

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING AND  
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LOS ALTOS, HELD ON  
THURSDAY, JULY 05, 2012, BEGINNING AT 7:00 P.M. AT LOS ALTOS CITY HALL,  
ONE NORTH SAN ANTONIO ROAD, LOS ALTOS, CALIFORNIA**

**ROLL CALL**

PRESENT: Commissioners BAER, BRESSACK, BODNER, CHIANG, MOISON, and  
McTIGHE  
ABSENT: Commissioner JUNAID  
STAFF: Planning Services Manager KORNFIELD

**PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

None.

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

1. **Planning Commission Minutes**  
Recommendation to approve the minutes of the June 21, 2012 regular meeting.

MOTION by Commissioner MOISON, seconded by Commissioner BODNER, to approve the minutes of the June 21, 2012 regular meeting as amended by Commissioner BAER. Due to a non-action vote of 3/0/3, with Commissioners BRESSACK, CHIANG, and McTIGHE abstaining, Commissioner MOISON amended his motion to approve the minutes as to form only.

MOTION by Commissioner MOISON, seconded by Commissioner BODNER, to approve the minutes of the June 21, 2012 regular meeting “as to form” and as amended by Commissioner BAER. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**DISCUSSION**

2. **Commission Reorganization**

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER BODNER, for Commissioner MOISON to be the Planning and Transportation Commission Chair. COMMISSIONER MOISON declined the nomination.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER MOISON, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BODNER, for Commissioner BRESSACK to be the Planning Commission Chair. Commissioner McTIGHE concurred with the nomination. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER BAER, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER McTIGHE, to nominate Commissioner MOISON to be the new Planning and Transportation Commission Vice-Chair. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

## STUDY SESSION

### 3. 11-D-09 - The Jeff Morris Group, Inc. - 400 Main Street

The developer and project architect presented a modified site plan and design in response to the prior Architecture and Site Review Committee input. The revised plan included an expanded courtyard between the buildings and revised building elevations adding smaller scale architectural elements at the courtyard, additional benches in the courtyard along the sidewalk, arched building elements at the first story to emphasize the horizontal aspects of the building, enhanced stairway entry tower elements on the First Street and Foothill Expressway elevations, lower walls and additional landscape at the Foothill Expressway corner, additional store front windows on the Main Street elevation, and enhanced building colors. The developer stated that it was his goal to provide a code-compliant project and that he was seeking no development incentives.

Commissioner input included:

1. A concern about the possible need to restrict pedestrian access from the sidewalk to the street and adjacent parking plaza to enhance safety; a suggestion to add balconies to enhance the Foothill elevation for interest and building users; a suggestion that the project needs destination uses such as plazas, water features and extra parking;
2. A necessary balance between the public, Commission and developer expectations; a liking of the colors, window changes, landscape, courtyard design and smaller scale massing at the courtyard; a concern to add more public use elements such as a water feature, public art, more connectivity to the sidewalk, and to provide more bike racks in active locations;
3. A support for the retail emphasis and warmer color palate, a desire for a lower apparent building plate at the first story, a suggestion to make the architecture more distinctive or reflective of the historic buildings, a question how to make the design and site plan more inviting such as by adding balconies and other elements focused on pedestrian interest, a desire to make the courtyard more public in use, a consideration to add more parking for public benefit, a support for the smaller scale building elements and a more varied roof design; and a concern about the tower element facing the Main/First Street corner;
4. An appreciation for the proposed changes and the project's retail emphasis at the Main Street and First Street corner (as opposed to an open plaza at the corner), and a desire for more parking spaces such by adding a second garage level;
5. A recognition of the improved courtyard design but a concern to add more public uses or elements, a need to improve the bicycle access and parking, a desire to add more exciting elements, a concern to add more details about the signage, and suggestion to use the rooftop area such as with a deck;
6. That the two story massing was appropriate, the open courtyard was brilliant, that the scale of the rear elevations needed to be improved along the lines of the reduced scale and interest of the First Street elevations, that the courtyard location was good with respect to the site plan

and surroundings; that public art should be considered at the Main/First Street corner; that bike racks should be creatively incorporated; and that the tower facing the Main/First Street intersection was appropriate.

Public comment included:

1. That the project should provide 3D renderings and respond to community needs and concerns such as with a strong design with a prominent urban design element such as with a plaza facing Main Street;
2. That a three-story design would provide more opportunities for public open space, balconies and more efficient office space; and that fewer parking spaces would be good trade-off for public benefits;
3. That three-story designs are appropriate and that the public uses open spaces for community events;
4. That the project should look to the future uses and not restrict itself by adjacent land uses; that the rear elevation should be improved and that more public spaces should be included; and that the courtyard was not a public space;
5. That the project should have more open space and provide opportunities for public art;
6. A suggestion to include a larger public plaza near Parking Plaza No. 4 where the activity is in adjacent public spaces, more parking and an enhanced crosswalk connection to Parking Plaza No. 4;
7. A reiteration that 3D images and shade studies are necessary; a concern about taller walls facing the Foothill Expressway corner; and a suggestion that a public plaza such as in the original site plan was the best approach.

Commissioner direction included:

1. Provide 3D images from each perspective; articulate the building massing to smaller scale elements; consider more diverse architecture; that three-story solutions would slow the development review process; more parking should be provided at-grade; public art should be included; the landscape should be more open along Foothill Expressway so that the signage and building is more prominent; and that more benches or other public use elements should be included;
2. That three-stories might be appropriate because of the importance of the uniquely prominent site (but not elsewhere); that the project should incorporate more community space and public art;
3. That three-stories near State Street was more appropriate; that a wider sidewalk area should be provided across from Parking Plaza No. 4; and that a more diverse but related design theme should be used for both buildings;
4. That the courtyard would invite a higher quality restaurant use; that more public space amenities are needed such as for public art and sidewalk furniture; that the Foot hill Expressway building elevation needed more attention; that more bicycle provisions were necessary; and that three-story massing and higher ceilings are necessary to attract higher quality building tenants;
5. That 3D modeling and virtual computer generations are important tools to apply to the project; that more active public spaces are desired; that a third story was acceptable as long as

- the relative building intensity was kept to an appropriate level; and that more parking was desired and would qualify as a key public benefit;
6. That three-story development might be acceptable if it was justified by the public benefits; and
  7. That 3D modeling was desired but should only follow clear direction from the Commission; that the taller elements should be more impressive.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair BRESSACK adjourned the meeting at 9:40 PM.

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David Kornfield, AICP  
Planning Services Manager