



**MEETING MINUTES  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
154 SOUTH EIGHTH STREET  
GROVER BEACH, CALIFORNIA  
TUESDAY, MAY 10, 2011  
6:30 P.M.**

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in a City meeting, please contact the City Clerk's Office (473-4568) at least 48 hours prior to the meeting to ensure that reasonable arrangements can be made to provide accessibility to the meeting.

**CALL TO ORDER:** 6:30 p.m.

**FLAG SALUTE:** Commissioner Laferriere.

**PRESENT:** Commissioners Alex, Blum, Coleman, Laferriere, Vice Chair Evans and Chair Long.

**ABSENT:** Commissioner Roberson.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** At this point of the meeting, members of the public may bring up any items within the jurisdiction of the Planning Commission that are not on the agenda. Please limit your comments to three (3) minutes. The Planning Commission will listen to all comments; however, in compliance with the Brown Act, the Commission cannot act on items not on the agenda.

**CONSENT ITEMS:**

**1. Approval of Minutes of Planning Commission meeting for April 12, 2011.**

Commissioner Laferriere made the motion to adopt the minutes as noted; Vice Chair Evans seconded the motion, and it was carried with a vote of 6-0-1-0, with Commissioner Roberson absent.

**PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS:**

**Development Permit Application No. 08-018 (continued from April 12, 2011)**

**Applicant – Michael & Jennifer Poelking**

This Development Permit Application is a request for approval of Site and Architectural Plans to construct a two story addition on an existing single family residence located at 828 North 5<sup>th</sup> Street (APN 060-491-045) in the Single Family Residential (R-1) District.

Planner Reese presented the staff report and gave the background for the project. The applicant has received approval from the homeowners association. The Grover Beach Zoning Code requires structures greater than 15 feet above natural grade to be reviewed by the Planning Commission, if it is north of Grand Avenue.

Staff believes that the addition has been designed to preserve privacy. The proposed addition makes the home larger than adjacent homes but similar to other homes in the surrounding neighborhood. Staff completed a view analysis and story poles were installed. Planner Reese described the various view issues and indicated that partial ocean views would be retained and staff is recommending approval.

She stated that staff recommends approval.

Commissioner Laferriere asked for clarification about the second story area. Planner Reese indicated that there are limitations.

Chair Long asked if the letters received from the public were from residents outside of the Mar Brissa subdivision. Planner Reese indicated that they were.

Chair Long opened the public hearing.

Geoffrey Augustt, project designer, was present to answer questions.

Robert Reed, 839 N. 6<sup>th</sup> St. expressed concern that this addition would tower over the adjacent homes. The homes in that subdivision do not transition to 2<sup>nd</sup> story until they are further in. He expressed that this addition would be a travesty and cause view shed damage, and also damage property values. He stated that it would not be allowed according to the CC&Rs for the subdivision. He stated that he would have liked to have earlier notification. He stated that there were design restrictions to make the subdivision harmonious with existing neighborhoods. He expressed concern that staff doesn't evaluate different types of views and that all views will be impacted.

Anita Shower, Grover Beach resident, stated that the grade of the site has been artificially altered. She expressed concern about the view impacts.

Lisa Lewis, 855 N. 6<sup>th</sup> Street; stated that this project would not be consistent with the neighborhood. She expressed concern about the loss of views and that the scope of the addition is too large for the neighborhood.

Resident at 831 N. 6<sup>th</sup> St. stated that this addition would impact her view entirely and stated that the CC&Rs need to be reviewed.

Chair Long closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Blum stated that it is a great looking house, but that he has some concerns. He stated that the CC&Rs state that there are some things prohibited unless approved by the Homeowners Association. He stated that it seemed that the letter suggests that the Homeowners Association had met the criteria in the CC&Rs. He stated that it seems that final plans had not been submitted to the Homeowners Association.

Chair Long asked for clarification regarding CC&Rs. City Attorney Koczanowicz stated that the city does not enforce private documents. The project is conditioned to have the approval of the Homeowners Association.

Commissioner Blum stated that regarding views, this is a unique situation because it was designed to meet the requirements and requests of the neighbors. He stated that the massing of the addition is an issue.

Chair Long stated that views cannot be guaranteed. He expressed concerns about the size of the project and felt that it would be overpowering for that area.

Commissioner Alex stated that the view issue is an emotional one. He stated that there are issues regarding property values. On the other hand, it could raise the property value in the Mar Brissa area. He stated that the Homeowner's Association approved the addition. He

acknowledged that it is obstructing views.

Commissioner Laferriere stated that there is an issue related to size and massing. He stated that this home with the addition would be the largest in the immediate area, but that there are other homes within the 300 foot radius that are of similar size.

Commissioner Alex stated that he struggles with telling people what to do with their property. He stated that while massing is an issue, he is supportive of the project.

Chair Long stated that it was apparent that the two story homes in that neighborhood are at lower elevations and the single stories are higher. His main issue is the massing of the project. He stated that there is a balance between property rights and social responsibility.

Commissioner Laferriere stated that there are ways of doing a second story without that much view obstruction. He stated that it seemed that the designer didn't worry about much other than maximum envelope. There are design elements that could have helped to preserve some views.

Chair Long reopened hearing to allow the designer to answer some of the concerns.

Mr. Augustt stated that he didn't feel that the proposed addition dwarfed the other buildings. He stated that it is a discreet second story addition. The roof line was designed to be as shallow as possible. He also stated that the addition doesn't go all the way to the back, it is recessed. He felt that those were reasonable attempts to address the massing of the house.

Chair Long closed the public hearing. He stated that they need to decide if it is consistent with the area.

Commissioner Laferriere stated that in the absence of anything in writing regarding the initial intent of the Mar Brissa subdivision, they have to go just by what is in the Municipal Code, regarding roof line placement.

City Attorney Koczanowicz stated that if it is the desire of the Planning Commission to continue the item in order to review more information, it would need to be for review of City documents, and not the CC&Rs for the subdivision. He reiterated that the project is contingent upon final approval of the Homeowners Association.

Director Buckingham stated that the original resolution was reviewed and is a binding document. Regarding views, he stated that there is no differentiation in the Municipal Code as it relates to different kinds of views.

City Attorney Koczanowicz stated that historically speaking, the view issue has been interpreted to be that the applicant does the best they can to design their project with consideration.

Director Buckingham stated that there have been instances when it was requested to adjust the addition to decrease view impacts. It is difficult to determine if shifting the second story in this case would reduce the obstruction.

City Attorney Koczanowicz stated that the Commission has the ability to continue the item to see if alterations can be made.

Commissioner Laferriere asked for a 10 minute recess.

Chair Long recessed the meeting at 7:36 p.m., and the meeting reconvened at 7:48 p.m.

Chair Long reviewed the findings in the resolution.

Regarding the first finding, he stated that the color and style are in keeping with the neighborhood, but he questioned the height and scale.

Commissioner Blum stated that it's a great looking home but he isn't sure that this height and scale is compatible with the other two story homes in the neighborhood.

Commissioner Coleman stated that the design is attractive but the scale doesn't meet the findings.

Commissioner Alex stated that Commissioner Coleman's statement about scale is correct if you're looking at 5<sup>th</sup> Street, but it is not true if you are looking at the homes behind it.

Commissioner Coleman stated that if you go up a block or two you find the same situation with larger homes next to smaller ones. She asked if they would apply a standard just to Mar Brissa.

Chair Long stated that the land use policies are in place, and the Commission is charged with considering the neighborhood character.

Commissioner Laferriere stated that all of the findings have to be made and he doesn't think they can be made.

Chair Long stated that they can adopt the resolution as presented, they can deny the resolution or approve the resolution with modified conditions and findings.

Commissioner Laferriere stated that he hoped that if the project is denied, they can provide direction to the applicant so that they can resubmit.

City Attorney Koczanowicz stated that the discussion about whether or not there are sufficient findings is appropriate and the decision of the Commission can be appealed to the City Council. He recommended against trying to structure a future project. If they vote for denial, staff will bring back a resolution of denial.

Vice Chair Evans expressed concern about the height and scale and compatibility with the neighborhood.

Commissioner Alex stated that the addition complies with the code.

Commissioner Laferriere stated that it complies with the Municipal Code, but there are subjective considerations as well. He stated that he didn't know if the size or 2<sup>nd</sup> story were consistent with the character of the neighborhood.

Commissioner Coleman stated that her issue is the 2<sup>nd</sup> story and the mass of the addition. She felt that it would be overwhelming and dwarf the other homes in the area. She agreed with Commissioner Alex about dictating what people do with their property but she has to evaluate the conformity with the neighborhood as well.

Commissioner Blum stated that consistency with the neighborhood is his issue. Views are not guaranteed but at the same time this seems to conflict with the original intent of the Mar Brissa subdivision.

City Attorney Koczanowicz recommended that the Commission take action, and if the project is denied, staff will present a resolution of denial on the consent calendar of the next meeting.

Commissioner Blum made the motion to deny the project; Commissioner Laferriere seconded the motion and the motion was carried, with Commissioner Alex voting no and Commissioner Roberson absent.

**COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS:**

**Report from City Council Representatives**

Commissioner Blum reported on the previous City Council meeting.

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Director Buckingham briefed the Planning Commission on the upcoming Joint City Council and Planning Commission Workshop.

**STAFF COMMENTS**

**ASSIGNMENT TO ATTEND CITY COUNCIL MEETING(S)**

**ADJOURNMENT:** 8:19 p.m.

/s/  
CHAIR LONG

/s/  
SECRETARY TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION  
BRUCE BUCKINGHAM, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

(Approved at PC Meeting: August 9, 2011)