

TOWN OF LOS GATOS
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SUMMARY MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE GENERAL PLAN COMMITTEE OF THE TOWN OF LOS GATOS **SEPTEMBER 26, 2007** HELD IN THE TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CIVIC CENTER, 110 EAST MAIN STREET, LOS GATOS, CALIFORNIA.

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm by *Chair Jane Ogle*.

ATTENDANCE

Members present: *Joe Pirzynski, John Bourgeois, Tom O'Donnell, Marcia Jensen, Jane Ogle and Joanne Talesfore*

Members absent: *Barbara Cardillo, Barbara Spector and Margaret Smith*

Staff present: *Bud Lortz, Community Development Director; Randy Tsuda, Assistant Community Development Director; Curtis Banks, Project Planner and Sandy Baily, Associate Planner.*

ITEM 1 506 UNIVERSITY AVENUE

The applicant described the proposal. *Talesfore* commented that the proposal had been reviewed by CDAC and HPC. Both groups supported the applicant's concept and were pleased that the pre-1941 home was being saved. Commissioner *Bourgeois* asked if the applicant considered a multi-family project behind the existing home. The applicant discussed the options that had been considered and why three single family lots were proposed.

Lortz commented that while the variance for lot size requested by the applicant is not part of the review to be considered by the Committee, that there are no special circumstances associated with lot configuration or topography and staff cannot recommend the necessary findings to support the variance.

Bourgeois commented that there is a lack of owner occupied low income housing and did not like reducing the density on this site. *O'Donnell* was not concerned about the loss of one unit that could occur if a single family development is approved instead of a higher density project, but is concerned about the loss of the opportunity of a relatively affordable housing opportunity. He also noted that the applicant has proceeded in conformance with direction provided by CDAC and was reluctant to recommend a different approach.

Pirzynski expressed his support of the proposal.

Jenson moved and *Pirzynski* seconded to recommend approval of the General Plan Amendment and Zone Change. Support is based on the project resulting in one less housing unit than allowed by the existing General Plan and Zoning, the applicant retaining the existing pre-1941 home, and

the scale and design of the proposed units providing a logical transition from the single family homes along University Avenue to the multi-family developments along Towne Terrace.

Motion passed 5-1 (Bourgeois opposed).

ITEM 2 RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

Lortz gave an overview.

- **Applicability**

The Committee accepted the wording prepared by staff for sloping lots outside of the Hillside Area.

Ogle expressed concern that the wording had a legalistic tone and she didn't want this carried over in the rest of the document.

- **Definition of Neighborhood**

The Committee accepted the paragraph insert prepared by staff with the change of the word "improved" to "altered" or "remodeled".

The Committee agreed that consideration should also be given to houses located to the rear.

- **Cellars**

The Committee concurred that the sentence recommended by staff should be inserted in the document. The Committee agreed that the cellar information would be lost in the bullets of the text and should be kept where it is in the document and added to the sidebar.

- **Sustainability**

Lortz stated that this issue will be dealt with further during the General Plan update process.

Pirzynski discussed the pros and cons of governing green building. Stated that the market is taking the lead on green building and sustainability. Was hesitant to impose a regulatory approach. Felt that the Town should promote green building, not mandate it. The product will need to be compatible with the structure, which will force companies to develop better products in the future.

Bourgeois felt this was true for big developers. However, in the interim, the average homeowner will need incentives to build green.

Jensen expressed concern that the public will take the matter to heart and will propose products that are not compatible with the house or neighborhood. Suggested that the details be in an appendix instead of the document.

Bourgeois stated that the information regarding solar panels should be in the green building section as opposed to a separate heading. A bullet should be added regarding water concerns relating to drought issues and the use of grey water. Noted that on Page 35 of the document, strategies should be consistent (ie: the words "use" and "consider" should be consistent).

ITEM 3 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Bourgeois moved to approve the minutes of August 22, 2007 with the correction that Marcia Jensen was absent from that meeting. *O'Donnell* seconded, motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 4 VERBAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Ray Davis expressed concern over the large houses being approved with large cellars. Stated that this needed to be further discussed and that standards are needed regarding this issue and community values.

Jerome Durant stated that in regards to sustainability, historic preservation is the greenest way to go. The Committee agreed and stated that this will be included in the document.

Lee Quintana questioned what the most cost effective green building techniques were that do not change the character of the neighborhood. Solar panels should be the last consideration. Public education on the matter is very important. Quintana agreed with the comments made regarding sustainability. Did not get a good sense that the Town was trying to save one story neighborhoods. In regards to how to read a neighborhood, Quintana felt that the emphasis should be on the style and scale first and the architectural details and window trim should be secondary.

ITEM 5 ADJOURNMENT

O'Donnell moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:50 p.m. *Pirzynski* seconded, motion passed unanimously. The next meeting of the General Plan Committee is tentatively scheduled for October 11, 2007.

Prepared by:


Curtis Banks, Project Planner
Sandy L. Bally, Associate Planner