



**City of Belvedere
Planning Commission Regular Meeting
Minutes**

17 January 2024 – 6:30 PM

City Council Chambers City Hall: 450 San Rafael Avenue, Belvedere CA Phone 415.435.3838
City of Belvedere Internet Address: <https://www.cityofbelvedere.org>

A. CALL TO ORDER OF REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

Chair Pat Carapiet called the special meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers. The meeting was also available via Zoom webinar. Commissioners present: Pat Carapiet, Ashley Johnson, Nena Hart, Marsha Lasky, and Alex Seidel. Commissioners Absent: Kevin Burke, Claire Slaymaker. Staff present: Director of Planning and Building Rebecca Markwick Attorney Ann Danforth, Associate Planner Samie Malakiman, and Technician Nancy Miller.

B. OPEN FORUM

This is an opportunity for any citizen to briefly address the Planning Commission on any matter that does not appear on this agenda. Upon being recognized by the Chair, please state your name, and limit your oral statement to no more than three minutes. Matters that appear to warrant a more-lengthy presentation or Commission consideration will be agendaized for further discussion at a later meeting.

No one wished to speak.

C. REPORTS

Director Markwick reported on the City Council meeting of January 16, 2024.

D. CONSENT CALENDAR

The Consent Calendar consists of items that the Planning Commission considers to be non-controversial. Unless any item is specifically removed by any member of the Planning Commission, staff, or audience, the Consent Calendar will be adopted by one motion. Items removed will be considered in the sequence as they appear below. If any member of the audience wishes to have an item removed, follow the remote meeting procedures referenced above. If you do not have access to the Zoom meeting platform, please email the Director of Planning and Building, Rebecca Markwick at rmarkwick@cityofbelvedere.org and indicate that you would like to remove a consent calendar item and identify the item. After removing the item, the Planning Commission will call for comment at the appropriate time.

There were no requests to remove items from the Consent Calendar.

MOTION: To adopt the Consent Calendar consisting of the following items:

1. Draft **Minutes of the November 14, 2023**, special meeting of the Planning Commission.
2. Draft **Minutes of the January 3, 2024** special meeting of the Planning Commission.

MOVED BY: Alex Seidel, seconded by Marsha Lasky.

VOTE: AYES: Pat Carapiet, Ashley Johnson, Alex Seidel, Nena Hart, and Marsha Lasky.
ABSENT: Claire Slaymaker, Kevin Burke

E. PUBLIC HEARINGS

3. Design Review application for the property located at **46 Lagoon Road** (APN 060-063-03). The applicant proposes landscape improvements, including new paving, water feature, spa, entry walk and gate, plantings, and exterior lighting. Staff recommends that the project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA

Guidelines Section 15301 Existing Facilities. Applicant: Catherine Coy, Catherine Coy Design;
Property Owner: Bart Stephens.

Associate Planner Malakiman presented the staff report. A slide show presentation accompanied his remarks.¹

Pete Pedersen, landscape architect for the project, stated that Palm trees are found in many places in Belvedere, as shown in several slides he presented. He explained that these are drought tolerant and WELO compliant. The number of palm trees in this design have been reduced to 16.

Planning Commissioners asked for more information about the numbers of trees in the boxes shown on the plans. In some cases, there appear to be double trunks in the boxes on site which would count as two trees. Details on the proposed lighted gate ring were also discussed. Mr. Pedersen confirmed that the number of trees as called out in the plans would be the number to be considered for approval tonight.

Open public hearing.

No one wished to speak.

Close public hearing.

Commissioners discussed the proposal. Concerns were still raised about the large number of Palm trees in the proposed design. Their potential heights, maintenance issues, and that they are inconsistent with typical Belvedere landscaping were all concerns. Lowering the rear yard spa was discussed and a reduction screening in the rear planter would be needed. Consensus was to delete any Palm trees on the rear (Lagoon) side of the property.

The proposed feature light ring on the front gate was discussed. Commissioners would like to have the ability to review a physical mockup or similar. It was explained that the dimmer on the light strip could be permanently set at a low level as a condition of approval.

Open public hearing.

Mr. Pedersen stated that the spa cannot be lowered due to the level of the water table and existing paved conditions. There will be adequate screening to shield from view from the water. He stated that he does not want another continuance.

Close public hearing.

Commissioners decided to approve the project with conditions added to the approval Resolution: 1 Palm tree on the front side, no Palms on the rear, permanently dimmed gate light ring if mockup or sample is approved by Chair and staff, in final landscape and lighting plan.

MOTION: To adopt the applications for Design Review for **46 Lagoon Road** as conditioned.

MOVED BY: Ashley Johnson, seconded by Nena Hart.

VOTE: AYES: Pat Carapiet, Ashley Johnson, Alex Seidel, Nena Hart, and Marsha Lasky.
ABSENT: Claire Slaymaker, Kevin Burke.

4. Design Review, Demolition Permit, Variance, Exception to Total Floor Area, and Revocable License applications for the property located at **455 Belvedere Avenue** (APN: 060-241-05) to demolish an existing 1,011 square-foot residence and construct a 5,035 square-foot single-family residence with attached 2-car garage. The project proposes new landscaping, hardscaping, retaining walls, exterior lighting, and a swimming pool. The applicant requests a Variance from the zoning ordinance to allow a 48-foot-tall structure where 36-foot-tall structures are permitted. The applicant requests an Exception to Total Floor Area to allow a 5,035 square-foot residence where 4,850 square-feet are permitted. A Revocable License is required for private improvements on the Blanding Lane right-of-way. The project is categorically exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guideline Section 15303(a) New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures. Project Applicant: Federico Engel; Property Owner: Kwan Group LLC.

¹ The slide show presentation is archived with the record of the meeting.

Associate Planner Malakiman presented the staff report. A slide show presentation accompanied his remarks.²

Federico Engel, project architect presented the project.

Commissioners asked for clarifications on some of the project design.

Open Public Hearing.

Armand Atkins representing the owners of 445 Belvedere Avenue who are the next door neighbor, has some issues with view blockages by Pavilion 2. He submitted several photographs to illustrate the concerns with blocked views. He requested that the height and height Variance not be supported and hopes that this element of the design can be reduced in height and pulled back. The affected area of his home would be public rooms from the upper level.

William Rothman, resident, stated that the public views of the Golden Gate would be obstructed. Because this is a new project and subject to current rules, whatever was previously there is not relevant to this consideration.

Close public hearing.

Commissioners discussed the project application. There was general support for the design but requests for some modifications to reduce height, floor area, and adjustments to reduce view blockages were suggested. Consideration might be given to a reduction in the amount of glazing.

MOTION: To continue the applications for **455 Belvedere Avenue** to a future Planning Commission meeting.

MOVED BY: Ashley Johnson, seconded by Alex Seidel

VOTE: AYES: Pat Carapiet, Ashley Johnson, Alex Seidel, Nena Hart, and Marsha Lasky.
ABSENT: Claire Slaymaker, Kevin Burke.

5. Design Review and Exception to Total Floor Area applications for the property located at **401 Golden Gate Avenue** (APN: 060-222-01) to add 603 square feet to the residence. The project proposes new landscaping, hardscaping, exterior lighting, and a swimming pool. The applicant requests an Exception to Total Floor Area to allow a 5,185 square-foot residence where 4,850 square-feet are permitted. The project is categorically exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guideline Section 15301(l)(1) Existing Facilities. Applicant: Jeff Dorso. Property Owners: Ivanhoe Belvedere LLC.

Associate Planner Malakiman presented the staff report. A slide show presentation accompanied his remarks.³

Jeff Dorso, applicant, presented the project. He addressed some comments received during the site visits by Commissioners.

Alpna Gupta, Walker Workshop, presented a slide show of the plans to illustrate the design and landscape plan. Additional updated plans were presented for discussion.

Commissioners asked questions regarding proposed landscape and step lighting, and screening for the underside of the pool. Low emission glazing will be used for the glass wall. Approximately 18 cubic yards of off haul is estimated. The deed restricted JADU is not a part of the review tonight but the process will be clarified at the time of Building Permit issuance. It was clarified that a lighted handrail on the interior stair core will be a part of the project.

Open public hearing.

No one wished to speak.

² The slide show presentation is archived with the record of the meeting.

³ The slide show presentation is archived with the record of the meeting.

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Close public hearing.

Commissioners discussed the project. Modifications to the numbers and locations of light fixtures could be considered as part of the final landscape and lighting plan. Concerns were expressed that the recessed lighting in the overhangs may be very visible when viewed from below the property looking uphill. Alternatives need to be considered.

Chair Carapiet stated that because the pool location is very high up there may be too much exposure of the underside of the pool structure from below. She is unsure that the proposed planning plan is sufficient to screen these structures. She cannot make the Design Review findings as it is currently proposed.

MOTION: To approve Design Review for the project at **401 Golden Gate Avenue** as conditioned.

MOVED BY: Ashley Johnson, seconded by Marsh Lasky


VOTE: AYES: Ashley Johnson, Nena Hart, Marsha Lasky, Alex Seidel
NOES: Pat Carapiet
ABSENT: Kevin Burke, Claire Slaymaker

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 PM

PASSED AND APPROVED at a regular meeting of the Belvedere Planning Commission on February 20, 2024 by the following vote:

VOTE AYES: Pat Carapiet, Kevin Burke, Nena Hart, Alex Seidel
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: Claire Slaymaker (due to absence from meeting)
ABSENT: Ashley Johnson, Marsha Lasky

APPROVED:


Pat Carapiet, Planning Commission Chair

ATTEST:


Beth Haener, City Clerk