

COMMISSION MEMBERS
Ramiro Maldonado, Chair
Margaret Williams, Vice Chair
John Ebnetter
Adam Nugent
Seema Patel

**City of San Mateo
Regular Meeting Minutes
Planning Commission**

City Hall
330 W. 20th Avenue
San Mateo CA 94403
www.cityofsanmateo.org

**Tuesday, September 14, 2021
Remote 7:00 PM
Regular Meeting**

CALL TO ORDER

This meeting is being held under the provisions of State of California Governor Gavin Newsom's Executive Order N-29-20; in which Brown Act regulations are relaxed to allow members to remote in due to the Coronavirus Covid-19 health emergency.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

Remote: Vice-Chair Margaret Williams, and Commissioners John Ebnetter, Adam Nugent and Seema Patel
Absent: Chair Ramiro Maldonado,

PUBLIC COMMENT

Richard Hedges commented on his appreciation for retired Commissioner Etheridge's service to the community as a Planning Commissioner.

STUDY SESSION

1. Pre-Application Review for a Proposed Five-Story Mixed-Use Building at 222 E. 4th Avenue (Draeger's Grocery)

Associate Planner, Wendy Lao presented an overview of the proposed project seeking direction on the following items: Site plan - The configuration of the site, including the proposed street loading zone for the grocery store and separated bike lane along B Street; Building Design - The architectural design, building materials, and compatibility with the Downtown Retail Core.

Applicant, Marcus Gilmour with Lane Partners presented a timeline of the project's progression and more details of the site plan and architectural design. Marcus also introduced Sheryl Klein with Alta Housing who is partnering with Lane Partners on the affordable housing of this project.

Commissioners Questions: Commissioners had questions regarding current grocery store size vs. proposed: possibility of using mechanical lifts for parking vs. valet parking: possibility of assistance for funding from affordable housing organization to add more housing to project.

Public Comment: Ranul Bahadur had questions about the configuration of the office space and about the access to the proposed open space by upper floors. Richard Hedges liked the design, supported Draeger's as a tenant and had concerns about the loading zone configuration and pedestrian/bicycle access on B St.. Drew mentioned other ethnic grocers in the area and did not like the configuration of loading on B St. and felt the proposed configuration of Ellsworth as 2-way street was too narrow. Steve Sirianni liked the overall proposed design and saw no issues with the proposed B St. configuration for biking and pedestrian traffic. Laurie Watanuki liked the design, would like more details on proposed pedestrian walkway/bike lane/loading zone and suggested truck restriction on side streets.

Cameron Plamer likes the design and hopes the loading zone/bike/pedestrian configuration can be resolved for the grocery store. Veril Phillip, resident of Gramercy felt it is important to keep Draeger's but felt a big concern would be increased traffic and safety for pedestrians on 5th Ave., suggests a traffic light be put in place for pedestrian safety at 5th and Ellsworth. Raayan Mohtashemi feels it is imperative that a grocery store is maintained at this project, felt proposed parking garage is over-sized, loading zone issues can be worked out, in favor of more family size housing at this site, does not like the design. Michael Weinbauer is in favor of housing at this site but would like to see 2 and 3 bedroom apartments included vs. micro units, feels that having a grocery store is imperative to project, suggests decreasing parking garage spaces, in favor of keeping delivery trucks on main streets to decrease noise, and feels that design is uninspired. Mr. Ferrari, a Gramercy resident, feels that this project will have the negative impact of traffic congestion and noise and that the parking garage should move to Ellsworth. Dan likes design, and would love to see Draeger's as part of this project, is ok with loading zone and feels that overall this project will benefit downtown and the residents of San Mateo. Robert Love and Mrs. Love had questions about the estimated time for construction and hours permitted for construction. They also felt that there would be increased traffic on 5th and that the parking garage had too many spaces. Koija Schluetter likes the design and that the proposed project would retain a grocery store. Diana is in support of the project and is in support of Draeger's as part of the project and likes that they are good feature of downtown and good to their employees.

Commissioners Comments: Commissioners agreed on the benefit of a grocery store at this project and overall project architectural design and is compatible with downtown retail core. Commissioners suggested expanding living walls and adding trees on B St. There was interest to work on the loading zone/bike lane/pedestrian walkway on B St. and the possibility of changing locations of the loading zone to Ellsworth to alleviate the traffic on B St. and provide for safety of pedestrians and bicyclists. Most commissioners would like to see more housing at this location and/or 2 and 3 bedroom units and would be interested in maximizing density and height to provide more housing. All commissioners commented that this and all future projects need to be cognizant of jobs/housing imbalance and how to create a balance in San Mateo.

2. Pre-Application Review for a Proposed Five-Story Mixed-Use Building at 500 E. 3rd Ave. (Block 21)

Senior Planner, Rendell Bustos presented an overview of the proposed project seeking direction on the following items: Building Design – Overall architectural style and neighborhood compatibility; Site plan -Density Bonus Concession request and effect on proposed design. Applicant, Mike Fields with Windy City Property Ventures also provided a more detailed overview of the history of the project, architectural style and detailed site plan.

Commissioner Questions: Commissioners had questions about potential bike lane on Delaware, clarification of numbers of residential units and potential density bonus residential units, parking garage spaces ratio clarification, housing/jobs ratio balance, dimension of walls in courtyard between units, possible Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEEDS Silver) certification and questions about historical significance of proposed buildings that would be replaced by this project.

Public Comments: Rahul Bahadur expressed his concern for lack of housing in San Mateo and this development, likes that it is located close to Caltrain and potential for commuters, suggested public art and murals for common areas. Richard Hedges in favor of adding higher height for more housing, likes design and expressed the importance of a grocery store. Erica Powell appreciates design and feels that the 68 units is a great addition and feels that biking lane and loading zone are safe for pedestrians and bicyclists. Laurie Watanuki likes the architecture, requesting traffic study for intersections at 3rd, 4th, 5th and 9th and South Humboldt and South Delaware, concerned about congestion, traffic and safety for pedestrians and bicyclists. Diana had concerns about size of units proposed and feels that considerations need to be made for families, also concerned about congestion and traffic in downtown due to more construction.

Commissioners Comments: All Commissioners are in favor of height concession and would even like a larger height concession to see more housing. Commissioners expressed concerns that proposed project needs more housing including below market housing and 2 and 3-bedroom units to accommodate families. Most Commissioners liked the design but would like further considerations to specifics of design elements, site lines for bicycle and pedestrian safety, consideration to the character of neighborhood. Other concerns where jobs/housing ratio and the creation of balanced growth in San Mateo. There was also discussion amongst the commissioners about this and future projects and their impact on the neighborhood both to individuals, businesses, and city.

REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CDD Deputy Director, Zachary Dahl, provided updates on items for future Planning Commission meetings.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 11:43 pm.

APPROVED BY:

Margaret Williams
Margaret Williams, Commission Vice-Chair

SUBMITTED BY:

Mary D. Way
Mary Way, Administrative Assistant