



MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE

January 7, 2025

6:03 PM

In accordance with City policy, all Planning Commission meetings are recorded on audio and video in their entirety and are available for review in the Community Development Department (CDD). These minutes are a summary of the action taken.

1. ROLL CALL

Chair Ed Acosta, Vice-Chair Peter Radin, Commissioners Lucy Rojas, and Jennifer Veitch-Olson were present. Commissioner Daniel Dodge (arrived at 6:11pm) and Commissioner Brando Sencion, were absent.

A. MOTION TO EXCUSE ABSENT PLANNING COMMISSIONERS (IF ANY)

MOTION: It was moved by Commissioner Rojas, seconded by Vice Chair Radin, and carried by the following vote to excuse absent Commissioners Daniel Dodge and Brando Sencion:

AYES: COMMISSIONERS: Acosta, Radin, Rojas, Veitch-Olson
NOES: COMMISSIONERS: None
ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS: Dodge, Sencion

(Commissioner Dodge arrived at 6:11pm, after roll call to excuse absent commissioners.)

Staff members present were Interim Community Development Director Justin Meek, Interim Assistant Community Development Director Matt Orbach, Assistant City Attorney Denise Bazzano, Administrative Analyst Elena Ortiz, Executive Assistant Celia Castro, Permit Technician Rob Manansala, and City Interpreter Carlos Landaverry.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Vice Chair Radin led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. PRESENTATIONS & ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

A. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None

B. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE COMMISSION

None

4. CONSENT AGENDA

A. MOTION APPROVING MINUTES OF OCTOBER 1, 2024, AND NOVEMBER 19, 2024

B. MOTION APPROVING A REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2025

PUBLIC INPUT

None

MOTION: It was moved by Vice-Chair Radin, seconded by Commissioner Rojas, and carried by the following vote to approve the Consent Agenda:

AYES: COMMISSIONERS: Acosta, Dodge, Radin, Rojas, Veitch-Olson
NOES: COMMISSIONERS: None
ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS: Sencion

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. DENIAL OF SPECIAL USE PERMIT AND DESIGN REVIEW PERMIT WITH ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (PP2023-6377) AND RECOMMENDING TO CITY COUNCIL DENIAL OF A ZONING MAP AMENDMENT FOR A NEW 7,670 SQUARE-FOOT DRIVE-THROUGH CAR WASH FACILITY ON A 1.18± ACRE SITE LOCATED AT 632 EAST LAKE AVENUE (APN:017-321-02), FILED BY VANCE SHANNON WITH QUICK QUACK CAR WASH, APPLICANT, ON BEHALF OF BILL HANSEN, PROPERTY OWNER (CONTINUED HEARING FROM NOVEMBER 19, 2024)

Item 5.a. was pulled from the Agenda and continued to a date uncertain.

Commissioner Veitch-Olson made a comment regarding the item and thanked all for the public comments.

B. APPEAL (#PP2024-8160) OF ZONING ADMINISTRATOR DENIAL OF AN ADMINISTRATIVE USE PERMIT FOR DEMOLITION OF A NONCONFORMING DETACHED GARAGE AND CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW EXPANDED GARAGE WITH A SECOND-STORY ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT (#PP2024-7815) LOCATED AT 79 MONTE VISTA AVENUE (APN:018-521-01)

1) Staff Report

Interim Assistant Community Development Director Orbach gave the presentation.

Assistant City Attorney Bazzano addressed and helped facilitate discussion regarding the Ex Parte Communications with Planning Commissioners.

2) Planning Commission Clarifying & Technical Questions

In answering Vice Chair Radin, Interim Assistant Community Development Director Orbach confirmed the Government Code Sections regarding Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) was moved to a new Government Code section but the content did not change.

Vice Chair Radin inquired if the result would be different if the City's ADU ordinance was still in effect. In answering, Interim Assistant Community Development Director Orbach clarified the 2022 Watsonville Municipal Code (WMC) reflects the same relevant sections of the state ADU law even though some other sections are out of compliance.

Vice Chair Radin referenced the Staff Report addressing the set-back requirements and asked if the height of the building was in compliance. In answering, Interim Assistant Community Development Director Orbach clarified height is not the issue and further clarified the set-back requirements.

Commissioner Rojas asked for examples that reflect standard practice with three dimensions. Interim Assistant Community Development Director Orbach provided structure examples that identified three dimensions.

Vice Chair Radin shared a comment regarding the three dimensions that define a living space.

3) Appellant Presentation

Property owner Trina Coffman-Gomez and Designer and Architect Peter Odryna gave the presentation.

4) Planning Commission Clarifying & Technical Questions

Vice Chair Radin asked if the applicant's position is that the height requirements are not subject to setbacks. In answering, property owner Coffman-Gomez referenced the Government Code 66321 and explained the section does not indicate the height.

Vice Chair Radin referenced the letter of the Office of State Senator Dr. Aisha Wahab and height requirements. He further asked if the applicant received a response from the Community Development Department regarding questions to this application, in answering, property owner Coffman-Gomez said she did not.

Property owner Coffman-Gomez shared a comment regarding the height requirements mentioned in the letter from Office of State Senator Dr. Aisha Wahab.

Vice Chair Radin shared a comment clarifying the role of the Planning Commission regarding this item and the issue of height versus the issue of setbacks.

Property owner Coffman-Gomez shared a comment referencing the legislative changes for ADU's.

Commissioner Dodge asked Designer and Architect Odryna to share standard projects he has worked on in other Cities. In addressing Commissioner Dodge's question, Designer and Architect Odryna shared he has worked with projects that involve ADU's and has also worked with non-conforming structures in different cities. He further shared his experience working with similar projects in different cities.

Commissioner Dodge asked what the major factors regarding this project are. In answering, property owner Coffman-Gomez explained the issues are around the structure location and vehicle access and limited footprint. She shared a comment stating that the project is in compliance with State Law.

5) Public Hearing

Chair Acosta opened the public hearing.

Watsonville resident Martha Vega spoke in support of the project.

Watsonville resident Steven McGee spoke in support of the project.

Property owner's daughter, spoke in support of the project.

Hearing no further comments, Chair Acosta closed the public hearing.

6) Appropriate Motion(s)

MAIN MOTION: It was moved by Commissioner Rojas, seconded by Commissioner Veitch-Olson, and carried by the following vote to approve the following recommendation:

RESOLUTION NO. 01-25 (PC)

RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE, CALIFORNIA, DENYING AN APPEAL (PP2024-8160) AND UPHOLDING ZONING ADMINISTRATOR'S DENIAL OF AN ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW PERMIT FOR THE DEMOLITION OF AN EXISTING, NONCONFORMING, TWO-CAR, DETACHED GARAGE AND CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW, THREE-CAR, DETACHED GARAGE WITH A NEW, DETACHED, 754-SQUARE-FOOT, SECOND-STORY ACCESSORY

**DWELLING UNIT (#PP2024-7815) LOCATED AT 79 MONTE VISTA AVENUE
(APN: 018-521-01)**

7) Deliberation

Interim Assistant Community Development Director Orbach addressed concerns raised during the appellant's presentation, as requested by Planning Commission. Including addressing the different properties that were presented with non-conforming structures.

Vice Chair Radin inquired if Santa Cruz City adopted an ADU ordinance after the March 24 implementation of State Law. In answering, Interim Assistant Community Development Director Orbach clarified the date is uncertain, however Santa Cruz has to follow state ADU standards and cities are allowed to be more progressive.

Vice Chair Radin referenced that the adoption of the Housing Element would help adopt ordinances that are compliant with current state law which are aspirational goals for the community.

Interim Assistant Community Development Director Orbach shared a comment regarding the City's support for ADUs.

Commissioner Dodge asked for clarification regarding the state law and height requirements trumping City laws and properties close to transit corridors. In answering, Interim Community Development Director Meek clarified the regulations that would apply when City ordinances are not in compliance with state law, including when an existing structure is converted into an ADU what requirements apply to such projects.

Commissioner Dodge asked for clarification regarding the location and dimensions of the project. In answering, Interim Community Development Director Meek clarified the appellant is asking that instead of looking at the three-dimensional object to look only at the foot print and not apply the height requirement.

Commissioner Dodge asked if the City ordinance is not in compliance with state law. In answering, Interim Community Development Director Meek confirmed the City ordinance has not been amended and is not in compliance with state law. He further clarified how many other jurisdictions find themselves facing similar challenges.

Vice Chair Radin shared a comment regarding the City ordinance being out of compliance with state law and the outcome regarding the appeal.

Assistant City Attorney Bazzano added that state laws relating to ADUs change frequently and described how this affects the City's ordinance and processing applications. She added the City has reviewed the application consistent with state law that speaks to the issue upon setbacks.

Commissioner Rojas and Commissioner Dodge shared similar concerns regarding the appeal process and challenges facing the subject of ADUs.

Vice Chair Radin shared a comment regarding the challenges the project faces and shared he will support the motion.

8) Chair Calls for a Vote on Motion(s)

AYES:	COMMISSIONERS:	Acosta, Radin, Rojas, Veitch-Olson
NOES:	COMMISSIONERS:	None
ABSENT:	COMMISSIONERS:	Sencion
ABSTAIN:	COMMISSIONERS:	Dodge

Assistant City Attorney Bazzano recited the appeal language.

5. REPORT OF THE SECRETARY

Interim Community Development Director Meek shared an update regarding the implementation of the Housing Element that includes updating the ADU Ordinance and other code sections.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Chairperson Acosta adjourned the meeting at 8:19 PM. The next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for February 4, 2025, at 6:00 PM.

Justin Meek, Secretary
Planning Commission

Ed Acosta, Chair
Planning Commission