

**FINAL MINUTES
REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
OCTOBER 14, 2008
CORTE MADERA TOWN HALL
CORTE MADERA**

COMMISSIONERS

PRESENT:

Chair Bruce K. Mace
Commissioner Patrick Pagnillo
Commissioner Sloan Bailey
Commissioner Peter M. Schwartz
Commissioner Richard Esteb

STAFF

PRESENT:

Bob Pendoley, Planning Director
Dan Bell, Senior Planner
Nancy Salcedo, Minute Recorder

1. OPENING

A. Call to Order

B. Pledge of Allegiance

C. Roll Call

All the Commissioners were present.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT: None

3. CONSENT CALENDAR: None

Planning Director Pendoley requested as a change in the order of hearing items, that the New Hearing item, followed by the Director's Report on 301 Corte Madera Town Center, P. F. Chang's Rooftop Mechanical Equipment, precede the Continued Hearing item.

5. NEW HEARINGS

A. 320 CORTE MADERA TOWN CENTER, DESIGN REVIEW APPLICATION NO. 08-033 (CRATE & BARREL). 770 TAMALPAIS DRIVE INC-CORTE MADERA TOWN CENTER (PROPERTY OWNER) (Fulton Farrel, ARCHITECT) -To allow a new entry storefront including new signage and

landscaping for Crate & Barrel retail store. (Zoning: C-2 Regional Shopping District) (Planner: Dan Bell).

Commissioner Schwartz removed himself from the discussion due to a business relationship with the applicant.

Senior Planner Bell presented the staff report for which he used a slide presentation. He explained that the applicant is seeking Design Review approval for an exterior remodel of a commercial building with a new storefront, raised façade, and business signage and landscaping. He said that the design of all storefronts at the shopping center is regulated by Corte Madera Town Center Design Guidelines. A document developed by the Center and approved by the Town. SZFM Design, a third party architectural firm, provides initial review and comment on all projects to the Center. The Guidelines provide parameters for acceptable and unacceptable design, but do not impose a strict prescriptive design. The Mall Management and SZFM design both support the proposed exterior modifications to the storefront.

He explained that the remodel includes demolition of three existing storefronts (Z Gallerie, Featherbeds & Bath, and Shoe Pavilion) and construction of a contemporary, cohesive design incorporating painted brick veneer, textured stucco and metal panel finishes and expansive storefront display windows. Staff believes that the proposed mall side does not attempt to mimic the stucco, tile and cornice design seen on many mall-side storefronts, but the alternative design and window display areas provide a compatible building scale, and comply with the general parameters of the Design Guidelines.

He said that a new storefront entry, a taller façade, new second story glazing, business signage and new landscaping are proposed for the east elevation, which will be a more contemporary design with straight, simple lines using textured stucco and metal panel finishes. A new second story window opening will be framed by a raised relief, with an illuminated area behind glass proposed between the first and second story windows. The 35'-tall façade height conforms to district standards and will help visually buffer roof top mechanics and the new elevator shaft. Corrugated metal siding will distinguish the customer pick-up area from the entry. The project includes new screening walls of cultured stone and brick to buffer the utility area to the left of the entrance, which includes two existing cooling towers.

Senior Planner Bell said that a number of new storefronts have been approved along the east side of Corte Madera Town Center in recent years, which have improved the appearance and commercial activity of the Center by replacing a blank wall or

secondary entrance with a more prominent entry area. The proposed east-side remodel is compatible with the building scale and varied architecture of the east side of the Center, and the proposed color palette will improve the context of the project.

He said staff does have concern with illuminated glazing proposed between the first floor entrance and the new second floor display windows. Finished drywall would be setback 2' from the inside of the glazing and the area between would be fully illuminated with down lighting, resulting in an unnecessary high level of light "spilling" from the building, which is not seen elsewhere in the Center.

New landscaping is proposed adjacent to the east-side entrance. The selection of trees, shrubs and groundcover, along with the new utility area screening walls and decorative pavers will provide an improved and attractive east side entrance. Staff recommends that the new buffer wall at the customer pick-up area not be clad in proposed corrugated metal, rather it be clad in cultured stone or brick.

Regarding signage, individual illuminated or halo letters are encouraged. For large tenants, allowed sign area is based on proportionality with the storefront width. The proposed east-facing Crate & Barrel wall sign is 88 sq. ft. and the width of the east-facing lease area is 120 lineal feet. The sign is not oversized for this location. A recently approved east-facing wall sign at the adjacent Barnes & Nobel store is 76 sq. ft. The three signs on the mall-side of the building total 67 sq. ft. and are equally proportional to the storefront width.

Staff believes that the proposed exterior remodel and site improvements generally conform to the Corte Madera Town Center Design Guidelines. Staff does suggest that the Commission review and determine whether the proposed illuminated glazing design feature on the east-facing storefront and the proposed corrugated metal buffer wall left of the shipping/receiving doorway are appropriate design choices for this location.

Commissioner Bailey asked for the height difference between the new façade and the old one. Senior Planner Bell said the proposed is 4' taller.

Commissioner Esteb asked about the east-side signs, which are 88 sq. ft. and 20 sq. ft. He asked whether the glass wall protrudes from the building, which it does.

Commissioner Pagnillo asked about the façade and the raised rooftop.

Sudhish Mohindroo, architect with Stan Hoffman Design Studio, said that the Center has historically consisted of large boxes, which have been successfully renovated to add

fenestration and windows. The last remaining box is this, the old Thrifty building. He said that buildings have been added and wrapped to buffer boxes, and efforts are underway to provide more of a streetscape. The skyline is varying on south side, and the main goal is to break long façade and make an area entry court, with a garden experience. The Crate & Barrel store will have two entrances. On the mall's interior the box is being lowered by 5'6". He said he agrees with staff that the illuminated display area should not be brightly illuminated. He said the metal wall is separating the loading area, and is easier to maintain because it is easier to replace if it gets damaged, but that it is more important as a symmetrical entry aid, and matches a metal wall inside the store to blend inside and outside.

Peter Wehrli, architect for corporate Crate & Barrel, said that finding the real estate to accommodate a full furniture site was difficult, and that this site is atypical, as the typical Crate & Barrel building is freestanding. He said the entry is set back so far that it is almost like a service area, so they warmed it with the large amount of glazing, which fits in with store's integration of merchandise and architecture. There is a purity to stores exterior materials that are repeated on the inside. He said the buffer wall of corrugated metal, screened with landscaping has a metallic finish with a clean fresh look. He assured the Commission that this is a customer pick up area and they do not want it to look like an area that they have turned their back on. He argued that cultured stone could chip if it gets hit, and they like to display against corrugated metal. He clarified that the building height is 34', and that a sense of human scale is important. Signage and visibility to vehicular as well as pedestrian traffic is a goal. He said that the stores are recognized by their signature materials. He concluded by pointing out the screening elements for utilities, and added that he does not want an aggressively lit display area.

Commissioner Esteb asked about the floor area increase as the new floor is extending out two feet where the glazing is extending. Yet, nowhere is this said that there is an increase in floor area. The applicant said this is unoccupied space.

Commissioner Esteb asked about signage lighting. The applicant said signage would be halo lit. Commissioner Esteb asked if the lights result in up lighting. The applicant explained that the light does go up the wall, but that it dissipates, only lighting the wall.

Brooke Vos, of 14 Granada, said the current Z Gallerie is not that tall. She said the wall is an unaesthetic box.

Commissioner Pagnillo said he was happy to have Crate & Barrel back, but there were several aspects he did not like about the design, such as the box aspect and the color.

He said he would like to see a smaller east-side sign at the top and reduced lighting and glare.

Commissioner Esteb said he liked the design and loves the sheet metal, but that the big east-side Crate & Barrel sign is too big. The two-story glass façade acts as a lantern. No other facades on this side have that product advertisement feel. He said the applicant had done a great job of creating a smaller box.

Commissioner Bailey said he appreciates the effort of design to the Center over the years. He said that how signage will be lit must be managed. He said his only concerns have to do with the building on the mall and east side. He said the existing facades are dramatically different than that which is proposed. Color scheme finishes are all so very different that he has a hard time making findings that they fit into the general scheme. He said the Illuminated glazing could be muted with a condition that staff review.

Commissioner Mace said the treatment at the Center has been wonderful over the years. He asked regarding the considerable design change whether this is an intended differential. The applicant said that there is a precedence that this is an organic evolution not frozen in time. The architecture at Bay Club, REI and Z Gallerie and all are as dramatically different as this, and the balance is tipped. Given all of the sameness, this is good for balance.

Commissioner Mace said he liked the balance, and that a straight, big box is more offensive. He said the signage is too big, and that he considers the display glass merchandising, like signage. He asked staff how much area was in the signage at California Pizza Kitchen. Senior Planner Bell said that it is smaller than that at Barnes & Nobel, which is 76 sq ft. Commissioner Mace said the furniture display is out of character with the Center. He said the corrugated metal is okay, but it would be best if the color could be darkened from silver. He said the hiding of the mechanical equipment at the ground level is good, and concluded that he has no problem with modernist approach.

Commissioner Bailey asked about the whiteness of the exterior. Said the grand scheme was to break up the boxing and this changes the boxiness.

Commissioner Pagnillo agreed that the whiteness makes the boxiness stand out more. He said he would like to see the display glass area reduced but not necessarily gone.

Planning Director Pendoley said that before final Certificate of Occupancy, lighting could be approved by the Commissioners in the field, and added that in the evenings, lighting could be off.

Commissioner Bailey solicited input from the applicant regarding color muting. Mr. Wehrli said that the storefront is setback over 100 feet, and the photograph does not do the color justice.

Planning Director Pendoley said the materials board should make clear which is the brick color.

Commissioner Bailey asked the applicant if there was any willingness to mute the color. Mr. Wehrli said that Crate & Barrel is identified with the proposed corporate white.

Commissioner Pagnillo said that the building will be big and the color will make it bigger.

Commissioner Esteb said that with the color toned down and creamier, keeping the crisp white metal trim, the proposal would fit well in the community.

Commissioner Mace concluded that the Commission would like the applicant to add 15% reduction in the size of the east-side wall sign to bring it down to neighbor's scale; to tone down lighting behind glass; and to mute the building color on the east side.

Planning Director Pendoley said final lighting could be approved in field by the Planning Commission. Color could be brought back to Consent Calendar or the Commission could also approve the color in the field (upon viewing alternative color swatches on the building).

MOTION: Motioned by Commissioner Esteb, seconded by Commissioner Bailey and passed unanimously to approve 320 Corte Madera Town Center Design Review Application No. 08-033 to allow a new entry storefront including new signage and landscaping for Crate & Barrel retail store with the following conditions:

1. Signage on east facing façade be reduced by 15%.
2. Window frame color is fine as proposed, but that the larger façade color is to be reviewed by the Commission in field with 8 sq. ft. swatches of sample colors.
3. Lighting for center fenestration to be reviewed by the Commission in the field.

Planning Director Pendoley read the appeal rights.

6. ROUTINE AND OTHER MATTERS

A. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

a. Director's Report on 301 Corte Madera Town Center, P.F. Chang's Rooftop Mechanical Equipment.

Senior Planner Bell presented the staff report for which he used a slide presentation. He said planning staff has been working with Town Center Management to explore options to exchange or reduce the visibility of the utility grease exhaust fan equipment. The extraordinarily long draw from the kitchen to the rooftop mandates the size of the equipment, and adding screening around the equipment would only make it more visible. He said that after viewing many options, staff believes the only feasible option is to rotate the system 180 degrees from the vertical vent shaft, which would reduce the length of the horizontal shaft to a 9-foot run rather than the existing 16-foot run, and minimize the appearance as seen from the street.

Stan Hoffman, of Town Center Management, said they are not thrilled with end result and looked at many different options. He said the best idea is the rotation, which will reduce the size by 50 percent. He said painting the thing the color of the sky rather than the existing red to match the terra cotta would be helpful.

Commissioner Schwartz said there are architectural elements, which can be used to fool the eye. Or the applicant could simply rotate and eliminate the sky view underneath the horizontal shaft.

Commissioner Bailey said he thinks it is a good idea to make it look like a chimney and to repaint it.

Commissioner Esteb suggested that the applicant rotate it to the west. It was mentioned that this would require a long horizontal run and be more visible from other vantage points.

Commissioner Pagnillo said that from the freeway, most people are looking at the traffic light or surrounding cars. The focus on the rooftop is more likely from Peet's.

Commissioner Bailey asked for clarification that the height is 8'8" from the roof both existing and proposed, which was affirmed.

Commissioner Mace said that sadly, the duct obstructs the view of Mt Tamalpais. What can be done has been done, but that it is up there at all is unfortunate. He agreed with the proposed rotation and elimination of the underneath sky view with some sort of visual buffer.

There was consensus by the Planning Commission to support the proposal including buffering of the underneath sky view.

Senior Planner Bell asked for clarification on desired paint color of the equipment. The applicant suggested a bluish cool gray.

4. CONTINUED HEARINGS:

A. DRAFT UPDATED GENERAL PLAN- This is a continued public hearing to receive comments on the draft Updated General Plan. The Commission will receive comments and may make revisions to the draft Plan. (Planner: Robert Pendoley).

Planning Director Pendoley presented the staff report. He said there have been several hearings on Chapter 3; the first meeting generated 13 changes. At the second hearing 10 new changes were made, and 11 of original changes were accepted. He recommended that the Commissioners referred to the revisions Table, noting that where a change has been accepted it says so, while if it has not yet been approved, it reads "drafted". He suggested the Commission discuss those reading "drafted".

Chairman Mace introduced the drafted policies beginning with RCS 2.2.c page 3-11, where the suggestion had been to add the word "strongly". Commissioner Esteb said he is unclear of the appropriateness of the use of the word strongly. Planning Director Pendoley said "strongly" is good for capitol improvements, but less so for design review.

Commissioner Schwartz said it is a question of policy as guidance versus policy as mandate. Mace said "strongly" makes a difference to him, and that he was in agreement.

Commission accepted RCS 2.3.a page 3-13. Policy to read "utilize programs offered by a utility to encourage energy efficiency"

RCS 2.6.a on page 3-14 Commissioner Pagnillo said in an effort to get a handle on cost, he doubts whether this is really necessary. If the State has already mandated Title 24, he does not think it is necessary to develop a program to exceed it.

Commissioner Schwartz said it is unfortunate that Commissioner Pagnillo had missed the hearing when the Commission discussed this issue. He explained that Title 24 merely aims at the middle of the range. Chairman Mace asked Planning Director Pendoley about the meaning of “develop a program.”

Planning Director Pendoley said the timeline says ongoing, so the Commission would do this only as directed by the Council. From a management standpoint, he said he was unsure if it was appropriate because of the State requirements, and the size of Corte Madera.

Chairman Mace suggested the removal of “develop a program”. Commissioner Schwartz said the sentiment of this phrase reflects the Commission attempt to put teeth into programs, and to push things further, rather than stick with State code.

Commissioner Pagnillo said that was not a direction the plan should go.

Commissioner Bailey said if we are debating, it couldn't be our strongest sentiment.

Commissioner Pagnillo asked about Item 2 on page 3-12 to add a policy on heat islands. He said he was concerned that the intent of the policy is to rule out artificial turf, and if so, which types of artificial turf. He said he would prefer to review proposals for potential types of artificial turf on a case-by-case basis and strive to include the best affordable.

Commissioner Schwartz said the comment was inspired by certain cases when the use of the artificial turf has caused increased temperatures and resulting public health concerns.

Commissioner Mace said rather than prohibit the use of all artificial turf, policy should be written to discourage the use of non-performing materials.

Commissioner Bailey said the Commission should look at the implementation program list. Planning Director Pendoley said it would be helpful for timeframes, and to note which are significant mitigators as defined by the EIR

Commission accepted RCS 2.7.c.

Commission accepted RCS 3.1.c on page 3-17. Planning Director Pendoley added that the Town had enrolled in a program to assist in a sustainability inventory, which will be a base for the Plan's major implementation program. This is ongoing.

Regarding RCS 4.1.b, Planning Director Pendoley will return with additional information.

Commission accepted RCS-8.1.a.

Regarding edit item 16 RCS 10.4.a on page 3-54, Planning Director Pendoley said he was unsure what to recommend as a trigger, but that the air board has mandated much here. The Commission agreed to leave it without a trigger.

Commission accepted MM 4.5.6 page 3-56 with a definition of traffic calming from ITE.

Regarding Chapter 5, Planning Director Pendoley said staff has always felt that the ideas are great, but that it is a jumble. He recommended goal one be “good community design”, then add specifics.

Regarding CD-3 on page 5-9, Commissioner Pagnillo said in some cases it is too specific, but that it was a great start on developing the guidelines He said it should simply read, “ develop a plan”.

Chairman Mace said he felt strongly that these things belong here because they have been discussed by the Commission and so stated. Commissioner Schwartz agreed.

Regarding CD-1.3 5-10, Commissioner Esteb asked if it should read, “encourage” or “strongly encourage”.

Commissioner Pagnillo said these things should be considered a list of things to include in the design guidelines.

Commissioner Schwartz said they should be listed exclusive of what should be in the design guidelines.

Chairman Mace said the timeframe for design guidelines is within 3 years.

Planning Director Pendoley said the Commission wants a policy that says we require standards, so take out “encourage” and set a standard. He said it is bad to put standards in the General Plan, and better in the design guidelines, and to leave room for discretion. Commissioners Pagnillo and Bailey agreed.

Commission accepted CD-1.5.a with the change of timeframe to 2 to 3 years for Zoning Ordinance amendment.

Commission accepted CD-1.1.a, CD-1.2.a, CD-2, and CD-3 on pages 5-9 thru 5-12 as part of previous discussion.

Commission accepted CD-1.6 and CD-1.6, with “sense of place” passage to be wordsmithed.

Commissioner Pagnillo said regarding RCS 7.5 that “require” use of native plants in landscape plans, should be changed to be “encourage” or “promote”.

Commission accepted CD-4.2 on page 5-17.

Commission accepted CD-4.6 and CD-4.6.a on page 5-19. Brooke Vos suggested put “minimize”, but the Commission preferred “control”

Commission accepted CD-5.1.

Commission accepted CD-6.

Commission accepted CD-6.1.

Commission accepted CD-6.2.

Commission accepted CD-7.5.

Commission accepted CD-6.3.

Brooke Vos asked the Commission if they had the chance to review her letter requesting a change to CD-5.3 on page 5-17, adding that Town Center and the Village are not both regional centers, and that there should be a bullet for each one of the neighborhood types.

Planning Director Pendoley said this policy does not relate to land use.

Ms. Vos asked the Commission to consider adding a policy CD-3.5 discouraging parking garages. Commissioner Schwartz said the Commission is interested in retaining flexibility.

Ms. Vos continued that on page 5-23 implementation program CD-6.5.a there should be an attempt to define “scenic roadway corridors” which are not defined in glossary. Commissioner Esteb said a list of corridors could be prefaced by “including but not limited to.”

Planning Director Pendoley advised that the best way to handle the parking structure issue is to screen them so they don’t look like parking structures, and secondly to

control the lighting. He said he is not sure how specific the Commission would want to get because garage review considerations are quite obvious.

Chairman Mace suggested this is an issue to discuss under design guidelines and that Commissioners should retain awareness that this issue is important to the community. Commissioners agreed.

Regarding Chapter 6, Planning Director Pendoley said Figure 1.6 showing all parks would be done by consultants.

Commissioner Pagnillo said it seemed that Chapter 6 was written several years ago, and much of it has already been done and gone to Council, so the document should be updated to reflect this.

Commissioners Mace and Schwartz said these things should also be included here as part of the Commission's ongoing governing document.

Regarding Chapter 7, Planning Director Pendoley said he had received feedback that accelerating the timeline for updating the Flood Protection Ordinance is ongoing as the Town is required to do this as frequently as FEMA changes the rules, which is quite frequently.

Commission accepted F-2.2.b on page 7-12, with "require" replaced with "promote."

Commissioner Esteb said F-2.2.c conflicts with F-2.2.a. Planning Director Pendoley said use of the word "promote" clarifies.

Commission accepted Page 8-4.

Commission accepted PSH-1.1.a on page 8-6.

Commission accepted PSH-1.2.a, PSH-1.3.d, PSH-2.1, MM4.3.1a, b, c, and d.

Commission accepted PSH-3.1 and PSG-3.1.a, and noted this will be controversial.

Commission accepted PSH-5.8, noting that the Commission has the ability to regulate take offs and landings, but over flights are more of a political issue.

Commissioner Pagnillo asked about Page 8-23 Noise Studies Along Highway 101. Planning Director Pendoley said this is a Mitigation Measure in the EIR.

6. ROUTINE AND OTHER MATTERS

A. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- i. Commissioners: Commissioner Schwartz reported on the Highway interchange
- ii. Director Pendoley announced the Nov 11 meeting will be cancelled due to Veteran's Day Holiday.

- a. **Report on 301 Corte Madera Town Center, P.F. Chang's Rooftop Mechanical Equipment.**

B. MINUTES

- i. Draft Planning Commission Meeting Minutes of September 23, 2008. Motioned, seconded and approved unanimously.

7. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11 pm

The next Planning Commission Regular Meeting is Tuesday October 28, 2008. The next Special Planning Commission Meeting is Thursday November 6, 2008 at 7:30 p.m. in the Corte Madera Town Hall.