

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chair Schuman.

ROLL CALL

Mike Giller Christie Leidal Ron Schuman
Dan Schroder Gretchen Dudney Dave Pringle
Mr. Lamb was absent.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

With no changes, the August 2, 2016, Planning Commission Minutes were approved as presented.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

With no changes, the August 16, 2016, Planning Commission Agenda was approved as presented.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

1) Moore Residence (MM) PL-2016-0222, 1067 Discovery Hill Drive

Commissioner Questions / Comments:

Mr. Schroder: Can I ask a point of clarification? On page 8 of the packet: negative four and positive four but later negative two and positive two? (Mr. Mosher: That was a correction that did not get carried through; it is supposed to be negative two and positive two, thank you.)

With no further comments, the consent calendar was approved as presented.

WORKSESSIONS:

1) Searle House Restoration, Addition and Landmarking (MM) PL-2016-0345, 300 East Washington

Mr. Mosher presented a preliminary discussion with the Applicant and Agent of a specific site and architectural issues related to the possible redevelopment of the property. The Applicant and the Agent have four issues to discuss:

- Acknowledge the setbacks and official “front yard”
- Obtain Commission feedback on façade widths for this Character Area
- Obtain Commission feedback on connector and general massing of a proposed addition
- The location of a third parking space for a proposed accessory apartment

Staff had the following questions for the Commission:

- Visual Impacts to the Block: Did the Commission believe the massing of the addition on this property has negative impacts to the overall visually unity of the two adjoining blocks (Washington Avenue and French Street)?
- Building Mass and Scale: Did the Commission believe the general massing of the building meets the intent of the policies listed in the staff report?
- Façade Width: Would the Commission support a 4-foot offset between facades in lieu of the established 6-foot minimum offset? Given the lot configuration, did the Commission have concerns with the building’s lot frontage exceeding 50 feet in length?
- Connector: Did the Commission believe the length of the connector is adequate to separate the new addition from the historic structure?
- Parking: Did the Commission agree that the parking, 3 feet off the property line, meets the intent of the guidelines as best as possible? Did the Commission believe the 3-foot separation of the parking space from the property line is adequate space to allow buffering to the abutting property (Community Center parking lot)?

Applicant Presentation: Ms. Janet Sutterley, Architect for the Applicant:

On the extra parking spot, which we are hoping will be considered side yard, there is an off-site ten foot buffer strip that is already heavily landscaped on Town property, which is why we thought it would be okay to be only three feet from the property line. The 20-foot wide driveway cut would flare on site just enough to get to the parking spot. There is currently an paving strip just off the property where currently many cars are parked, which would be vacated and landscaped with an encroachment license agreement if this project goes through. We are asking about the stepping forms issues because we are working with only 25 feet of depth for the building. The most important thing to us for tonight's discussion is the building massing and scale and the ability to go to a story and a half in height. The house directly across the street is a full two story house and there is a story and a half historic residence down the street and another one nearby, so I think we fit in well with the scale of the neighborhood. The accessory unit would most likely be located in the basement area beneath the landmarked historic house.

Commissioner Questions / Comments:

Mr. Pringle: I was not on the site visit; did those of you there gain any more insight?

Ms. Dudney: I remember hearing about some improvements to the property; could you expand more on this?

Mr. Schroder: How did you propose to address Priority Policy 38 about the façade? (Mr. Mosher: The applicant is trying to break up the façades with the stepping.) So you're going to lose more feet in the connector element if we are going to hold to the six feet? (Mr. Mosher: The width of the connector could get narrower and the blue colored piece could get narrower, but internal functionality is key.)

Ms. Dudney: And the historic building will be raised 12 inches? (Mr. Mosher: Yes, for site drainage corrections.)

Mr. Pringle: Are we doing the right thing for the wrong reasons or are we doing the wrong thing for the right reasons on this property? We're not going to fool anyone by building it like it's an infill lot when it's a corner lot. If we build it as presented here we are going to run up against issues. (Mr. Mosher: This is how the property is historically situated, which will always be a problem of this property, so what we're asking the Commission is if this is the way we want to go, and are there variances we want to make.) I think we're going about this the wrong way since this is a corner lot.

Mr. Schroder: Are out buildings defined to be at the back of the lots? (Mr. Mosher: Yes.) So, in the photographs, there is an out building off to the side, so maybe we can maintain historic precedent by looking at that? (Mr. Mosher: Correct. Well there isn't the mass that is being proposed in that photo.)

Ms. Dudney: It is clear that the Development Code was not written with this kind of property in mind, so I ask what would we say if the Development Code was written with a lot more properties like this? Because I am not supporting the massing moving up, I don't think it keeps up with the rest of the block.

Mr. Pringle: We are not smart enough to write code that considers every possible project that may come across, but I do think that a lot of our most successful historic preservations have not exactly met the code.

Mr. Giller: Was there a Cultural Resource form with this? Could you email it to us? (Mr. Mosher: The analysis of the Resource data is in the report.) I think what is being wrestled with are character defining features, and this house is a bit different and we really want something compatible here because the addition is much more visible. I think this is close but the addition is more complicated than the original, and because it's so visible we should make it compatible.

Mr. Pringle: I was just wondering if we could be more creative here? Look at the house that was built on Ridge Street with too many big windows, that's a wonderful corner house. (Mr. Mosher, the closest one I can think of is the Kasonavich house by Bank of the West, which we did discuss.) (Ms. Sutterley: I know the house you are thinking of, it was a good solution, but it does not have a connector.) I just don't think we're going to be happy with this along the road

- because the little house is going to be lost in all the additions.
- Mr. Schuman: I think this property is difficult and if we could take everything off and start over, it would be better. But it's historic. I don't like the massing in the back, but we have to work with it.
- Ms. Dudney: We have to think of the fact that any variance affects all of the properties around this place. My concern is the height and mass; it's less about the side parking and the four and six feet, I'm mostly concerned about height and mass. I am concerned about the property to the north.
- Mr. Schuman: I also don't think the parking works, once you start piling up snow there, you can't fit a car. I want to look at how we can improve the neighborhood and the entire area. A few years ago, we had a conversation about livability.
- Mr. Giller: In response to Mr. Mosher's question about this project possibly lowering the historic rating, it's possible. The addition should be simpler than most buildings in the District. So, the addition should also be simpler and a bit smaller. We're looking at an addition that is not quite subservient to the historic house. I think it's a bit big and complicated. The building blocks are good and the step ups are good, the four foot setback is okay, I think that this can be fixed, but is overpowering as is. (Ms. Sutterley: I agree this is too busy, this is more of an idea, and we do want to get higher than the historic structure.)
- Mr. Pringle: The house was oriented wrong. (Mr. Mosher: In the 19th century it was orientated right!)
- Mr. Giller: No, that is just the way the mining community built things.
- Ms. Dudney: The historic standards weren't written with this in mind.
- Mr. Mosher: I was thinking maybe they could take out some of this roof out in between the blue and orange. (Mr. Grosshuesch: Are they going to be separate units on the top floor?) (Ms. Sutterley: No, The second floor will be like a master suite incorporated into the main house.)
- Mr. Pringle: Maybe we can drop the roof line. (Mr. Mosher: Maybe they could break this down into smaller separate appearing masses.)
- Mr. Giller: A new addition should not compete in design, scale, size of an historic building. We need to make sure that the historic building is the most important thing on that lot. So the addition needs to be simpler. (Mr. Mosher: There are currently little out buildings on the property; maybe they could do something like that?)
- Ms. Dudney: If we have to have a variance for something like this, the viewpoint of the neighbors is going to be very important to me. A variance isn't a right and if the neighbors are opposed, that is important.
- Ms. Leidal: I think there's a rule about the garage in the yard being 20 ft from the property line, I think we can give a variance because this is a special circumstance. (Mr. Mosher: That was anticipated, and Streets was supportive of allowing encroachment off the property for driveway parking.) Does the connector meet our policy? (Mr. Mosher: It meets all the requirements, and the length has been determined on a case by case basis in the past.)
- Mr. Schuman: If you could all give your thoughts on the questions.
- Ms. Dudney: I applaud the purchaser wanting to restore this historic building, but I don't believe that the massing is suitable for the block, I don't think it meets the intent of the policies. And if we come back with something new that requires a variance, I want to talk to neighbors. I support the four foot offset I'm not concerned with exceeding 50 in length or the parking.
- Mr. Pringle: I think the massing is overwhelming; it will devalue the historic house. I think the connector element should be extended; it looks more like buildings are pushed together too much as is. I wish there was a different solution to the 50 foot width issue. I don't have a problem with the four feet stepping issue or with the 3 feet off the property line on the parking space, but I don't think it will be a parking space once the snow starts being pushed there. There might be a little too much program going on here; we might need to shrink our expectations.
- Mr. Schroder: I'm glad we're going to change this, but to what given the Washington front? It feels like we should pay more homage to the original building with the additions. I don't know if this house has a negative impact when you look at the huge houses on the same block, but I still support what Mr. Giller is saying about reflecting on the simplicity of the historical house. The 50 foot

- frontage is difficult, but the stepping is a good idea, and I'm fine with the connectors.
- Ms. Leidal: I think this is a tough site as a corner lot with the orientation of the house; our historic standards were not written for this. We need to be flexible, but I would like to see us meet as many policies as possible. I agree with the concern about rear massing and simplifying the design of the rear structures to be more compatible. I would like to see the 6 foot offsets on façade width because that is precedent we've met before. I think the connector may need to be longer, but it is difficult because it is a corner lot. Parking, you can technically park in that area, but it will be a snow stack management concern. Noting that we need to give a variance for the placement of the garage under Absolute Policy 9A.
- Mr. Giller: I believe this is a great opportunity and wonderful project. I am okay in general with simplifying the massing and showing flexibility on the small questions. I don't care so much about the parking and the 4 foot offset, but I encourage considering other options in the design process.
- Mr. Schuman: I'm not sure how I can work through the mass and scale, this is big, but I would love to see something happen here. The connector fits; I think the offset is okay. I think the parking meets the intent of the guidelines, though I don't think it's going to actually work. You're off to a great start.

OTHER MATTERS:

Mr. Truckey presented three recent code changes to the Commission. Staff had provided the Planning Commission with a brief update of pending ordinances at the August 2 meeting. The packet included a brief description of each ordinance as well as the ordinances themselves. First readings on each of these ordinances were reviewed by the Town Council on August 9. The Residential Parking ordinance was asked to come back with further refinement. The Point Analysis and Land Use District 1 ordinances will each require a second reading. The Residential Parking ordinance will require additional research and will return to the Town Council as a first reading. Staff would like the Planning Commission to be familiar with the ordinances. Staff would like to answer any questions or take any comments or note issues that the Commission has.

1) Point Analysis Decision and Miscellaneous Updates

Commissioner Questions / Comments:

Mr. Pringle: I had a discussion with one of the Council members on how they like what the Commission is doing and they see that we pass everything at seven to nothing. I don't know if they all understand that there is still controversy to a project because of that; that in order for it to pass it must be a unanimous vote.

2) Land Use District 1 Update

3) Deed Restricted Parking Exemption Update

Commissioner Questions / Comments:

Mr. Pringle: So you could convert the bottom space of a floor to residential if it's in the back? What about an alley? (Mr. Truckey: You could if it was on an alley, per the Downtown Overlay District.) What about the river walk? (Mr. Truckey: Not on the river walk.) What about Fiesta Jalisco? This whole ordinance is applied to anomalies. (Mr. Grosshuesch: We cannot anticipate every situation. The ordinance is intended to get more deed restricted spaces for housing. We see this as an easy way to get some desperately needed workforce housing.)

Ms. Dudney: I think it's true that what was once office space is no longer getting leased, so this is a very real solution. (Mr. Grosshuesch: We don't have any exclusionary land use districts; we let the market decide. If we didn't have deed restricted affordable housing requirements, the market would probably bid these spaces into condos. We didn't like the idea of having downtown residential that didn't have parking associated, but now we're stepping up transit and pedestrian access, so since this is not many units to begin with, the philosophy is to loosen up

- on the parking.)
- Mr. Pringle: So this is long-term workforce housing? (Mr. Grosshuesch: Yes.) What about bikes and kayaks and such? (Mr. Grosshuesch: I don't think we're any worse off by doing this.) I think we're opening up more of a problem here. Like a few years ago we were splitting up lots which caused problems and we had to stop it. I'm not sure that this is a good solution to a problem. If we open this up how do we stop it? (Mr. Grosshuesch: We are not incentivizing new construction with this, and the people renting these out are not necessarily of the same mindset as the people with accessory units in the Highlands.) But I don't know if the Town will even check? (Mr. Grosshuesch: The town will check, as we do with all our deed restricted units.) I don't trust the intent; I don't think it's a good idea. (Mr. Grosshuesch: I think the intent is pure based on what building owners have said.)
- Mr. Giller: Is there a sunset on this? (Mr. Grosshuesch: We will work with the units and the buildings on this, but it is permanent.)
- Ms. Dudney: I think this is a good idea, a good way to address workforce housing issues. (Mr. Truckey: This is not going to be income based but will be something like a requirement that tenants are working 30 hours a week in the Upper Blue Basin.)
- Mr. Schuman: So the requirement is that people will be working in the Upper Blue? (Mr. Grosshuesch: We are still working on what the requirements would be.)

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 8:21 pm.

Ron Schuman, Chair