

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE FOSTER CITY PLANNING COMMISSION**

Council Chambers – 620 Foster City Boulevard – Foster City

**MINUTES**

**February 1, 2024**

1. CALL TO ORDER

**At 7:00 p.m. by Vice Chair Haddad**

2. ROLL CALL

**Present: Commissioners Pedro, Venkat and Vice Chair Haddad**

**Absent: Commissioners Bronitsky and Jagtiani**

**Staff Present: Sofia Mangalam, Community Development Director, Kevin McGill, Assistant Planner; James Atkins, Senior Planner, and Denise Bazzano, Assistant City Attorney**

3. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

1. None

4. CONSENT CALENDAR

1. MINUTES OF DECEMBER 7, 2023 REGULAR MEETING

ACTION: Motion by Commissioner Venkat, seconded by Commissioner Pedro, Minutes of December 7, 2023 Planning Commission Regular Meeting, passed 3-0-0-2 (Absent: Bronitsky, Jagtiani)

5. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARING

1. None

6. NEW PUBLIC HEARING

1. None

7. OLD BUSINESS

1. None

8. NEW BUSINESS

1. None

9. STUDY SESSION

1. REVIEW, DISCUSS, AND OBTAIN DIRECTION FROM THE PLANNING COMMISSION REGARDING A PROPOSED USE PERMIT REQUEST TO ALLOW A 273 SQUARE FOOT (SF) SINGLE-STORY SUNROOM ADDITION TO AN EXISTING 2,430 SQUARE FOOT TWO-STORY SINGLE-FAMILY WATERFRONT HOME LOCATED AT 980 CUMBERLAND CT. IN NEIGHBORHOOD 8 – APN 094-552-320 – UP2023-0106

Summary of Planning Commission comments:

Commissioner Venkat commented that the term significant is up for interpretation. Based on the mockups and presentation she does not believe there are significant waterfront view impacts. She has seen multiple sunrooms in the area with different designs and sizes. She believes if this sunroom does not deviate and if it is not out of range from existing sunrooms in the area she does not believe there would be significant waterfront view impacts. She understood the need for family members in multigenerational families will most likely may additional space for accessibility needs to accommodate/navigate for a walker, wheelchair etc.

Commissioner Haddad asked the applicant if they could move the sunroom by a couple feet further from 970 Cumberland Ct (to the left when facing rear elevation). The applicant responded that she has a window so she would be able to move it a little closer to her window as possible, maybe a foot.

Question for Commissioners:

Does the Planning Commission feel the proposed sunroom creates a significant waterfront view impact?

Commissioner Pedro does feel that it proposes an impact view to the right out garden window. It would be a significant impact.

Commissioner Venkat commented that the neighbors mentioned that they updated the bay window and if the bay window hadn't been added it wouldn't be an impact, but feels its subjective. She feels that when mentioning an increase or decrease of home value it is also subjective unless there is actual proof or a study done.

Commissioner Haddad had no other questions or comments.

Summary of staff questions:

**Question 1: Does the Planning Commission feel the proposed sunroom creates a significant waterfront view impact?**

Commissioner Venkat does not feel it has significant waterfront view impacts but cannot point to any quantitative data to show that. She knows from being on the path that she had noticed sunrooms of all sizes. She commented that the drawing mockup is opaque and feels more impactful, but the actual sunroom will be glass and will still be able to see view through the sunroom and will have light.

Commissioner Pedro does feel that it does significantly impact the view and would effect views from the backyard deck as well. He also feels it could impact the value of the property.

Commissioner Haddad feels that it will have some impact but not significant. He mentioned the view from the kitchen is very wide and will have one corner cut off but does

not feel the addition will create that much of an impact. He also feels the owner has the right to improve their house. He believes the applicant and neighbor can work it out.

**Question 2: What specific changes, if any, need to be incorporated into the proposed design prior to a Public Hearing?**

Commissioner Pedro can look at design and create a different view corridor, maybe angle the view; maybe sliding it down if it's possible. He would like more thought given to the neighbors view and exploring anything to help mitigate the impact on the neighbor.

Commissioner Venkat commented if applicant is interested they could propose another angle of the sunroom. She also felt it's imperative we keep the processing moving before the 2 year mark of original application.

Commissioner Haddad commented that there are many options to design sunroom to keep everybody happy. He feels it is best to leave it to staff to work it out between now and the Public Hearing.

2. REVIEW, DISCUSS, AND OBTAIN DIRECTION FROM THE PLANNING COMMISSION REGARDING A PROPOSED ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW REQUEST TO ALLOW THE DEMOLITION OF A 1,540 SQUARE FOOT ONE-STORY EICHLER-STYLE SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSE AND CONSTRUCT A NEW 2,304 SQUARE FOOT ONE-STORY CONTEMPORARY-STYLE SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSE LOCATED AT 925 GULL AVE IN NEIGHBORHOOD 2 – APN 094-212-750 – AR2023-0037

Questions/Comments from Commissioners:

Commissioner Pedro had no questions. He drove by the site and there were four Eichlers in a row and noticed it was a traditional area with a cool mix of Foster City homes. He believes there is a lot of opportunity for the applicant.

Commissioner Venkat stated she does not have any issues with what is proposed but did ask if this was the first time that an applicant has completely demolished and built a new home.

*Director Mangalam answered that we could not find an instance where an Eichler was demolished and rebuilt. She said there was only one which was a house damaged by a fire. She said, there is no precedent to review a demolition of an Eichler with new design like this.*

Commissioner Venkat asked about an issue that was raised about this house being used for short term rental.

*Assistant Planner McGill confirmed the house had been listed on AirBNB and was brought to staff's attention. He advised the owner and applicant that we do not allow short term rentals in Foster City. The posting has since been removed and is not posted for short term rental.*

Venkat asked if owner currently lives in house.

*Assistant Planner McGill responded the owner plans to move into the residence after construction but the current house is not big enough to accommodate their family.*

Commissioner Haddad had no questions.

Commissioner Venkat commented that she works from home 5-days a week and that there is noise around her but feels that this is the way that things are going to be over the next few years, especially due to the pandemic and remote work and multigenerational families. She feels that many of the older homes in Foster City will not be able to meet the needs of families. She does not have any issues, but feels she cannot refer to any specific guideline we have.

Commissioner Pedro had no questions.

Commissioner Haddad had no questions.

Summary of staff questions:

**Question 1: What design criteria should staff use to review proposed demolition of an existing single-family home and construction of a new single-family home?**

Commissioner Pedro feels it should be consistent with the neighborhood.

Commissioner Venkat feels it should be consistent but the size itself is not a drastic change nor is the material being proposed. She has seen homes, not new construction, but additions with similar styles.

Commissioner Haddad feels staff is familiar enough to make the determination.

**Question 2: Does the Planning Commission, feel the proposed design would be consistent with the existing neighborhood?**

Commissioner Venkat feels it will be consistent.

Commissioner Pedro feels it will be consistent.

Commissioner Hadad feels it will be an improvement.

**Question 3: Would the Planning Commission require the proposed new house to have Eichler-style elements included in the design?**

Commissioner Pedro does not have to one particular style as long as it's consistent with the neighborhood.

Commissioner Venkat does not think it should have Eichler style elements unless the applicants wants them.

Commissioner Haddad commented it does not have to have Eichler style elements. He looks for new styles in Foster City including contemporary or modern styles.

**Question 4: What specific changes, if any, need to be incorporated into the proposed design prior to a Public Hearing.**

Commissioner Pedro cannot think of anything. As long as it complies with Health and Safety requirements but feels considerations should be given to extra green build ideas.

Commissioner Venkat had no additional changes but also feels any green additions to home would be a nice addition.

Commissioner Haddad had no specific design in mind and will leave it to design team. He is in favor of improvements in Foster City and is in favor of this proposal.

3. REVIEW, DISCUSS, AND OBTAIN DIRECTION FROM THE PLANNING COMMISSION REGARDING A PROPOSED ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW REQUEST TO ALLOW FOR A PROPOSED FIRST STORY REMODEL AND A 1,548 SQUARE FOOT (SF) SECOND-STORY ADDITION TO AN EXISTING 2,402 SQUARE FOOT SINGLE-STORY HOME LOCATED AT 919 FLYING FISH STREET IN NEIGHBORHOOD 2 – APN 094-231-320 – AR2023-0046

Questions from Commissioners:

Commissioner Venkat had no questions.

Commissioner Pedro had no questions.

Commissioner Haddad had no questions.

Commissioner Venkat commented about the metal seam roof being more durable and energy efficient.

Commissioner Pedro had no comments.

Commissioner Haddad had no comments

Summary of staff questions:

**Question 1: When a “high-use” space includes multiple window and door openings on multiple wall planes/elevations into the same space, should staff make a determination of significance based upon the impacts made on one (1) wall plane, or the aggregate impacts of wall planes into the space?**

*Director Mangalam clarified the question and asked the Commissioners if we should we make a determination on the aggregate of windows on both sides or the impact on one specific plane for these kitchen windows in the corner.*

Commissioner Pedro felt the aggregate is the way to go and felt the purpose of the analysis and solar impacts was to decide if it decreases light into the room. Since it's a corner window and there are other windows that are not affected then light into the room would not be an issue. Staff should look at aggregate of light into the room.

Commissioner Venkat also felt we should look at aggregate impacts of wall plane into space.

Commissioner Haddad agreed aggregate impacts is what needs to be looked into.

**Question 2: What specific changes, if any, need to be made to the proposed additions' design prior to a public hearing?**

Commissioner Venkat had no specific changes.

Commissioner Pedro had no specific changes.

Commissioner Haddad had no specific changes and will defer to staff to look into design.

#### 10. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR REPORT

1. Director Mangalam gave the commissioners an update on Housing Element and mentioned the seven day review period and also that it was sent to HCD for review. She also mentioned staff is working on overhaul of the Signage Ordinance and a survey has gone out to the business community. She mentioned there is dedicated webpage for the Sign Ordinance Update and asked if they would take the survey. She also noted that she appreciated all of the input we've received from businesses and the residential community. She is looking forward to the Housing Implementation work and advised that some of the policies will be brought to the Planning Commissioners.

#### 11. STATEMENTS AND REQUESTS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS

1. Commissioner Venkat thanked staff and fellow Planning Commissioners and all of the public speakers. Wanted to remind everyone it's Black History month, and to let everyone know there is a Black History museum in Redwood City. She also mentioned Lunar New Year is coming up on February 10<sup>th</sup>. She wishes everyone a prosperous, healthy and happy Lunar New year.
2. Commissioner Pedro thanked staff for the staff reports and the quality of the staff in the City. He appreciates everything staff is doing with the Housing Element and would be great to have that completed. He stated that as a City, the time is appropriate that we sit down and strategically plan Foster City and come up with specific plans for the next wave. He feels it is not too soon to do some real specific planning for specific sites. He mentioned how the residents like to be involved and that we should invite the residents to help plan the future of the city.
3. Commissioner Haddad thanked staff for great reports and appreciates the hard work. He also looks forward to getting the Housing Element approved.

#### 12. ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned at 8:21 p.m. to a Regular Meeting on February 1, 2024, Council Chambers, 620 Foster City Boulevard, Foster City, California.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Planning Commission of the City of Foster City at a Regular Meeting thereof held on February 15, 2024 by the following vote:

AYES, COMMISSIONERS:

NOES, COMMISSIONERS:

ABSTAIN, COMMISSIONERS:

ABSENT, COMMISSIONERS:

RAVI JAGTIANI, CHAIR

ATTEST:

SOFIA MANGALAM, SECRETARY