



# City of Burlingame

BURLINGAME CITY HALL  
501 PRIMROSE ROAD  
BURLINGAME, CA 94010

## Meeting Minutes Planning Commission

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Monday, June 24, 2024

7:00 PM

Council Chambers/Online

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### 1. CALL TO ORDER - 7:00 p.m. - Council Chambers/Online

*The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. Staff in attendance: Interim Community Development Director Ruben Hurin, Assistant Planner Fazia Ali, and Assistant City Attorney Scott Spansail.*

### 2. ROLL CALL

**Present** 6 - Horan, Lowenthal, Pfaff, Schmid, Shores, and Tse

**Absent** 1 - Comaroto

### 3. REQUEST FOR AB 2449 REMOTE PARTICIPATION

*There were no requests.*

### 4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

#### a. Draft June 10, 2024 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

**Attachments:** [Draft June 10, 2024 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes](#)

*The following corrections were made:*

*Item 9a; first bullet under Commission Discussion/Direction: change "...window is a lot. It if is cumulative, people change just one window, it can be a lot of windows 25% in any direction." to "...window size is a lot, in particular if it is cumulative. People may change just one window, but it could be a lot of windows of 25% in any direction."*

*Item 9a; first bullet under Commission Discussion/Direction: insert ", nor made larger all over" after "My concern is that windows don't look great when made smaller all over".*

*Item 10b; first bullet from top of page: change "may move one" to "may move on".*

**Vice-Chair Horan made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Tse, to approve the meeting minutes. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye:** 6 - Horan, Lowenthal, Pfaff, Schmid, Shores, and Tse

**Absent:** 1 - Comaroto

### 5. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

*There were no changes to the agenda.*

### 6. PUBLIC COMMENTS, NON-AGENDA

*Chair Lowenthal opened the public hearing.*

*Public Comments:*

> Robert Yorio, 2325 Adeline Drive: I am here to speak about the environmental review and Amendment to Conditional Use Permit for Mercy High School Athletic Center that was on the June 10th Planning Commission meeting. I have reviewed the meeting minutes and a few comments said to the commission. I am here tonight with my neighbors from 2335 Adeline Drive. We have some concerns about the location, use and access to what is referred to in the applicant's construction logistics plan as the Construction Parking Lay Down Area. It's an area on the maps where construction equipment will be situated during construction and where the construction workers will come in and out to park on their daily work. That location is across the street almost directly from our property. Adeline Drive is particularly narrow at that proposed location. The contractor's plan indicates that there will be two 8-ft wide gates to accommodate the delivery of equipment and access for as many as 50 workers over the course of the 14-month construction of the project. That is a real problem for neighbors that live on Adeline Drive and the adjoining streets, daily commuters who go down Adeline Drive to El Camino Real in the morning and back in the afternoon, and parents and students who are driving and walking to either Lincoln Elementary, Hoover Elementary, Burlingame Intermediate or Mercy High School itself. There's a lot of foot traffic in the morning. Parents walking kids, high school kids walking by themselves, elementary students some with parents and some without. There are 4, four-way stop intersections from El Camino Real to the site where this construction lay down location is. I reviewed the comments about this area from the June 10th meeting and from my reading of the meeting minutes, there was an attempt to address this issue by noting that worker parking during construction will be at a lot inside the property instead of Adeline Drive where there is clearly not enough parking spaces, including side streets. But that approach misses the main safety concerns. Cars and trucks driving to the proposed site will greatly increase the traffic during morning commute hours. Equipment movers and workers will be traveling right next to the parents, students and children walking and biking on their way to the neighborhood schools mentioned earlier.

There's an alternative that I want to point out to the commission. If you look at the map, there is an area at the end of Hoover Avenue that is called the Eucalyptus Lot which is used for overflow parking. It seems big enough and relatively flat to accommodate workers who come daily. They can park there and be shuttled over to the construction site. It would greatly alleviate the traffic problems on Adeline Drive with this proposed site for the construction lay down. I encourage the commission to take a look at that.

Chair Lowenthal closed the public hearing.

## 7. STUDY ITEMS

*There were no Study Items.*

## 8. CONSENT CALENDAR

- a. Adoption of Resolution Updating the Guidelines Regarding the Level of Review Required for After-Action Changes to Approved Design Review Projects. Staff Contact: Ruben Hurin

Attachments: [Staff Report](#)

[Attachments](#)

[Resolution](#)

Commissioner Pfaff made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Tse, to adopt the resolution. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** 6 - Horan, Lowenthal, Pfaff, Schmid, Shores, and Tse

**Absent:** 1 - Comaroto

## 9. REGULAR ACTION ITEMS

*There were no Regular Action Items.*

## 10. DESIGN REVIEW STUDY

- a. 1556 Balboa Way, zoned R-1- Application for Design Review for a first and second story addition to an existing single-unit dwelling. (Alex Tzang Architects, applicant and architect; Daniel Gage, property owner) (45 noticed) Staff Contact: Catherine Keylon

**Attachments:** [1556 Balboa Way - Staff Report](#)

[1556 Balboa Way - Attachments](#)

[1556 Balboa Way - Plans](#)

*All Commissioners have visited the project site. Commissioner Shores noted that he briefly spoke with the property owner during his site visit. Assistant Planner Ali provided an overview of the staff report.*

*Chair Lowenthal opened the public hearing.*

*Ricci Wu, designer, represented the applicant and answered questions regarding the application.*

*Public Comments:*

> *There were no public comments.*

*Chair Lowenthal closed the public hearing.*

*Commission Discussion/Direction:*

> *Acknowledged receiving the letter from the neighbor. I have a similar thought expressed in this letter. The front does not hold the whole thing together.*

> *Appreciate the 3-D views provided, it really helps us to see what your design is trying to accomplish. Also appreciate the new gable entry to try and move away from the full ranch style architecture. But I agree with my fellow commissioner that the second story is not holding the first floor together. We don't get much of ranch style homes that have second stories. It just looks like something that has been put on top instead of integrating into the design of the first floor. I was hoping that the front piece would do it, but it's not. Now that you have turned the gable ends of the second floor towards the street, which I typically like, with the board and batten going all the way up to the ridge beam there is not much break up there. It is making the second floor look taller than it is. Appreciate the 8-foot plate height, but the proposed design is making it look disproportionately bigger on top on what is traditionally a low ranch style base. It has some scale challenges. Suggests making it feel integrated both on top and the bottom.*

> *The wrap-around roof at the first level does break up a larger plane in the back in the elevation, but I'm not sure if you can keep the rafters when you build the rest of the structure going up. Consider providing an overhang, a belly band or another way to differentiate the lower floor plane from the upper floor. The materials don't bother me. We are just not getting the scale to integrate quite right. The wrap around roof is not doing any favors in the back. I see some great potential but am struggling with scale and a few other items.*

> *I agree with my fellow commissioners. Appreciate how this design is trying to get together but I am having some issues with the proportions of the second story in relation to the main floor regarding window*

sizing. In some cases, the large window in the primary bedroom is out of scale in relation to the multi-sliding door down below. Suggests addressing it more carefully. There could be a better way to connect the upper floor with the lower floor rather than having the tiny roof extensions between the levels, as my fellow commissioner suggested. I don't mind the material changes either, but the vertical board and batten on the second story is making the upper floor look taller than it really is. It could be because there is nothing on the pediment area that could help bring the scale down. A change of material or direction of materials can help.

> From a design perspective you need to have the first and second stories come together cohesively and represent some type of a unified whole even though there may be material changes. I feel like the project is on the way to something but is not quite there. Not sure if a design review consultant may be able to aid this applicant in pulling the design cohesively. The vertical posts at the front porch are a little thin, they feel fragile in terms of holding up a large, framed member over the front porch. Needs adjustments to details of proportions, size and items like that.

> I agree with my fellow commissioners. The design is going in the right direction. I like the massing on the second floor; I like the way it is set back. I don't mind the material change. I was confused why the overhang on the gable end is so narrow on the front versus the back of the house. There are two different dimensions shown. It would be good if we have an overhang on the front. The roof eaves look a little plain. I also agree that the front needs to be beefier if it is going to make a statement.

> I am concerned that you are taking down 49.9% of the walls. If you take an extra 5-1/2 inches of wall down, you have now exceeded 50% and you will have to come back to the Planning Commission. It seems pretty close for a contractor to get on site, and you are exactly on the maximum FAR. If you make the house ten square inches bigger, you will be out of compliance. You are pushing it too close to the edge for a renovation. I am a little nervous about these numbers.

> I don't know if the design is far away. It is up to the applicant if they want to go through the design review consultant, it doesn't seem that far to me.

> I agree with my fellow commissioners. The comment from one of the neighbors stuck out to me. The front porch is beautiful, but as my fellow commissioner said, the posts need to be bigger. If that design is repeated somewhere in the eaves in the front, that may help with the it being plain. The shallowness at the front could use a similar depth.

> I agree with everything that has been said. The applicant has received a lot of interesting points. Even though the front porch is not exactly in line with the farmhouse style, I think it is attractive and adds a lot. It is close and all the pieces are here.

> We have a lot of examples in the Design Review Guidelines to help guide the applicant. A lot of those were well thought out by people who put a lot of effort into trying to help with the architectural styles. There's a lot that you can take with that to apply. The project is close, there are just a few things that are not going your way right now. If you don't address them, the next meeting will not go that well.

**Commissioner Schmid made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Horan, to place the item on the Regular Action Calendar when plans have been revised as directed. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye:** 6 - Horan, Lowenthal, Pfaff, Schmid, Shores, and Tse

**Absent:** 1 - Comaroto

- b. 114 Bayswater Avenue, zoned R-1 - Application for Design Review for a new, two-story single-unit dwelling and detached garage. (Quinn Ye, Rockwood Home Development LLC, applicant and designer; Rockwood Home Development LLC, property owner) (65

noticed) Staff Contact: 'Amelia Kolokihakaufisi

Attachments: [114 Bayswater Ave - Staff Report](#)

[114 Bayswater Ave - Attachments](#)

[114 Bayswater Ave - Plans](#)

All Commissioners have visited the project site. Assistant Planner Ali provided an overview of the staff report.

Chair Lowenthal opened the public hearing.

Quinn Ye, designer, represented the applicant regarding the application.

Public Comments:

> There were no public comments.

Chair Lowenthal closed the public hearing.

Commission Discussion/Direction:

> Curious why there was a porch exemption, why is that considered a porch and not just a regular door stoop? (Hurin: It is considered a porch because it is covered. Porches can be recessed or project out. In this case, it is a recessed porch.)

> Wanted clarification on the new assembly bill regarding the number of bedrooms and parking. Staff mentioned that there are four bedrooms in this home and thus the requirement for two parking spaces. Doesn't the living room on this floor plan qualify as another bedroom because it is enclosed? (Hurin: The code now specifically calls out living rooms as not being a bedroom. So, no matter the configuration of the room, enclosed or not, a living room is not considered a bedroom. Under the zoning code update, we listed the different types of rooms that are not considered bedrooms and a living room is one of those rooms.)

> With regard to the water issue raised by a neighbor, is that something that is being addressed? (Ye: At the planning stage, we received a comment about the drainage. It seems okay that we are adding drainage on the other side. We will provide more details during the building permit stage. The same neighbor also raised a question about the fence. The existing fence is 5-foot tall with 1-foot of lattice on top. We will talk to the neighbors if they are willing to share the cost so we can raise it to a 6-foot fence with 1-foot of lattice on top. The same neighbor also requested that the door on the east side of the house contain frosted glass; we can do that.)

> There are two risers at the front landing and another step up into the house from the front door. Consider raising the level of the front porch so there is a level transition between the porch and finished floor inside the house to build up the front porch and have a grander entrance.

> This is quite well done and a very attractive home.

> I agree with my fellow commissioner's comment regarding the details on the windows. I like the idea of having the header and the sill expressed and defined. You can do it in stucco in another color. It just needs to come out proud a little bit, so it shows significantly and not just a faint line. If it comes out like an eyebrow about an inch, you will get the effect. There are a lot of ways to do that easily. I would encourage you to do a section through the window system to show how it is bumping out the header piece. When windows details are provided, it helps us to know that you have thought about quality windows, how that assembly works and that you will have good trim details. I appreciate the rest of the drawings, but a

window detail would be fantastic and will clarify what we are looking for in that area. I didn't see any concerns and I think it will look nice. I am looking forward to it.

> I agree that this is a very nicely tailored home. It has a nice style and massing with the modern Tudor architecture. The reason why I was questioning the window trim detail is because it can look cheap if it is not done well. You have mentioned that you are intending to use a prefabricated product; please provide a specification sheet along with the details for the next meeting so we have an idea of the product you are planning to use. There is a project currently being constructed along Hillside Drive near Alvarado Avenue, that detail looks horrible and very cheap. It is a nicely designed home but want you to pay attention to this one element because it can add a lot of interest to your windows. It is very pared down as modern, but the shadow details and corner edges being sharp versus rounded, can be expressed on the finished product.

> I like the project; it does a good job. The proportion and massing are all good. Even though it is a modern Tudor style, the absence of anything in those large gable ends in the first story on the left side and the second story on the right side seems like dead space. It could use an additional detail, like a vent or something. If it is investigated and it does not look like it is going to add to the design, it's not a deal breaker for me. Overall, the design is good.

> I agree with my fellow commissioners. It is a beautiful design. Thank you for providing the rendering, it is beautiful and very helpful. Looking at the rendering the first time, it seems a little elongated with the Tudor architecture having steep roofs and the windows can be a little wider. Now that I've been looking at it longer, the design seems to grow on me. Consider widening the windows to see what it does. Otherwise, the project is great.

> I like the width of the windows.

> My fellow commissioner has an interesting idea about the gable with the vent. It would look nice and may pull it down. Also consider the comment about the front stoop having the same floor level as the house, it will look classy.

**Commissioner Schmid made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Tse, to place the item on the Regular Action Calendar when plans have been revised as directed. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye:** 6 - Horan, Lowenthal, Pfaff, Schmid, Shores, and Tse

**Absent:** 1 - Comaroto

- c. 1472 Drake Avenue, zoned R-1- Application for Design Review for a new, two-story single-unit dwelling and attached garage. (Debo Sodipo, dZXYN Management Group, designer; Tan Tseng, property owner) (55 noticed) Staff Contact: Brittany Xiao

**Attachments:** [1472 Drake Ave - Staff Report](#)  
[1472 Drake Ave - Attachments](#)  
[1472 Drake Ave - Renderings](#)  
[1472 Drake Ave - Plans](#)

All Commissioners have visited the project site. Assistant Planner Ali provided an overview of the staff report.

Chair Lowenthal opened the public hearing.

Debo Sodipo, designer, represented the applicant and answered questions regarding the application.

*Public Comments:*

> *Public comment sent via email by Lynne Carson: I find it difficult to see yet another beautiful, historic home in Burlingame destroyed. The Burlingame neighborhoods are losing the charm of unique historic homes in favor of white shipping container houses. One of the characteristics that makes Burlingame a sought-after town to live in, are the homes. If someone doesn't like the style of a particularly beautiful, older home, don't buy it. At what point will the Planning Commission step in and stop the leveling of our beautiful Burlingame homes?*

*Chair Lowenthal closed the public hearing.*

*Commission Discussion/Direction:*

> *Thank you for the presentation. Appreciate the thoroughness and for providing samples of homes for use to compare with.*

> *There are inconsistencies between the floor plans, elevations and renderings. Correct drafting errors to be consistent with the design intent. Make sure that the line weights are correct to help us read the drawings appropriately.*

> *On the sample of approved projects that were shown in the presentation, I just wanted to note that we don't do skimpy porches anymore. At some point, we all realized that a porch needs to have a presence on your design. Thank you for making the porch have a presence on your design.*

> *I appreciate the presentation and touching on some of the issues I had with the design based on the email we received from Mr. Sargent. I still think the windows are too big, especially the front windows. I am glad that the owners have decided to put divided lites because all the homes in the neighborhood have divided lites. In keeping with the neighborhood, that is a must.*

> *1516 Bernal Avenue has more details on the gables while the gable on this house is plain. It could use a bit more detailing to add interest to the front of the house.*

> *I like the idea of making the front columns larger and removing the faux veneer stone. Whenever I see faux veneer on columns, it does not work when it is 12 inches around because you are just seeing the edges of the veneer and it looks cheap. I would be in favor of removing the veneers entirely and just having a more substantial wood column.*

> *What are the rules on the deck at the back? It is almost like a second-floor balcony. I am concerned about the privacy of the homes that are downhill from there. (Hurin: In this particular case, we have a down sloping lot. We consider a second floor deck to be at least 9 feet above adjacent grade. If you have a level lot, the second floor will be 9 feet above grade. In this case, it is less than 9 feet, so we still consider it a first floor deck. A Special Permit is not required and they are not limited to 75 square feet.)*

> *I read through Mr. Sargent's email and agree with a lot of the points he raised. The Bernal Avenue examples are not great for Drake Avenue. There are a lot of nice houses on that block that are a bit of a craftsman style and more historically noted. His points are well-taken.*

> *The windows are too tall at the front. It has a western exposure, so those windows will get extremely hot. It's either you will have some shades down or the room will take a lot of heat. As much as you want the view, consider that you will have a lot of sun exposure on that side.*

> *I agree with my fellow commissioner about the gable end. Consider a material change to help with the scale quite a bit. We have been seeing a lot of people taking the materials all the way up to the ridge and it looks like something is missing. There is an opportunity to improve upon the scale in that area.*

- > *Having divided lites is a huge enhancement in design.*
- > *The columns stuck out for me. If you look at 1151 Rosedale Avenue, which was recently completed, they did a poor job of doing those columns with the material and how skinny they are. It is just way out of scale. It is a great example of how not to do this; we are concerned about that. Sometimes straight square columns look skinny. There are a few examples on Howard Avenue where people have done a more angled base to their column or angled all the way up, like starting with 18 inches at the bottom and ending up with about 10 inches at the top. It gives you a more dynamic look and helps to avoid the skinny look. Another option to consider is building a low wall in between columns and help expand that material to make it be more than just a column base.*
- > *I am a little concerned about how the down slope on the left side and the retaining wall will impact the neighbor next door. Suggests providing a section of the site since you are raising the garage slab about 2-3 feet where it is now. There would be some retaining to even out what is happening at the neighbor's side. I would hate for you to get that far along then get caught with the civil drawings and must change your design quite a bit. Just to make sure that both sides of the neighbors are happy and could make that work.*
- > *The windows are big. The divided lites will help bring down the scale, but there are still a lot of windows facing west.*
- > *I agree with my fellow commissioners. The window sizes should be addressed. Adding some divided lites will help in this situation.*
- > *I wanted to comment on the public comment that was read to us. We as a commission cannot weigh in on colors. Though somebody may be concerned about the preponderance of white and black houses in the city, it is not in our purview to comment on that. However, we can talk about materials. Looking at the stone cladding on the columns, suggests applying a different material on part of the house to add some architectural or textural interest. Consider adding some cladding along the front living room with reduced-sized windows.*
- > *The gable ends could have more attention which can benefit the design.*
- > *The split finish on the roofing materials is fine with the limit of standing seam metal roof over the front porch.*
- > *Samples have been provided on how to address the columns at the front porch, which I agree with.*
- > *Cleaning up the drawings, clarifying some of the details on the elevations to be consistent with the renderings will help.*
- > *The massing seems fine. I appreciate the thought that has been put into the presentation.*
- > *Thank you for the very detailed presentation. I wish more people had samples of designs that they were going for that are already built for us to look at, that was very helpful. I agree with what my fellow commissioners have said.*
- > *Right now, there are triangular pieces of wood at the gable ends which I have missed. The renderings are good, but they did not show as well. It is something going in the right direction. To make it stand out a little bit more, consider adding a belly band or a small strip of trim.*
- > *The divided lites are very important in this neighborhood.*



> *In my opinion, this is the most beautiful block in Easton because it has a lot of old historic homes and the new ones have been done very meticulously with a lot of attention to detail and materials. It feels like a high bar but being informed of the context of that street may be helpful.*

> *I didn't have any issues with the attached garage.*

**Commissioner Schmid made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Horan, to place the item on the Regular Action Calendar when plans have been revised as directed. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye:** 6 - Horan, Lowenthal, Pfaff, Schmid, Shores, and Tse

**Absent:** 1 - Comaroto

## **11. COMMISSIONER'S REPORTS**

*There were no Commissioner's Reports.*

## **12. DIRECTOR REPORTS**

*Interim Community Development Director Hurin noted that at the June 17, 2024 City Council meeting, Parks Superintendent/City Arborist Richard Holtz and Assistant City Attorney Scott Spansail presented information regarding the Tree Ordinance Update. Assistant City Attorney Spansail noted that the Ordinance will be returning to the City Council in the Fall.*

## **13. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

*No Future Agenda Items were suggested.*

## **14. ADJOURNMENT**

*The meeting was adjourned at 8:19 p.m.*