

CITY OF SAN GABRIEL

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

August 8, 2016

The regular meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of San Gabriel was held in the City Council Chambers at City Hall, 425 S. Mission Drive, San Gabriel, California, on Monday, August 8, 2016.

Chairman Garden called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and led the pledge of allegiance.

**Meeting Called to Order;
Pledge of Allegiance**

ROLL CALL

ROLL CALL

PRESENT:

Chairman Norman Garden, Vice-Chair Thomas Klawiter, Commissioner Camelia Vera and Commissioner Vince Zawodny

ABSENT:

Commissioner Jingbo Lou (excused)

STAFF PRESENT:

City Attorney Robert L. Kress, Senior Planner Larissa De La Cruz, Associate Planner Jo-Anne Burns, Assistant Planner Nicholas Bezanson, and Planning Commission Secretary Jackie Wong

CONSENT ITEMS

Minutes from the Planning and Design Review Commissions Special Joint Meeting on July 13, 2016

Commissioner Vera made the motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Zawodny seconded the motion. There being no objections, the minutes were approved.

CONSENT ITEMS

**Minutes from the Planning and Design Review Commissions Special Joint Meeting on July 13, 2016
Approved**

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chairman Garden asked that speakers come forward who wish to address the Planning Commission on non-agenda items.

No one came forward to speak; therefore, he closed this portion of the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

EXPLANATION OF PUBLIC HEARING PROCEDURES

City Attorney Kress explained the public hearing procedures for the items on this evening's agenda.

EXPLANATION OF PUBLIC HEARING PROCEDURES

Explained by City Attorney Kress

PUBLIC HEARING ITEM

- 1. 518 W. Las Tunas Dr.
Planning Case No. PL-16-088 (Amendment to Conditional Use Permit)
Applicant: Sophia Lau (Newport Seafood)**

This item was presented by Associate Planner Jo-Anne Burns regarding a request to amend an existing Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to serve liquor (Type 47 ABC License) at an existing restaurant in the C-1M (The Market Place) zone within the Mission District Specific Plan area. The existing restaurant currently has a Type 41 ABC License to serve beer and wine.

PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

- 1. 518 W. Las Tunas Dr.
Planning Case No. PL-16-088
(Amendment to Conditional Use Permit)
Applicant: Sophia Lau (Newport Seafood)
Approved**

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION: The application was reviewed and exempted for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements, per Guidelines Section 15301, Class 1 (Existing Facilities).

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommended approval of Planning Case No. PL-16-088, subject to the recommended conditions of approval.

Sophia Lau, business owner, 518 W. Las Tunas, is requesting to move the closing time to 11 p.m. to accommodate patrons entering the restaurant as late as 10:15 p.m. on the weekends.

Commissioner Vera inquired what other restaurants in the area have a Type 47 liquor license. Ms. Burns stated that Luna's and Cheers have it.

At this time, Chairman Garden closed the public hearing portion.

Commissioners' Discussion

Commissioner Vera stated that the restaurant is not a sports bar and finds that the proposed closing hour is reasonable. However, she was concerned about the patrons' safety when crossing the street to and from the restaurant without using the crosswalk. She suggested that the owners post signs to discourage them from not using the crosswalk.

Vice-Chair Klawiter stated that the owners are a great neighbor and he is proud to see their business is successful given the popularity of their restaurant. He added that he is fine with the proposed closing hour and agreed with Commissioner Vera's concern about people not using the crosswalk.

Commissioner Zawodny suggested talking to the Police Department to patrol the area for people jay walking.

City Attorney Kress commented that the applicant is directed to use reasonable efforts to encourage its customers to use the crosswalk. He suggested that wait staff and/or valet staff can advise patrons to use the crosswalk. He also suggested that no new patrons will be admitted after 10 p.m.

Sophia Lau stated that the valet staff can advise patrons to do that.

Chairman Garden made the motion to approve PL-16-088 with an added condition that patrons can stay until 10:45 p.m. and that the restaurant closes at 11 p.m.

Vice-Chair Klawiter seconded the motion.

Ayes: Garden, Vera, Klawiter and Zawodny

Noes: None

4-0 vote. Motion carried.

**2. 251 S. San Gabriel Blvd.
Planning Case No. PL-16-061 (Amendment to Conditional Use Permit)
Applicant: Mark Chan (Data for Children)**

This item was presented by Assistant Planner Nicholas Bezanson regarding a proposed amendment to an existing CUP to for an after-school tutoring center to expand to an existing adjacent commercial building located in the C-1 (Retail Commercial) zone.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION: The project was reviewed and exempted for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements, per Guidelines Section 15301, Class 1 (Existing Facilities).

Commissioners' Discussion

**2. 251 S. San Gabriel Blvd.
Planning Case No. PL-16-061
(Amendment to CUP)
Applicant: Mark Chan (Data for Children)
Approved**

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommended approval of Planning Case No. PL-16-061, subject to the recommended conditions of approval.

Commissioner Vera inquired if the space could be utilized for another use after hours. Mr. Bezanson stated that if ever that were the case, there would be postings on its hours of operations.

Chairman Garden inquired how full the parking lot gets. Mr. Bezanson stated that it is 90% vacant during mid-day.

Vice-Chair Klawiter commented on the window treatments. Mr. Bezanson stated that as part of the conditions of approval, the treatments would have to come down.

Mark Chan, owner, 251 S. San Gabriel, came forward and stated that he is comfortable and satisfied with all conditions of approval. However, he is keeping the blinds to prevent the blazing sunlight coming through. Mr. Bezanson suggested the owner use vertical slats so that people from the outside could still see the interior.

Testimony

1. Isella Bowles, San Gabriel resident on Kendall Drive, opposes this item due to:
 - Opposing vision from what the community wants for this location;
 - Hampering other businesses to come in the area and attract desirable, tax-generating businesses; and
 - Increased traffic from loading/unloading children and blocking traffic.

Mr. Chan addressed Ms. Bowles and the Commissioners' concerns. He stated that shutting down a successful, existing business that helps the community does not help attracting new businesses. Due to the building's existing architectural constraints, the site is ideal for his type of business. He pointed out that there is a new complex two doors down that will be more suitable for attracting retail shops and restaurants.

Senior Planner Larissa De La Cruz explained that the site could not accommodate other uses except for an office space due to the parking requirements, tenant improvements, and existing use to upgrade to ADA requirements. She added that the City's Economic Development Manager keeps residents' comments, and is actively recruiting retailers.

At this time, Chairman Garden closed the public hearing portion.

Commissioners' Discussion

Commissioner Zawodny stated that it is tough when a space has been vacant for a while. He added that it is a wonder to see the City come to life with thriving businesses. He suggested opening the windows to add natural light inside.

Vice-Chair Klawiter agreed with Commissioner Zawodny about opening the windows and that a dark storefront won't attract anything. He suggested adding drought-tolerant landscaping and planters to evoke an urban environment in the area.

Chairman Garden suggested adding a trellis, an awning or something at the storefront to promote activation of place.

Chairman Garden moved to approve PL-16-061 subject to the recommended conditions of approval. Vice-Chair Klawiter seconded the motion.

Ayes: Garden, Klawiter, Vera and Zawodny
Noes: None

4-0 vote. Motion carried.

Testimony

Commissioners' Discussion

At this time, City Attorney Kress announced that Commissioner Vera recused herself due to her employment in the real estate business, which might pose as a conflict of interest with the next item.

**3. 306 San Marcos St.
Planning Case No. PL-15-045 (Tentative Tract Map)
Applicant: Gantcho Batchkarov (San Gabriel Summit Homes)**

This item was presented by Senior Planner Larissa De La Cruz regarding a request for a Tentative Tract Map to allow construction of an eight-unit residential condominium project in the R-3 Arroyo Residential zone within the Mission District Specific Plan area.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION: The City of San Gabriel determined that a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) would be required for this project after an Initial Study in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). A Notice of Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration of Environmental Impact was prepared and filed with the Los Angeles County Clerk on July 14, 2016 and was also made available for public review.

Mr. Gantcho Batchkarov, 12515 Walnut St., Los Angeles, CA 90066, project architect and applicant, came forward and stated that he was comfortable with all of the conditions of approval.

Testimony

1. Annette Kondo, resident at 312 San Marcos, voiced her concerns about:
 - protection of existing trees in the front of the property;
 - the project not having more than two stories;
 - having to demolish the last craftsman house on that street;
 - increased demand for street parking, especially that the project is near the new Olson housing development; suggested underground parking; and
 - an alleged tenant living in the house onsite.

At this time, Chairman Garden closed the public hearing portion.

Commissioners Discussion

Commissioner Zawodny was concerned about the project's massing of the front-facing unit. He stated that the rear units look fine but the front looks very bulky.

Vice-Chair Klawiter agreed with Commissioner Zawodny and stated that there are developments in the City with small lots that have much sensitivity for the site. He added that the farmhouse would be good to save but it currently is in poor condition.

Ms. De La Cruz stated that they do not have a record of a tenant living onsite. Ms. Kondo said that there is a white Mercedes that is always parked there at the end of the day. Winnie, member of the design team, said that the developer, who drives a white Mercedes, often visits the site but no one lives there.

Chairman Garden inquired about subterranean parking. Ms. Winnie stated that since there are so many existing trees onsite, they did not consider creating underground parking. She and her team are trying to preserve as many trees as possible and accommodate the existing environment.

Chairman Garden was concerned about the height of the first unit. He suggested reducing it to two stories, creating underground parking, and preserving the olive tree by the trash enclosure.

City Attorney Kress suggested that the Planning Commission continue the item to a later date so that the project team can present a new set of proposed plans.

Chairman Garden made the motion to continue PL-15-045 to a Planning Commission Special

**3. 306 San Marcos St.
Planning Case No.
PL-15-045
Tentative Tract Map)
Applicant: Gantcho
Batchkarov (San
Gabriel Summit
Homes)
Continued to the
Planning Commission
Special Meeting on
Tuesday, September
13, 2016 at 4:00 p.m.**

Testimony

Commissioners Discussion

Meeting on Tuesday, September 13, 2016 at 4 p.m.

STAFF ITEM

None.

PLANNING COMMISSION ITEMS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Chairman Garden moved to adjourn to a Special Meeting of the Planning Commission on Tuesday, September 13, 2016 at 4:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, City Hall, 2nd Floor, 425 S. Mission Drive, San Gabriel, CA.

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The Planning Commission meetings are available on tape and may be reviewed within 90 days after the meeting in the Community Development Department office at City Hall during regular business hours.

Chairman Norman Garden
City of San Gabriel
Planning Commission

ATTEST: _____
Jackie Wong, Secretary
City of San Gabriel Planning Commission

STAFF ITEM

None

**PLANNING COMMISSION
ITEMS**

None

ADJOURNMENT