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PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING OF: May 12, 2020

UNAPPROVED DRAFT MINUTES

PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY OF SEBASTOPOL
MINUTES OF May 26, 2020

PLANNING COMMISSION:

The notice of the meeting was posted on May 21, 2020.

1. CALL TO ORDER: Chair Fernandez called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and read an opening statement.

2. ROLL CALL:

Present: Chair Fernandez, Vice Chair Fritz, and Commissioners Kelley, Oetinger, Wilson, Lindenbusch and Haug
Absent: Commissioner Douch
Staff: Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director
Alan Montes, Associate Planner

3. APPROVAL OF PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES: April 28, 2020 and May 12, 2020

Planning Commission Minutes of April 28, 2020:

A member of the Commission amended the minutes.

Vice Chair Fritz made a motion to approve the minutes as amended.

Commissioner Lindenbusch seconded the motion.

The Commission voted on the motion as follows:

AYES: Chair Fernandez, Vice Chair Fritz, and Commissioners Oetinger,

Wilson, Kelley, Lindenbusch, and Haug
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: None

Planning Commission Minutes of May 12, 2020:

A member of the Commission amended the minutes.

Commissioner Oetinger made a motion to approve the minutes as amended.

Commissioner Lindenbusch seconded the motion.

The Commission voted on the motion as follows:

AYES: Chair Fernandez, Vice Chair Fritz, and Commissioners Oetinger,
Wilson, Kelley, Lindenbusch, and Haug
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: Commissioner Douch
ABSENT: None

4. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON ITEMS NOT ON AGENDA:

Celosia Arcadia, with Cradle to Career Sonoma County and Gravenstein Health Action Chapter, commented:

- Thanked the Commission for their thoughtful deliberation of the proposed nonconforming use (smoke shop at 207 North Main Street) that came before them at their last meeting.
- Has been working with those that spoke on the matter, as well as the City, on tobacco retail license legislation.
- Appreciates the Commission for prioritizing the health of youth.
- Relieved to hear that the applicant withdrew his application.
- Concerned about the idea of a business with long hours offering an experimental product (that is addictive), in the same category as cannabis and ecstasy, creating a novelty and curiosity among our youth.
- Hoping that the tobacco retail license legislation will address kratom.
- Extended her gratitude to the Commission once more.

Chair Fernandez thanked Ms. Arcadia for her comments.

Chair Fernandez asked if other members of the public wished to comment on this item.

There were none.

Director Svanstrom and Associate Planner Montes indicated that they had not received written public comment for items not on the agenda.

Chair Fernandez closed the public comment period.

5. STATEMENTS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST: There were none.

6. PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT (Update on Future Agendas, Action of Other Boards and City Council)

Director Svanstrom updated the Commission on the following:

- Recent and upcoming Council actions.
- The City's Annual Level of Service Report will be coming to the Commission in June.
- Provided updates related to COVID-19.
- The group that is working on the tobacco retail license legislation has requested to get their draft before the City Council sooner rather than later.
 - The last Planning Commission meeting spurred them into action.
 - Has a meeting with them next week.

Chair Fernandez asked for questions of Director Svanstrom from the Commission.

Vice Chair Fritz commented that he heard that seating was planned for the plaza to provide a place for people to sit down and eat when picking up their takeout.

Director Svanstrom responded:

- That has not been looked into as of yet.
- The plaza is still being used by the Farmers Market on the weekend.
- There are areas where that could be accommodated if businesses are requesting it.
- Engineering Manager, Henry Mikus, has contacted Caltrans regarding parklets along Main Street for outdoor dining during this time.

Commissioner Lindenbusch asked if street closures for pedestrian use had been considered.

Director Svanstrom responded:

- Met with the bike and pedestrian subcommittee earlier today.
- Most of the cities that are doing these are doing them because their sidewalks are too crowded, or they have two destinations that they are trying to connect.
- Sebastopol does not have either of those issues.
- People already walk down the middle of some neighborhood streets in town due to ours being a smaller community.
- Their discussion included the potential of doing so on a rotating basis next summer.
- This concept will be presented to the Council at a future meeting.
- Interested in hearing from Commissioner Lindenbusch about any particular locations he may have in mind.

Commissioner Haug asked if the committee that is working on the tobacco retail license legislation had plans to address the sale of kratom.

Director Svanstrom responded that she could send an email to that committee as that was an issue that a lot of concern was expressed over during the last Planning Commission meeting.

Commissioner Haug asked if the Commission would be able to meet with the City's Economic Vitality consultant.

Director Svanstrom responded:

- There are not any plans for that currently.
- Those consultants are currently focusing on community and business relations.
- Surveys have been sent to Sebastopol business owners.
- There may be an opportunity in the future.

Chair Fernandez asked Director Svanstrom about the work that is being done by PG&E.

Director Svanstrom commented that specific information is available on the homepage of the City's website.

Commissioner Haug commented that PG&E is replacing old gas lines.

Commissioner Lindenbusch asked Director Svanstrom who the Economic Vitality consultant reports to.

Director Svanstrom responded that they will report directly to the City Manager.

7. DISCUSSION:

A. BARLOW PARKING STUDY

Associate Planner Montes presented the staff report.

Yolanda Mathew, Director of Operations, for The Barlow was present and available for questions.

Commissioner Douch had no questions.

Vice Chair Fritz asked how the marked parking spaces are allocated or determined and otherwise managed.

Associate Planner Montes responded that the City is not involved in allocation of parking other than ensuring that the parking requirement is met.

Ms. Mathew responded:

- The marked parking spaces are an allowance.
- Believes the marked spaces for Seismic are in their lease.
- Unsure as to whether the marked spaces for Community Market are in their lease, but it was something The Barlow agreed to do as it seemed to make sense to keep traffic flowing.
- Regardless of that being included in a lease or not, The Barlow can take away the marked spaces at any time.

Vice Chair Fritz asked how those marked parking spaces are monitored, or if use of them by people going into other businesses have been an issue.

Ms. Mathew responded that it has been more of an honor system.

Commissioner Haug asked if the addition of residential units at The Barlow was still in discussion at this time and if so, how that may impact parking.

Associate Planner Montes responded that preliminary discussion had occurred, but that the City has not received a formal application from The Barlow for a project that would include residences at this time.

Ms. Mathew responded:

- That is something that may be explored over time.
- Understands that a project like that would come with its own set of requirements.

- Before applying for any such project, they would look into what those requirements are and how best to meet them.

Commissioner Kelley had no questions.

Commissioner Lindenbusch had no questions and thanked Associate Planner Montes for the thorough report.

Commissioner Oetinger commented that her questions have already been answered.

Commissioner Wilson commented:

- Thanked Associate Planner Montes for his report which he found very helpful.
- Asked if the 378-space parking requirement assumes full occupancy of all the units.

Associate Planner Montes responded that that number is based on the building square footage.

Commissioner Wilson commented:

- That staff's survey showed that there are a number of vacant units or units being offered for lease.
- It seems like that is almost always going to be the case.
- 100% occupancy seems unlikely given the nature of things.
- Asked if Kosta Brown uses the 25 parking spaces for parking.

Ms. Mathew responded:

- Kosta Browne does not use those parking spaces for parking regularly.
- They appear to use them when they are entertaining in their hospitality building.

Commissioner Wilson commented:

- Concurred with Associate Planner Montes on those 25 parking spaces at Kosta Browne being deducted from the surplus since they are not regularly available for their employees or the public.
- Asked if the marked parking spaces are tow-away spaces.

Ms. Mathew responded:

- No, they do not do active towing.
- They might actively tow vehicles if there was an ongoing issue, or if a vehicle was left for several days, but not if somebody is there enjoying the campus.

Chair Fernandez asked if the old cement plant property (385 Morris Street) was considered as an overflow parking area for The Barlow or if it just unusable at this point.

Associate Planner Montes responded:

- The Barlow has used that property as overflow parking for some events in the past which have been allowed as a temporary use.
- If it is continuously used as a parking lot, The Barlow would need to obtain the permits and approvals for it to be a parking lot.

Hearing no further questions or comments, Chair Fernandez asked members of the public if they wished to speak on this item and asked staff if written comments had been received.

There were no comments from the public and no written comment had been received.

Chair Fernandez asked staff a procedural question.

Commissioner Wilson asked for the status of the hotel.

Director Svanstrom responded that the applicant has indicated their intent to move forward with the Hotel Sebastopol project.

- She and the City Manager have a phone conference scheduled with the applicant tomorrow.
- Will have more to update the Commission on at their next meeting.

Commissioner Wilson commented that the Hotel Sebastopol project is outside the boundaries of The Barlow.

Director Svanstrom responded in the affirmative and noted that the Hotel Sebastopol project is in the Downtown Core and is not associated with The Barlow.

Commissioner Wilson asked if the Hotel Sebastopol project is providing their own parking.

Director Svanstrom responded in the affirmative.

Commissioner Kelley commented that The Barlow was proposed to build a hotel at one point and asked Ms. Mathew if there was an update on that.

Ms. Mathew responded that there were no plans to move forward with that at this time.

Hearing nothing further, Chair Fernandez concluded this item.

8. PUBLIC HEARING:

A. USE PERMIT: Jamil Allati (207 NORTH MAIN STREET) – Project #2020-026 (CONTINUED FROM MAY 12, 2020)

This is an application, submitted by Jamil Allati, requesting approval to continue to operate a nonconforming use, smoke shop, at 207 North Main Street, in the Downtown Core (CD) zoning district. The prior use was HomeBlown Glass, a smoke shop, which had operated in this location for approximately 8 years. **THIS APPLICATION HAS BEEN WITHDRAWN BY THE APPLICANT, NO FURTHER ACTION TO BE TAKEN**

B. USE PERMIT: Crooked Goat Brewing (120 MORRIS STREET, SUITE 120) – Project #2020-029

This is an application, requesting approval to expand the outdoor patio at Crooked Goat Brewing located at 120 Morris Street, Suite 120, in The Barlow. A Use Permit is required as this is a significant expansion of the original use. This project will need a separate Design Review permit, which will be reviewed by the Design Review Board for the design of the patio structure.

Associate Planner Montes presented the staff report.

The Commission asked questions of Associate Planner Montes and Director Svanstrom.

Commissioner Oetinger commented:

- Morris Street and other nearby businesses will have available parking spaces in the evenings when this use is likely to be crowded.
- While the Commission is looking at The Barlow, there is likely to be plenty of parking available within and outside of The Barlow property.

Associate Planner Montes commented:

- The parking count includes parking that is on the public street directly adjacent to the use itself.
- The use of surrounding parking spaces may be occurring, but it may not be legal in terms of there being an actual agreement to allow it.

Commissioner Haug asked how many street parking spaces are included in the count for The Barlow.

Associate Planner Montes responded that 7 street parking spaces were included in the count.

Commissioner Haug asked how many parking spaces there would be at The Barlow if the street parking spaces were removed from the count.

Associate Planner Montes and Director Svanstrom responded that there would be 441 parking spaces which would result in a surplus of 38 parking spaces before this application.

Director Svanstrom added that McKinley Street is owned by The Barlow with a public easement over it.

Commissioner Haug asked if the parking spaces along McKinley Street are included in the count as well.

Director Svanstrom responded in the affirmative and commented:

- The diagram indicates that there are 29 parking spaces along McKinley Street that are part of The Barlow's property.

Commissioner Haug commented:

- Streets are thought of as a public space so to have McKinley Street attributed as parking for a private entity seems odd.
- The street may need to be used for a different public use that is not directly affiliated with The Barlow.

Commissioner Wilson commented:

- With the pandemic we are looking at fewer people eating inside.
- While we do not know how long this will last, this application seems timely and like something we may be seeing more of.
- Less demand for interior dining will result in less demand for parking.

Associate Planner Montes concurred and commented that that may be something worth discussing in the future.

Chair Fernandez asked about designating parking spaces for pickup and/or delivery.

Director Svanstrom responded:

- The City's regulations for parking leaves designation of time frames up to individual business owners.
- Different calculations are used for fast food and dine-in restaurants.
- This application was received prior to COVID-19 so this is not a response to the current pandemic.

Chair Fernandez responded that it may be beneficial to review what types of establishments are considered 'take-out' and what should or should not be included in that.

Chair Fernandez asked if the applicant wished to make a presentation.

Chuck Gangnath, Project Manager for Crooked Goat, gave a brief presentation as was available for questions.

The Commission asked questions of Mr. Gangnath.

Chair Fernandez commented:

- The side patio that Crooked Goat added is a nice addition.
- It is nice to see the area full of people who are enjoying themselves.

Chair Fernandez asked if members of the public wished to comment on this item.

Dan Friedman commented:

- We are reading about how craft breweries are going out of business with their current business models due to the pandemic.
- This should be expedited as quickly as possible to assist in keeping Crooked Goat as a viable business in town.

Hearing nothing further, Chair Fernandez thanked Mr. Friedman for his comment and closed the public comment period.

Chair Fernandez asked for discussion or further questions of staff.

Commissioner Douch expressed being in support of the application as submitted and made a motion to approve the application as submitted.

Vice Chair Fernandez seconded the motion.

Chair Fernandez asked for discussion of the motion.

Commissioner Oetinger commented:

- The flood plain belongs to the flood plain, but The Barlow is there now.
- The Barlow is redevelopment of an area that was blighted because of the flood plain.
- If anything were appropriate over parking it would be people enjoying eating on picnic benches outside, particularly because they are removable.
- The people who are outdoors drinking and/or eating are capable of walking from distant parking lots if parking were tight.
- Totally in support of this change and addition.
- Wishes the applicant the best.

Vice Chair Fritz commented:

- Crooked Goat is one of the businesses in The Barlow that seems to really be thriving.
- Crooked Goat was back in business after the flood remarkably fast.
- Having a successful business like Crooked Goat is a great asset to The Barlow.
- Enthusiastically in support of the outdoor seating area, particularly given the situation we are in now.
- This will be a benefit to the community.

Chair Fernandez commented:

- Wishes to add his support.
- Along with normal patrons of drinking age, the area has been set up for families too.
- The environment at Crooked Goat is good for individuals and families alike.
- Likes the concept of being able to order from restaurants in the area.
- Encouraged the applicant to reach out for help should they need it.

Commissioner Lindenbusch concurred with his fellow commissioners and shared his enthusiasm for the proposal.

Hearing nothing further the Commission voted on the motion to approve the application as submitted as follows:

AYES: Chair Fernandez, Vice Chair Fritz, and Commissioners Oetinger, Wilson, Kelley, Douch and Lindenbusch

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: Commissioner Haug

ABSENT: None

Mr. Gangnath commented that Crooked Goat values being at The Barlow and thanked the City for its continued support which has allowed their business to grow quickly and remain viable.

8. ADJOURNMENT: Chair Fernandez adjourned the meeting at 8:03 p.m. The next regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting will take place on Tuesday, June 09, 2020, at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Kari Svanstrom
Planning Director