



PLANNING COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES EXCERPTS

May 28, 2020

THOMAS EARL HOUSE BED & BREAKFAST – 1221 SEMINARY STREET (File No. PL18-0212) A Planned Development Overlay and Use Permit to convert an existing historic residence to a Bed and Breakfast Inn with ten guest rooms. The project involves converting the existing 1,834 square foot Thomas Earl House residence to a Bed and Breakfast Inn by adding 1,292 square feet to the rear of the structure and adding a 3,803 square foot basement. Two new structures, a 2,030 square foot two-story carriage house and a 432 square foot cottage, would be added to the site as part of the proposed Bed and Breakfast. The Planned Development Overlay would allow for parking in the front setback, reduced rear yard and side setbacks and a higher fence in the front setback. The site is located on the west side of Seminary Street between Calistoga Avenue and Polk Street and is located within the Traditional Residential General Plan Designation (TRI-143) and the Traditional Residential Infill Zoning District (RT-5).

Commissioners provided disclosures.

Assistant Planner Elena Barragan presented the Staff Report and provided a recommendation.

The Commission had the following questions and comments for Staff:

- What is the height of carriage house, cottage and existing structure?
- Clarification was requested on the changes made since the previous preliminary hearing.
- Clarification was requested regarding whether design review was a component to review.
- Clarification was requested regarding the existing structure would still move forward.
- Clarification was requested regarding how many parking spaces would be available on the street.

Ms. Barragan responded:

- The existing structure is approximately 25 feet in height, and the carriage house approximately 23'10", and the cottage is approximately 15 feet.
- The original proposal included six-foot high wrought iron fencing across the front property line, different materials and design for the accessory structures, removal of the Cypress towers on front property line and relocated in front of cottage, and reduction of the size of the basement.
- Design review is not a component of review for Planning Commission, as the Cultural Heritage Commission reviewed a Certificate of Appropriateness for changes made to a historic resource.
- The structure is proposed to move approximately 12 feet toward Seminary Street.
- Approximately four spaces could fit on the street, however; the intention is to use only the off-street parking.

Chair Huether invited the Applicant to speak.

Marc Porat, the Applicant, briefed the Commission on background relating to the application and offered to answer Commissioner questions.

The Commission had the following questions and comments for the Applicant:

- What are the methods in marketing which encourage ride-sharing or van pooling?

Mr. Porat responded to Commissioner questions:

- Shelley Wolfe, who prepared parking study, identified that the groups who would utilize the site noted ride share as a common mode of transportation. Prior to Covid-19, ridesharing was predominant, but in the event that there are more vehicles proposed, the staff has been instructed to notify the client to limit the number of cars to six, and would offer sending a car to retrieve clients to limit number of vehicles.

Chair Huether opened the item for Public Hearing.

June Beeler, spoke of her concerns regarding rehabilitation standards, evaluation report, CEQA exemptions, and landscaping.

Paul Wagner, spoke of his concerns regarding parking, removal of large trees, adding a major corporate retreat will make it worse, not a residential project.

After receiving no further comments, the Public Hearing was closed.

Chair Huether invited the Applicant to present rebuttal and respond to questions.

Mr. Porat provided clarification the project is a rehabilitation project in regard to the Secretary of Interior's Standards, Paul Kelley, Bruce Judd and himself reviewed the project, evaluated the new proposals and each time determined that it was consistent, which the Cultural Heritage Commission also recommended approval. The second comment Mr. Porat clarifies these guests are not tourists, they are there to work, and this would be a quiet place, no events, no weddings, emphasis placed on a quiet environment. This is not a business hotel, this will be for small groups to solve specific issues. Mr. Porat also added that the trees are not historic, and that the tree is approaching end of life. Mr. Porat ended his comment and stated he has a lot of respect of the Calistoga Avenue Historic District, and pointed that there are varied uses in the area.

Commissioners offered the following comments and questions from Staff:

- Clarification on CEQA exemptions.

Planning Manager, Erin Morris

- The comment was whether or not the project meets the Secretary of Interior Standards, that is not the matter before PC, that was a matter for CHC which was already addressed by the CHC meeting and found that the City Council could make that finding.

Commissioners discussed and began deliberation. Commissioners offered the following final comments and questions:

- Acknowledges hard work the Applicant has gone through the last three years and acknowledge that the structure is one of 16 homes is on the National Register of Historic Places.
- Historic Report was very thorough in looking at Secretary of Interior Standards
- The notion of the use, residential retreat a small facility as a think tank to innovators, is exciting

- A use that would generate minimal traffic.
- Parking should be evaluated, after one year of occupancy to determine compliance, an administrative report to the Commission whether or not the seven parking spaces were sufficient.
- Excited to have an economic engine to support the vitality of the structure.

Ms. Barragan and Mr. Allen provided the following clarifications:

- The Applicant provided as part of their submittal a parking study that demonstrated the amount of parking necessary would not exceed six spaces, they are providing seven.
- The operations manual submitted as also an attachment shows how parking will operate and a condition of approval is in place so that parking is administered in that manner.

Commissioner Murray moved to forward a recommendation Seconded by Chair Painter to the City Council, approving a Planned Development Overlay, Use Permit for the Thomas Earl House Bed and Breakfast and determining that the action is exempt from the requirements of CEQA with the condition that parking be evaluated after a year of occupancy to the Planning Commission.

Motion carried:

AYES: Murray, Huether, Painter, Onate
NOES:
ABSTAIN:
ABSENT:
RECUSED: Kelley