



Planning and Transportation Commission

Meeting Summary, March 20, 2022



Introduction

The Planning and Transportation Commission meeting occurred on March 20, 2023, at 7:00 PM.

- The workshop was held in person in the City Hall Council Chambers at 600 Elm Street.
- The meeting was recorded and posted by the City here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=oPHsCufhEIU

Overview

The purpose of the meeting was to review preliminary objective design standards for single-family residential development types in San Carlos.

- The City team included:
 - Andrea Mardesich
 - Rucha Dande
 - Meghan Riddlespurger
 - Lisa Costa Sanders
- The consultant team from MIG included:
 - Rishi Dhody
 - Laura Stetson

The following pages summarize the feedback received.

Public Comments

Three members from the public provided comments.

- **Setbacks/Stepbacks**

- The existing stepback standard that creates “wedding cake” structures is preferred.

- **Garage**

- Going from 20 to 18 feet for garage door widths can make it difficult for seniors, people with two cars, and people with kids.
 - Make sure that people can park their vehicles in their own personal property and not on the street.

- Provide examples of instances how new ODS provisions will cover gaps that have resulted in less-than-desirable results.

Planning Commission Comments - Development Standards

- Identify and evaluate standards that could possibly increase the costs of development projects.
- Allow for a diversity of housing styles.
- These standards will provide clarity for residents and developers and will create an efficient process for City staff.
- Establish better processes where the City staff can approve projects without having to go to a design review meeting and make it more cost effective.
- Incorporate feedback received from the architecture group.
- Incorporate what compromises have worked in San Carlos and add that to a palette for what an architect can choose from.
- Make roof overhangs an option, not a requirement.
- Test ODS on modern-style buildings.

Planning Commission Comments – Site Planning

- **Setbacks/Stepbacks**
 - The setbacks and second-story stepback recommendations presented at the meeting are supported.
 - A 7-foot setback requirement (entire plane) will allow flexibility.
- **Garage and Driveways**
 - Support for decreasing the garage frontage, but not to the point where you cannot park two cars.
 - 18-foot driveway would be supported if it can fit two cars. If it can only park one car, then it would not be supported. Allow space for the elderly, people with disabilities, and people with kids.
 - Windows in garages could be a safety issue.
 - Consider making the garage overhang an optional standard.
 - Add clarity for the garage landscaping requirement.

Planning Commission Comments – Site Planning

Porch

- Support for reducing the size of the porch to 30 square feet facing the street.
- Support for porch encroachment into the front setback. This helps engage the house more with the street.
- Add and clarify alternatives to porches.

Planning Commission Comments – Building Design

- **Articulation and Massing**

- Review the articulation standards to see if they will conflict with modern designs.
- Not desirable to break up the wall plane every 15 feet; should be 25 feet. This allows for more flexibility.
- Support for recommended setback requirements for rear balconies.
- For massing, take the guidance of the architects and designers.
- Side yard balconies should not be allowed for privacy concerns.

- **Porch**

- Consider that not all architecture styles lend themselves to a large porch.

Planning Commission Comments – Building Design

- **Windows**

- Don't restrict the window alignment offset. Off-setting the windows will work in some circumstances, but not all. This standard should be reevaluated, as it brings fairness considerations into question.
- Windowing treatments like glazing can accomplish privacy goals.

- **Colors and Materials**

- Hesitation about requiring two materials and two finishes. Re-evaluate.
- Clarify what elements of the house will count towards the change of color requirement (e.g., roofs, window trim?).

Planning Commission Comments – Other Details

- **Landscaping**

- Support of low-water design for the front yard.
- Support for landscaping requirements recommended.
- Requirement to allow for pervious surface should not be reduced to more than 50% to soften the look of concrete.

- **Utilities**

- Restrict ground-level/overhead utilities going forward.
- Better coordination with utility companies for locating the utilities.
- Specify that screening is not required for solar panels.