

February 3, 2021

## THE WALNUT CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

A regular Meeting of the Walnut Planning Commission (PC) was held on the above-referenced date. Chairperson Koo called the Meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

**FLAG SALUTE:** Commissioner Koo

**ROLL CALL:** Commissioner(s): Dy, Koo, Fernandez, Wang

**ABSENT:** Commissioner: Perez

**ALSO PRESENT:** Assistant City Manager – Development Services Tom Weiner; City Planner Justin Carlson; Assistant City Attorney David Mann; Senior Management Analyst Joelle Guerra; Assistant Planner Corinne Munoz; Community Development Technician Gabriel Katigbak.

### **CORONAVIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19) ADVISORY:**

C/Koo presented information regarding the California State Department of Health Services' guidance and the County of Los Angeles Public Health Officer's order for the control of COVID-19. Additionally, C/Koo informed all attendees of the necessary procedures to be taken when submitting comments.

### **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:**

C/Koo opened oral communications for Public Comment(s).

C/Koo closed oral communications for Public Comment(s).

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

1. January 20, 2021 (Regular Meeting Minutes).

### **MOTION ON ITEM 1**

VC/Fernandez moved to approve the Minutes of the regularly scheduled PC Meeting of January 20, 2021. PC/Dy seconded.

### **ROLL CALL:**

**AYES:** Koo, Fernandez, Dy, Wang

**NOES:** None

**ABSTAIN:** None

**ABSENT:** Perez

**Motion passed 4-0.**

### **PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

None

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

None

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**2. Site Plan Case/Architectural Review (SPC/AR) 2021-002 (Xiong):** A request to demolish an existing home and construct a new two (2) story single-family residence located at 20404 Seton Hill Drive (APN: 8712-004-008).

AP/Munoz presented the Staff Report.

**C/Koo opened the Item for Public Comment(s).**

CDT/Katigbak informed the Commission of neighboring correspondence that was received (via email) and forwarded to the Commission. The email summarized the following concerns:

- The project could have resulting effects to the health, safety, and welfare of the surrounding residents during the current COVID-19 pandemic.
- Construction of the Project could have impacts related to dust, mold, bacteria, and noise.
- The distance of the Project to the shared property line and the effects to the homes on Seton Hill Drive.

Applicant/Cyrus Xiong addressed the neighbors' concerns with the following:

- The Project will be starting construction no earlier than July of 2021.
- The existing building being four (4') away from the shared property line versus the proposed five (5').
- Other construction projects are currently being constructed on within the City.
- The proposed windows on the second-floor and the installation of trees in order to help screen for privacy.
- There are additional two-story homes within the subject neighborhood.

C/Koo asked if grading will occur on the Property.

Mr. Xiong indicated that the existing pad will be used and no grading is proposed.

C/Koo asked if the Applicant would be willing to shift the house north in order to make the setback (adjacent to the neighboring property) twelve (12') feet instead of five (5') feet.

Mr. Xiong mentioned that shifting the building north is possible; however, the current proposal was made to preserve views and to have as much backyard space as possible.

PC/Dy stated no concerns with the size of the proposed home but asked if the two (2) windows located on the second-floor can be removed, resized, and shifted higher in order to assist with privacy.

Mr. Xiong noted that the bathroom window could be elevated, but he would like to keep the bedroom windows as proposed in order to preserve natural lighting.

ACM/Weiner noted that the bedroom windows should not be modified due to possible effects on light and ventilation and if the Commission wishes to do so, a Condition of Approval (COA) should be placed that reads the following:

- Modifications of windows shall not result in failure to comply with light and ventilation and ingress and egress per California Building Codes.

PC/Wang inquired about the proposed stone veneer on the two (2) car garage and asked if it can be located on the single car garage as well.

Mr. Xiong mentioned that the design was intended to be symmetrical with the stone veneer on the garage and the window designs.

The Commission and Staff further discussed the design of the residence.

**C/Koo closed the Item for Public Comment(s).**

VC/Fernandez noted the various decorative materials used with the window treatments and understood the Applicants desire for Project symmetry. VC/Fernandez noted that the property line flares as it extends to the rear of the Property which increases the setback between the building footprint and side property line. VC/Fernandez further mentioned that the bathroom window (within bedroom four (4)) window would be suitable to assist in privacy screening.

PC/Dy stated that the asymmetrical treatments throughout the front elevation are well designed, but he would like to provide the neighbor additional privacy by further modifying the windows of bedroom four (4).

C/Koo mentioned that the Project would be enhanced with the side setbacks reversed; which would provide twelve (12') feet on the south side and five (5') feet on the north side.

**MOTION ON ITEM 2**

**VC/Fernandez motioned to approve SPC/AR 2021-002, subject to the attached COA's with the modification that the bathroom window in bedroom four (4) be turned into a high window. PC/Wang seconded.**

**ROLL CALL:**

**AYES: Koo, Fernandez, Dy, Wang**  
**NOES: None**  
**ABSTAIN: None**  
**ABSENT: Perez**

**Motion passed 4-0.**

**DICUSSION/TRANSACTION:**

**3. Housing Element Update 2021-2029: Discussion**

ACM/Weiner and SMA/Guerra presented the Staff Report.

VC/Fernandez asked if mixed-use is being explored.

SMA/Guerra noted that mixed-use is not favorable to the State for this cycle due to not being able to maximize the number of residential units, since a commercial component would be proposed.

ACM/Weiner mentioned that the mixed-use concept was explored and with the density number received from the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), different options needed to be explored as well.

PC/Dy explained the positives of mixed-use and its ability to assist with tax revenue within the City.

ACM/Weiner stated that the Study Area off Carrie Road has underutilized parcels with an on-going empty parking lot. ACM/Weiner noted that density proposed here could be higher; however then would need to be a transition with higher density adjacent to the existing single-family neighborhoods.

PC/Dy referenced existing higher density in the City of Pasadena with limited massing and walkable neighborhoods.

C/Koo asked if the frontage off Valley Boulevard can be excluded to protect existing commercial areas.

ACM/Weiner referenced the existing commercial/industrial center on the west side of Lemon Avenue and existing areas within the City that also have a strong commercial component.

PC/Dy suggested if the mixed-use within the City of Santa Monica can be reviewed by our Housing Consultants.

VC/Fernandez asked if the residential lots east of the 49-Acres Project were explored and the corner Lot on the intersection of Amar Road and Lemon Avenue.

ACM/Weiner noted that the residential lots east of 49-acres can be reviewed and gave a brief explanation on the history of the vacant parcel on the corner of Amar Road and Lemon Avenue.

The Commission and Staff further discussed the vacant Pon the corner of Amar Road and Lemon Avenue, the West Valley Specific Plan (WVSP), and the Mt. Sac West Parcel.

VC/Fernandez encouraged a discussion to be made (for the Mt. Sac West Parcel) with the City Council.

C/Koo asked if Study Area Two (2) can be extended to abut the existing residential area to the north.

ACM/Weiner noted the existing businesses along that area produce most of the City's sales tax revenue.

The Commission and Staff discussed the City's sales tax versus Residential units and rezoning properties (with property utilization) remaining the same.

SMA/Guerra noted the vital uses in certain areas that the State would not consider, in order to protect those businesses.

C/Koo inquired about Study Area Four (4) and the current state of the businesses.

ACM/Weiner noted that the businesses are doing ok and noted that the service station on the corner of Pierre Road and Valley Boulevard which would be great a great location for a future mixed use project.

The Commission and Staff further discussed potential mixed-use within the City and the existing WVSP.

C/Koo inquired about the status of the Walnut Liqueur Shopping Center.

ACM/Weiner noted that the Liqueur is no longer at the Center; however, Staff is hoping for an eatery to be established once COVID subsides.

The Commission and Staff further discussed the Walnut Liqueur Center.

Staff thanked the Commission for the feedback and that the information received will be discussed with the City Council during a Study Session on March 24<sup>th</sup>.

**C/Koo opened the Item for Public Comment(s).**

**C/Koo closed the Item for Public Comment(s).**

PC/Wang mentioned that Walnut has limited land-use and wants to utilize any land to preserve sales tax revenue(s). PC/Wang further noted that mixed-use will be great, but to limit building height to three (3) stories.

ACM/Weiner referenced a project in the City of Montclair that had a building up-to twenty (20) stories.

VC/Fernandez asked if the Consultant can explore the opportunity for mixed-use.

ACM/Weiner noted that there is opportunity in the City for mixed-use, but it should be kept at a minimal and where it can be feasible.

PC/Dy explained if Study Area Four (4) can be removed if commercial cannot be fully supported.

VC/Fernandez inquired about the new industrial building off Valley and if the building is being fully utilized with leases.

ACM/Weiner noted that Adesso is currently in the building but unsure if the office space has been leased.

The Commission and Staff further discussed the importance of retail, food establishments, and other businesses within the City.

ACM/Weiner explained the timeline for the Housing Element and that Staff is looking to adopt the document by the end of 2021.

**REPORTS AND COMMENTS:**

None

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**The Meeting adjourned at 9:02 p.m. The next Planning Commission Meeting is set for a regular Meeting on Wednesday, March 3, 2021, at 7:00 p.m., via teleconference. The Agenda will be posted on the City's website and at City related public facilities, including Walnut City Hall (21201 La Puente Road).**

**Passed and Approved on this 3<sup>rd</sup> day of March, 2021.**

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**Chairperson, Tony Koo**

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**Tom Weiner, Assistant City Manager – Development Services**