

FROM THE PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES OF JANUARY 14, 2016

Agenda Items

2. 15-1409 Hearing to consider a request submitted by Dennis Smith appealing the approval of Design Review DR14-0005-S/Dollar General Georgetown to permit a new 9,000 square foot commercial building on property identified by Assessor's Parcel Numbers 061-362-01, 061-362-02, and 061-362-04. The property totals 1.2 acres and is located on the southeast side of Main Street between the intersections with Orleans Street and Harkness Street, in the Georgetown area; and staff recommending the Planning Commission take the following actions:

- 1) Adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration based on the Initial Study prepared by staff;
- 2) Adopt the Mitigation Monitoring Program in accordance with CEQA Guidelines, Section 15074(d), incorporating the Mitigation Measures as presented; and
- 3) Deny the appeal, thereby upholding the approval of Design Review DR14-0005-S by the Development Services Division Director on October 28, 2015, based on the Findings (Attachment C) and subject to the Conditions of Approval (Attachment D). (Supervisory District 4) (cont. 12/10/15, Item #3)

Commissioner Shinault stated that although he was absent when this item was first heard, he has reviewed the project and feels that he can participate in today's discussion.

Rob Peters stated that additional public comments have since been received since the last hearing, in addition to the applicant's response to comments, and, therefore, staff would like to recommend amending conditions of approval in regards to the proposed crosswalk on Orleans Street.

Commissioner Heflin disclosed that he had conducted a site visit and had met with both sides of the issue.

Sabrina Teller, applicant's agent, discussed the revised designs submitted for the Commission's consideration.

Chair Stewart inquired on the new maximum height and septic.

Leon Alevantis, nearby resident, made the following comments:

- They are the most affected by the project as they live directly across the street;
- Project will change the character and feel forever;
- Opposed project;
- Submitted letter summarizing their concerns;
- Thanked Commissioners Heflin and Stewart for listening to them and discussing their concerns;
- Community is opposed to project due to location and size;
- Independently, he worked with a local realtor to attempt to locate alternate locations for the project;

- Applicant has tried to make the project fit with the downtown area, but it is still larger than the current largest building, which is the post office; and
- If the project is approved, would like the placement of the building to be moved far from Main Street.

Tara Gauthier, resident across the street from project, made the following comments:

- Opposed project;
- Inappropriate location as it is a historic location;
- Building size is inconsistent with surrounding buildings;
- Opposed to moving the building closer to Main Street;
- Small box store is not a pedestrian-friendly store;
- Sidewalk doesn't connect with the sidewalk that is used for other businesses located further down; and
- Spoke on trash enclosure location.

Mary Louise Cann stated she lived a couple of blocks away from proposed site and the current traffic levels are already significant. She opposed the proposed location.

Will Collin made the following comments:

- Owner of the American River Inn for 33 years;
- Restored the 162 year old historic building and converted it to a Bed and Breakfast Inn with 14 guest rooms;
- He will be the most affected by the project and is opposed to it;
- Questioned the real need for this type of business in a historic district;
- Has 7 rooms that will look directly at this project site;
- Understood the need for tax base, but this project would destroy his business; and
- Spoke on noise and traffic.

Cheryl Langley distributed a handout to the Commission, spoke on septic systems, and opposed the project.

Sue Taylor made the following comments:

- Owner of the Hangman building in Placerville;
- Understood Mr. Collin's comments on the hard work required to restore an old historic building;
- Doesn't feel that box stores on a historic Main Street should be allowed;
- Applicant is being allowed to merge 3 lots which is why it is a large size building and, perhaps, the merge should not be allowed;
- Inquired what would happen if the box store went out of business;
- Wrong location for this project; and
- Commission should enforce that the look of the building match the surrounding area.

Jeff Worton, Worton's Market, made the following comments:

- Area is small and quiet;

- There is no compromise;
- Project doesn't fit the area;
- Spoke about the Main Street atmosphere;
- Spoke on creek located in area; and
- Spoke on traffic in regards to the logging trucks that travel the area.

Chair Stewart closed public comment.

Fred Sanford, Environmental Management Division, made the following comments:

- Spoke on septic regulations and policies;
- Spoke on the details for this project;
- Confirmed that State law is not being violated;
- Spoke on the type of system that will be used for this project; and
- Spoke on the setbacks for seasonal creeks.

Ms. Teller made the following rebuttal comments:

- Spoke on the new maximum height;
- Respected the public's views that oppose the project, but the County zoned that area as Commercial; and
- Spoke on the water use for the project.

Commissioner Heflin requested a discussion on the "substantial conformity" to historic guidelines as stated on page 4 of the Staff Report.

Commissioner Pratt made the following comments:

- Understood the difference between "shall" and "should";
- Researched other areas where Dollar General stores have been approved or denied;
- Stands by his comments from the last hearing;
- This is a superior design compared to other Dollar General stores he has been in;
- The size of the building is too big for this parcel and encouraged the applicant to find another location; and
- His opinion has not changed from the last hearing.

Commissioner Shinault made the following comments:

- The general design and project are good;
- The design needs to be orientated to Main Street;
- Considers the project being right up to Main Street because the parking lot asphalt extends to the street;
- Buffer is needed to Main Street;
- Loading dock needs to be re-located;
- Not happy with the site plan; and
- Arches do make it look like 3 different structures tied together.

Commissioner Miller made the following comments:

- It would not be the only business in town that has trash enclosures in the front;
- Thinks it will look fine;
- Inquired what types of businesses would locate into the 3 separate vacant lots that would be viable; and
- Likes project.

Commissioner Heflin made the following comments:

- Hasn't changed his opinion from the last hearing;
- Project is out of character for the historic downtown area of Georgetown;
- Project doesn't fit as it is too big; and
- Doesn't want this to be a "pink elephant".

Chair Stewart made the following comments:

- Applicant has made strides to resolve the concerns;
- No issue with the height or the trash enclosure being located in the front;
- Sign doesn't seem consistent and looks out of place;
- Project is consistent with zoning;
- Understood the issue of the building location on the site; and
- Could see some more tweaks architecturally.

Commissioner Miller made a motion and prior to a second, Mr. Peters read into the record recommended actions that included revised exhibits, a new exhibit (P), amended Conditions of Approval and a new Condition (#50).

Commissioner Shinault indicated that he would prefer to see an alternate design oriented more to Main Street, with the roofs of the two corners being more consistent with Main Street.

County Counsel David Livingston stated that there was a motion on the table that needed to be addressed and provided other options for the Commission to consider once that procedural option was handled.

There was no further discussion.

Motion #1

Motion: Commissioner Miller moved, seconded by Commissioner Stewart, and failed (2-3), to 1) Adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration based on the Initial Study prepared by staff; 2) Adopt the Mitigation Monitoring Program in accordance with CEQA Guidelines, Section 15074(d), incorporating the Mitigation Measures as presented; and 3) Deny the appeal, thereby upholding the approval of Design Review DR14-0005-S by the Development Services Division Director on October 28, 2015, based on the Findings and subject to the Conditions of Approval as amended: (a) Amendments, as identified, to the building and crosswalk. MOTION FAILED.

AYES: Miller, Stewart
NOES: Heflin, Pratt, Shinault

Commissioner Shinault stated the design was very close but the applicant needed to come back with some small revisions.

Chair Stewart asked the applicant's agent if they would prefer a continuance off-calendar or have an action taken today with the option to appeal to the Board of Supervisors.

Ms. Teller indicated their preference would be to continue to a date certain meeting and requested the February 25, 2016 meeting.

Motion #2

Motion: Commissioner Shinault moved, seconded by Commissioner Miller, and carried (3-2), to continue the item to the February 25, 2016 meeting.

AYES: Miller, Shinault, Stewart

NOES: Heflin, Pratt