



ANNOTATED AGENDA

SPECIAL JOINT MEETING OF THE CITY OF CONCORD HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE WITH THE PLANNING COMMISSION AND DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

****PLEASE NOTE SPECIAL MEETING TIME****

Wednesday, April 6, 2022
6:30 p.m. – Council Chamber
1950 Parkside Drive, Concord

Housing and Economic Development

Committee:

Dominic Aliano, Mayor
Tim McGallian, Councilmember

Planning Commission Members:

Craig Mizutani, Chair
Jason Laub, Vice Chair
Ray Barbour, Commissioner

John Mercurio, Commissioner
Mark Weinmann, Commissioner

Design Review Board Members:

Kirk Shelby, Chair
Jack Moore, Vice Chair

Suzanne Alaksa, Board Member

JOINT MEETING 6:30 p.m. – Council Chamber

I. ROLL CALL:

Members Present: Dominic Aliano, Tim McGallian, Planning Commission Chair Mizutani, Commissioner Barbour, Commissioner Mercurio, and Commissioner Weinmann and Design Review Board Chair Shelby and Vice-Chair Moore.

Staff Present: Justin Ezell, Joan Ryan, Frank Abejo, Tom Capriola.
Audience in Attendance: 1 person

II. PLEDGE TO THE FLAG – *The pledge was led by Chair Mizutani.*

III. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD – *None.*

IV. ADDITIONS / CONTINUANCES / WITHDRAWALS – *None*

V. SPECIAL JOINT MEETING / STUDY SESSION

Objective Design Standards Presentation and Discussion – An overview will be provided of the City’s recently initiated project to prepare Objective Design Standards. The overview will include: 1) the project’s goals, 2) the timeline, 3) initial tasks, 4) outreach, and 5) the City’s relevant design documents. In addition, the project team is interested in a dialogue with the Housing and Economic Development Committee, Planning Commission, and Design Review Board regarding their experiences in the review of planning projects, and the implementation and incorporation of the City’s design guidelines into development projects, as well as to obtain policy direction from the group on key items. The project’s goals are to support and facilitate Concord’s tradition of high quality design while assisting in the creation of streamlined housing implementation, consistent with State Law. **Planning Contact: Joan Ryan @ (925) 671-3370 or joan.ryan@cityofconcord.org**

ACTION: Project planner, Joan Ryan, Principal Planner provided a brief introduction and then turned it over to the consultant Mukul Malhotra, to provide background on the issue and led the group through MIG’s power point presentation.

The presentation was followed by questions by the HED, Planning Commission and Design Review Board.

Public comment: Paul Kephart of North Todos Santos area, noted his belief that the NTS district should have its own standards.

Comments were then provided by the joint group – see minutes attached.

VI. STAFF REPORTS / ANNOUNCEMENTS - None

VII. ADJOURNMENT – 9:12 p.m.

NEXT PLANNING COMMISSION MEETINGS:

April 11, 2022: 6:30 pm – Council Chambers – Special Meeting
April 20, 2022: 6:30 pm – Council Chambers – Regular Meeting

NEXT DESIGN REVIEW BOARD MEETINGS:

April 14, 2022: 5:30 pm – Permit Center Conference Room
April 28, 2022: 5:30 pm – Permit Center Conference Room

ODS Joint Special Meeting Minutes #1 – (HED, Planning Commission, Design Review Board)

April 6, 2022, 6:30 pm. – Council Chamber

Summary Minutes

Staff in attendance: Justin Ezell, Tom Capriola, Frank Abejo, Joan Ryan

Consultant: Mukul Malhotra, Principal, MIG

One member of the public, Paul Kephart in attendance

Pledge – Mayor requested the pledge be led by Chair Mizutani.

Roll call - All members on agenda in attendance, with exception of Jason Laub and Suzanne Alaksa

Joint Study Session - Joan Ryan, project manager for the ODS project provided a brief introduction, thanked all for their attendance, anticipated a 10-month project, noted there will be other opportunities to provide input and that there would be a follow-up DRB/PC joint workshop in May with a full Council session later in the Summer. She then introduced Mukul Mulhotra as the Principal at MIG, as the presenter for the evening. She indicated the primary purpose of the meeting was to hear their feedback and experiences with reviewing the design of projects within the City.

Mr. Mulhotra provided his presentation – PowerPoint provided to participants in advance of the meeting.

Questions/Discussion

- Infill Development in Existing Areas
 - Small lots
 - 1 vs. 2-story
 - Adjoining Single Family (generally single-story) developments
- Contextual Response
 - Give + take
 - Look at particular districts
- 4-sided architecture
 - Sides/fronts
 - Relevance
 - Context
 - Building offsets
 - Opportunities
 - Major corridors
- Approval Process
 - Preliminary Design at initial advisory level.
 - Style vs. ‘Good looking’
 - Don’t pin into a particular architectural style
 - Texture
- 2-story in one story development
 - Respect existing neighbourhood

- Change in styles over a period of time
- Designate districts
 - 1) Downtown
 - 2) Corridor
 - 3) Residential
 - 4) Infill
- ODS Elements of Importance
 - Relief
 - Detail
 - Transitional treatment
 - Different roof pitch (Discussion of 'half stories')
 - Discussion of different projects, i.e. Eichlers, Wisteria near Safeway
 - Sight lines from public road
 - Sight lines from behind house; changing adjacent uses
- Prescribe Variations (in long buildings)
- Variety at different levels
- Elements
 - Dormers
 - Roof pitch
- Themes
 - Variety
 - Diversity of product
 - Consideration of 'fit' and surrounding neighbourhood.
 - History/Heritage preservation
 - Finding Balance
 - Get it Right – this is something we will be living with “legacy” that will shape appearance of City of Concord Good Objective Standards- If replacing existing review process.
 - Look at good examples, avoid mistakes/pitfalls of other cities
 - Continue conversations; going to neighborhoods
 - Keep local control to degree possible
- ODS in Infill – Spirit of Law
- Standards in a non-standard environment – *Reasonable*
- Keeping Affordability while Developing Standards – *Affordable by Design*
- Walk the fine line between Good Design and Flexibility –
- Don't be too restrictive – *Encourage Good Design (ex: Chestnut Development)*
- Percentage of developments to be single-story
- Define Design Districts/Areas
- Allowed to do or not do – *Control Parameters*
- Walkable/bikeable – Cognizant of sidewalk size - *Promote active sidewalks*
- *Opportunities to Direct development in certain areas*
 - *More flexible in certain areas*
 - *Coordinate with Housing Element*
 - *Spread diversity in neighborhoods.*

Questions continued

- Materials – Depth and structure
- One set of Criteria or more?
 - Craftsman, Ranch, Mission, Farmhouse, how to address style?
 - Downtown vs. City Overall
 - *Local Streets vs. Corridors*
- Building setback (example of Development standard)
- Want to maintain variety (Use of percentages – one approach)
- Relate to Neighborhood Context
- *Simple designs – consider \$ and impact on development*
- *Objective yet Flexible – Is there potential or a method to do both?*
 - *Concern with prescriptive and the issue of being too strict.*
 - *Don't want to short cut Design Review.*
- How to standardize 4-sided architecture?
- Potential for a “Menu Strategy” to assure good design but retain flexibility-want to consider
- ‘Cantebury’ Neighborhood, example of specific design.
- Bike paths adjacent to trees – need standard.
- Small lot detached – side elevation may not be important
- Address turning corners of building (materials wrapping)
- Form over style; Create good texture/fabric of City with good architecture
- Infill Standards – Contextual Variation.
- Renaissance, Wisteria, Gateway Building noted as good examples of form/architecture
- Eichler mentioned in terms of variety, history
- *Dimensions for relief*
- *Context when backing to single family, esp. single-story*
- *If a building burns down, can they go with ODS instead of original design?*

Public Comment

Paul Kephart – Lives north of Downtown – distinction between objective/subjective is important and presentation answered many of his questions. He believes that the historic area North Todos Santos (NTS) should have its own standards. He questioned how the General Plan gets applied.

Comments of the Joint Session

Weinmann – What makes Concord is its architectural diversity. Infill for different areas needs to be considered. For example, the recent Clayton Way project is an example of one that didn't fit.

Barbour – Concerned with the aspect of no public review for these ministerial projects. It's important we get these ODS right for that reason. This will be the legacy for the future in terms of appearance of the City.

Mizutani – prescriptive limits should be considered. Want staff (and Commission?) to look at examples from other cities. It is a process, so want to get it right (limited comment). “Heritage to preserve” some have levelled historic homes (not necessarily in Concord) and built modern, important to find a balance.

Barbour – Thanked staff, noted how much work of staff goes on behind the scenes.

Mayor Aliano – Appreciated the conversation. Wants to keep local control. Communicating with the architects, hearing the communication, experiences was helpful. Listening to the “Menu” concept was interesting. Wants to continue the discussion of what is the balance, will be relying on the PC/DRB to give their comments and shape the project and standards.

Shelby – Infill situations make strict application of standards difficult at times, but balance is needed; don’t want to turn off applicants to not use them and thus not develop within the City. Hard to create standards for non-standard environment. Will not be able to address every situation. Affordability – standards should not drive prices higher; can we do something with affordability in mind.

Moore – Progress is often difficult. This movement is a tough situation for developers, seems as though it may stifle creativity for architects. Keep in mind costs. Façade breaks cost money – need to walk the line and balance. He cautioned be careful about prescribing style; let professionals do their job. Will be walking a tight line between affordability and good design. In listening to the conversation, one approach may be to set a standard for X% of homes in subdivision need to be single story, particularly when infill parcel backing to existing residential.

McGallian – Affordable by design is good approach, likes concept of setting percentage of single story for infill. Chestnut Subdivision is a good example of a project that provided context to neighbourhood. If in downtown, near BART, there won’t be much we can do, want to be clear what we can and can’t control. Massing is important; active sidewalks is important and good for Economic Development. Promote certain standards, such as Trees, but need standards for distance to sidewalks to ensure pedestrians on sidewalks can get by. Want bikeable community.

Shelby – Can we direct development by having easier standards on site that we want to move or promote in certain areas?

Barbour – Spread diversity of product out through neighborhoods, not Crystal Ranch.