

**MANHATTAN BEACH
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
AUGUST 23, 2023**

A. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

A Regular meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Manhattan Beach, California was held in a hybrid format (Zoom and in person at City Hall, 1400 Highland Avenue, and 8111 Douglas Avenue, Dallas, TX, 75225) on the 23rd day of August, 2023. Chair Tokashiki announced protocols and called the meeting to order at the hour of 3:04 p.m.

B. PLEDGE TO FLAG

C. ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Dillavou (remotely), Ungoco, Hackett, Vice Chair Sistos, Chair Tokashiki
Absent: None
Others Present: Talyn Mirzakhianian, Community Development Director
Tari Kuvhenguhwa, Associate Planner
Mark Leyman, Parks and Recreation Director
Erik Zandvliet, City Traffic Engineer
Erick Lee, Public Works Director
Marzena Laskowska, Senior Civil Engineer
Katherine Doherty, City Engineer
Brendan Kearns, Assistant City Attorney
Tatiana Maury, Agenda Host
Rosemary Lackow, Recording Secretary (remote)

Director Mirzakhianian announced that Commissioner Dillavou is participating remotely and the agenda and posting of the agenda was done in accordance with Brown Act requirements.

D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made and seconded (Ungoco/Vice Chair Sistos) to approve the agenda with no changes.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Dillavou, Hackett, Ungoco, Vice Chair Sistos, Chair Tokashiki

Noes: None

Absent: None

Abstain: None

Agenda host Maury announced the motion passed 5-0.

E. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION – None

F. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

8/23/23-1 Regular Meeting – June 14 2023

It was moved and seconded (Hackett/Ungoco) to approve the minutes as submitted.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Chair Tokashiki, Vice Chair Sistos, Commissioners Hackett, Ungoco, Dillavou

Noes: None

Absent: None

Abstain: None

Agenda host Maury announced the motion passed 5-0.

G. PUBLIC HEARING

Consideration of a Use Permit and Coastal Development Permit to demolish an existing approximately 2,573 square-foot community center located at 1617 North Valley Drive, and making an environmental

determination for the project in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (Friends of Senior and Scout Community Center).

Director Mirzakhanian introduced Associate Planner **Tari Kuvhenguwa**, the project planner, who proceeded with a presentation summarizing the staff report and concluding with the staff recommendation: that the Planning Commission CONDUCT the Public Hearing and adopt the attached draft resolution, approving the Use Permit and Coastal Development Permit, subject to conditions, and making a determination of exemption under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The Chair invited the Commission to ask questions of staff.

Staff provided responses regarding the following:

- **Parks and Recreation Programming:** **Director Leyman** noted that space in the new building will be operated similarly to other city facilities and will be rentable. Based on event rentals for the past fiscal year for Joslyn, it is expected that most will be for relatively small scale community groups; a few (5 events) for larger groups (30-50 persons) but very large groups (e.g., wedding receptions) are not anticipated, as alcohol is not permitted. Approximately 1,000 square feet is dedicated for older adult use. Generally, older adult programming will be on weekday mornings up to about 3:00 p.m. with scout programming on weekdays after 3:00 p.m.. A net increase in programming is expected. It is expected that some programs will be reallocated from Joslyn. The rollout of programming for the new building will be done slowly and evolve as the city assesses the community's needs.
- **Parking:** **Director Mirzakhanian** explained that an estimate of the net increase of use of the new building (based on current use) by both older adults and scouts was used to develop the traffic and parking analyses. The existing capacity of the scout house (195 persons) was taken into consideration when developing the conditions of approval to address potential parking impacts. **City Traffic Engineer (CTE) Zandvliet** noted and described condition 21, that requires a parking management plan for relatively large groups during peak periods and conditions 22, 23 and 24 also intended to address parking demand, require: onsite bike racks (no. 22), conversion of existing Valley Drive loading zones to rideshare pick-up and drop-off zones (no. 23) and encouragement of event staff parking in underutilized City parking lots or structures.
- **Proposed Building Front Setback:** **Associate Planner Kuvhenguwa** clarified the proposed and existing front building setbacks in the overview table on page 5 of the staff report, indicating that the existing scout house is farther away from the Valley Drive property line compared to the proposed building.
- **Night Weekend Special Events:** **Associate Planner Kuvhenguwa** pointed out condition 15 of the draft Resolution provides a cap (up to five times per year) for special weekend events that would be allowed to end at 10:00 p.m. as opposed to 8:00 p.m.

Chair Tokashiki pointed out that the current scout house, does not have a use permit and, with the proposal, the city will have a Use Permit, in compliance with all applicable regulations and which will serve as a strong tool to regulate and exercise oversight of the proposed center.

PUBLIC INPUT

Chair Tokashiki invited public comment.

Julie Justus McGinity, representing the not-for-profit applicant Friends of Senior and Scout Community Center, requests approval of the subject use and coastal permits and environmental determination, and is in full agreement with the staff conclusions and recommendations. The new building project has received unanimous support from the city council and the community. The applicant has hosted meetings with the community as well as with representatives of 16th Street residents in order to understand all concerns.

Louie Tomaro, project architect, gave an overview of the plan, emphasizing elements intended to address concerns including: high and limited number of windows and increased second story setback to protect privacy for the adjoining neighborhood to the west, planting of 5 new trees at the front to replace two trees that will be removed, and creating an outdoor space that will allow an existing large pine tree to be retained. Some historically significant materials and items from the existing building (e.g., pinewood derby markers, fireplace flagstone, wall materials and building sign) will be retained and incorporated into the new building. Responding to a question from the Commission, **Director Mirzakhanian** informed that the species and size of the replacement tree has not yet been determined by the Urban Forester

however the recommended size is expected to be 24” or 36” box as this is known to be conducive to thriving after being planted.

Scott Yanovsky, parent, long- time resident and scout leader, understands the parking concern but urged the Commission to approve the project.

Bruce Greenberg, neighbor of the scout house is very supportive of this project but is concerned about the loss of trees, especially the 26” deciduous. He seeks clarification as to how many trees will be removed and why, if the 26” tree will be removed, why wouldn’t the nearby 8” tree also need to be removed?

Emma Gallart stated that she has concerns regarding the project’s impacts to police department response time and she feels that this should be evaluated.

Liz Fatone, Zoom participant, messaged via Agenda Host Maury, a comment that she is supportive of the project but does not think the parking research evaluated parking demand for events with attendance of up to 195 persons and she would like to see consideration for a condition that would cap event attendance at 40-50 persons.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION

Chair Tokashiki, seeing no further input, opened the floor to Commission discussion.

Commissioner Sistos stated that she loves the building and fully supports a new senior and scout facility but is concerned about loss of the large (26-inch) tree and parking impacts. She feels removal of the large deciduous tree is counter to the General Plan and would like to understand better why the removal is needed and would like to explore if there are any creative design solutions that could prevent the tree’s removal. Regarding parking, she is very concerned about the assumptions made for the parking study and the conclusion that there will be surplus parking spaces nearby that can accommodate the project, in particular on weekends especially in the spring when the baseball field in the park is being used all day and there may be a large event at the new building. Concerns about the study assumptions include the fact the parking utilization study was done in October and some assumptions about trip generation, such as the number of vehicles that will need parking for scouting activities.

CTE Zandvliet noted that the timing of the parking utilization study in October was appropriate for the proposed scout and older adult uses and emphasized that the scout house project is responsible for addressing only parking impacts that are directly related to the scout house activities, not existing city parking issues.

Commissioner Hackett stated that her concern regarding parking has been adequately addressed in that the parking study. She remains concerned that seniors may not be able to find parking that is located close enough for their needs but is confident that senior parking can be addressed through one or more solutions perhaps not within the Commission’s purview (e.g., providing crossing guards or shuttle service or adjusting senior programming times and/or number of events).

Commissioner Sistos reiterated that she feels that parking will be a big challenge and is concerned that in mitigating parking for seniors (by reducing programs) this could result in underutilization of the new space.

Commissioner Ungoco is generally supportive of this project and believes that the ability to review a use permit might alleviate some concerns. He suggested adding a condition that automatically requires a review of the use permit after a set period of time.

At 4:19 Chair Tokashiki declared a short recess requested by Director Mirzakhian to allow staff to gather information needed to address expressed concerns.

At 4:26 Chair Tokashiki called the meeting back to order.

Director Mirzakhian commented that new information is available regarding the building front setback and trees.

Associate Planner Tari Kuvhenguwa clarified the existing and proposed front building setbacks for the scout house: the existing scout house is set back 98 feet from the Valley Drive property line, and the proposed building will be set back 54.75 feet.

Director Mirzakhian clarified that the 8-inch tree is recommended to be removed because it is within

the building footprint. It was not mentioned in the staff report because it is not, by virtue of its diameter (less than 12-inches) a protected tree per the Municipal Code. Director Mirzakhonian indicated that in the arborist report, the health of the 26-inch deciduous tree is noted as fair and that current health issues with the tree are not likely to be fatal. Director Mirzakhonian emphasized that, while the 26-inch tree trunk is not within the building footprint, a key issue is damage to the root system below ground that extends out from the tree which is key to its health.

Director Mirzakhonian, in response to Commissioner Ungoco, suggested that the Commission could add a condition that schedules an automatic review of the use permit, by the Planning Commission at a point in time, one year after the center begins operation.

Commissioner Hackett noted that she likes this suggestion of adding a one-year review condition, with the caveat that parameters should be in place such that the new senior/scout house should be required to address impacts as coming from its operations, not from other separate activities.

Director Mirzakhonian reminded that as stated earlier by the City Traffic Engineer, the City is, independent of the scout house project, engaging in a city-wide traffic/parking survey with the goal of identifying areas of concern and possible ways to alleviate problems and this will include the parking lots on Valley Drive near the project.

Assistant City Attorney Kearns advised that at this time, the Commission's job is, in approving the use permit, is to attach conditions that are intended to ensure that the project will operate in a way that is consistent with all applicable findings. The Commission can only attach conditions that address impacts that specifically tie into the project. If in this case, the Commission would like to have a check-in at a future date, he believes the mechanism would be citywide, not project specific response.

Responding to **Commissioner Sistos**, **Director Mirzakhonian** explained that the use permit is the mechanism that gives this project, being in the PS zone, the ability to apply unique development standards. The intent is to give proposed public institutional uses some "wobble room" in being able to be built, often on challenging sites.

Commissioner Sistos reiterated her concern that assumptions used in the project parking study have resulted in an underestimate of parking demand and this cannot be reversed after the building is built.

Commissioner Hackett stated that she believes that parking demand issues can be addressed if needed after the project is built and does not support requiring a re-design or reduction in the building size.

There being no more discussion, the Chair called for a motion.

COMMISSION ACTION

It was moved by Commissioner Ungoco that the Commission adopt the submitted draft Resolution approving a Use Permit, and Coastal Development Permit, subject to conditions, with an added condition requiring that, one year after the beginning of use, the project be reviewed by the Planning Commission, and making a determination of exemption under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dillavou.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Dillavou, Hackett, Ungoco, Chair Tokashiki
NOES: Vice Chair Sistos
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: None

Agenda Host Maury announced that the motion passed 4-1.

H. DIRECTOR'S ITEMS – Update on previous Commission projects

Director Mirzakhonian provided the following updates:

1. The City's 6th Cycle Housing Element has, as of July 27th been certified by the state HCD (Department of Housing and Community Development); this represents a very big step.
2. The Coastal Commission has recently approved, subject to minor modifications, the City's new Coastal Hazards Chapter of the city's Local Coastal Program which the Planning Commission had reviewed and recommended adoption for in 2022. The next step will be for the City

Council to approve the minor modifications and after that, this new LCP chapter can be finalized.

3. Status of major projects approved prior by the Planning Commission: In plan check are: HighRose (Highland/Rosecrans multi-residential) and Sunrise Senior project (Sepulveda) and the MB Hotel (600 So. Sepulveda) is close to submitting for plan check.

I. PLANNING COMMISSION ITEMS – None

J. TENTATIVE AGENDA – September 13, 2023

Director Mirzakhanian noted that there are four items that are expected to come before the Commission in the next few months: a couple code amendment items including an update of the Historic Preservation Ordinance, requested by the City Council and a permanent ordinance (replacing an urgency ordinance) that would bring the City into compliance with SB 9 provisions relating to housing. Staff will be initiate the SB 9 amendment with a public study session before the Commission. In addition, there are two commercial use permits that getting close to be ready for hearing before the Commission.

ADJOURNMENT

At 4:45 p.m. it was moved and seconded (Hackett/Sistos) to adjourn the meeting to Wednesday, September 13 at 3:00 p.m. The motion passed 5-0.