian stated that there seems to be consensus on the Commission for tying the number of hotel rooms to the amount and type of housing provided.

Commissioner Tracy stated that he supports the adjusted language provided regarding the hotel. He asked if 2-story was also included in the conditions.

Planner Ruffing directed the Commission to the revised conditions that were updated to reflect the direction that was received at the February 26th meeting.

Commissioner Eddinger expressed concerns with providing specific numbers.

Chair Civian asked if there is consensus for providing wording that requires a nexus between the number of hotel rooms and the number of housing units.

There was consensus for providing a nexus as long a minimum number of housing units is required.

Chair Civan asked the Commission to address design. He asked if the rest of the Commission was in agreement with his preference for a clustered hotel design rather than a large tower style.

Commissioner Luks expressed his agreement and stated that he would remove the 2-story limit because it restricts creative design options.

Chair Civan agreed.

Commissioner Tracy opined that if you are looking for a clustered low scale, smaller impactful hotel he would keep it at 2 stories. Answering a question from Chair Civan, he stated that he was still of that opinion if they were looking at a design that was stepped higher as it extends further westward.

Commissioner Breznikar stated that she would like to see as little land as possible devoted to the hotel use in order to preserve land for housing. She cited the local unfilled need/demand for housing. She expressed a preference for good design including stepping the buildings back and clustering.

Chair Civan remarked that if the Growth Management Ordinance (GMO) were not in place we probably would not be looking at a hotel in this location. It is a dilemma that makes it tough to develop multi-family housing.

Commissioner Bottarini asked for a clarification of where building height maximums would be allowed.

Commissioner Breznikar stated that good design should dictate the configuration.

Chair Civan stated that he would agree, there has to be exceptional design.

A discussion ensued resulting in a consensus for removing the 2-story limitation in favor of compliance with the existing height limitations in the code.

Chair Civan summarized the consensus for; inclusion of a hotel use and exceptional design to warrant the full 130 room cap, and a nexus between the number of hotel rooms and the amount of housing provided.

Chair Civan confirmed for Attorney Kartiganer the Commission's direction that a minimum of 280 housing units be required as a part of the master CUP.

Commissioner Luks noted that timing could be built into a development agreement.

Chair Civan asked the Commission to address circulation. He related Commissioner Bottarini's suggestion that the diagram be eliminated in favor of language that would describe to the best extent possible a grid-like pattern, to which he would add language to minimize cul-de-sacs.

Commissioner Eddinger stated that long cul-de-sacs don't seem to work for anyone.

At Commissioner Tracy's suggestion the Commission reached consensus for deleting the circulation diagram.

Commissioner Petrik agreed commenting that the diagram does not seem to address emergency access connectivity needs.

Chair Civan stated that a grid like circulation can be achieved creatively, possibly including strategies incorporating the use of pedestrian thoroughfares to provide emergency access and service access during off-hours.

Commissioner Breznikar expressed interest in hearing from the Fire Chief about the need for wider streets in cases of emergency in conjunction with the needs of a senior living facility.

Chair Civian pointed out that the master CUP will address the street design and the review will include input from the Fire Chief.

Commissioner Luks pointed out that gridded streets will encourage the design of a hotel in clustered buildings rather than as a single building.

There was a consensus for 35' height maximum and slope no greater than 15%.

Planner Ruffing confirmed for the Commission that the 15% building slope change will not change the developable area.

Commissioner Bottarini asked to include wording that allows densities to flex over the total development rather than apply to individual parcels.

Planner Ruffing explained that the language in the guiding principles is consistent with Commissioner Bottarini's request. She also stated that staff can add to the language.

Upon confirming that further direction was not needed, Planner Ruffing described the next steps which include wrapping up the final edits to the plan, including an errata sheet for ease of review. The final EIR will also be wrapped up and available at the next review by the Commission. The target date is Tuesday April 23, 2019.

5. NEW BUSINESS: None

6. COMMISSIONER AND SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS: None

7. DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

- Director DeRosa and Commissioner Breznikar attended the Planning Commissioner's Academy
- Report of the Council's actions on the Mill District.

The meeting adjourned at 7:09 PM.

Maya DeRosa, Secretary

Jeffrey D. Civian, Chair