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CITY OF SIERRA MADRE
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
Regular Meeting of
Thursday September 1, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.
City Council Chambers, 232 W. Sierra Madre Blvd.

17 **CALL TO ORDER**

18 Chair Denison called the meeting to order at 7:06 pm

19 Present: Chair Denison, Vice Chair Hutt, Commissioners Dallas, Pevsner & Spears

20 Staff: Vincent Gonzalez, Director of Planning and Community Preservation
21 Joseph Nosrat, Administrative Aide
22 Clare Lin, Senior Planner
23 Aleks R. Giragosian, City Attorney

24 **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

25 Commissioner Spears moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner Hutt seconded. Motion
26 carried unanimously.

27 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES JULY 21, 2022**

28 Commissioner Spears moved to approve the minutes. Commissioner Hutt seconded. Motion
29 carried unanimously.

30 **COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT**

31 NONE

32 **AUDIENCE COMMENTS**

33 Deb Sheridan
34 Valle Vista

35 Ms. Sheridan recalled discussions at the previous meeting regarding the Meadows
36 project with concerns that the project will be approved at the next City Council meeting.
37 She also addressed Director Gonzalez with concerns of previous special hearings.

38 **PUBLIC HEARING**

39 **1. CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT 22-03 (CUP 22-03) A REQUEST TO ALLOW ADAPTIVE**
40 **REUSE OF THE VILLA DEL SOL D'ORO (VILLA) FOR PRIVATE RENTAL EVENTS**
41 **ON PROPERTY LOCATED AT 200 NORTH MICHILLINDA AVENUE**

42 Director Gonzalez gave a presentation with a review of previous meetings and changes
43 made to Attachment A.1 for the Villa as well as added language.

44 Commissioner Spears asked that it be specified that someone conduct a reading of
45 ambient noise prior to events.

46 Ken Farfsing
47 President of Alverno Heights Academy
48

49 Mr. Farfsing thanked the Planning Commission and spoke on the changes made to the
50 Conditional Use Permit with regards to religious event exceptions and their plans to hire
51 an independent event monitor.
52

53 Commissioner Hutt asked applicant about limits as well as exceptions and if there are
54 school events during the day or night.
55

56 Ken Farfsing

57 President of Alverno

58 Mr. Farfsing explained there are school as well as holiday events that will happen during
59 the evening and some events in the lower school.
60

61 Commissioner Hutt asked if the quarterly notice for temporary use will make people
62 aware of school events in addition to temporary uses, film and religious events.
63

64 Julia Fanara

65 Head of Alverno

66 Ms. Fanara explained there is a school calendar accessible on their website for
67 neighbors.
68

69 Commissioner Hutt asked to include night time school events on the quarterly calendar.
70

71 Julia Fanara

72 Head of Alverno

73 Ms. Fanara stated the neighbors are made aware of night events which are classified as
74 school events.
75

76 Chair Denison clarified that night events are scheduled in advance and will be recorded
77 on the calendar prior to the event.
78

79 Commissioner Dallas stated the concern of the Planning Commission is to rebuild the
80 trust and confidence with the neighbors so they are not surprised when there is an
81 event.
82

83 Julia Fanara

84 Head of Alverno

85 Ms. Fanara stated they understand.
86

87 Commissioner Spears asked what sports are played at the school facility and does it
88 include California Interscholastic Federation League?
89

90 Julia Fanara

91 Head of Alverno

92 Ms. Fanara explained the school participates in Soccer, Softball and the lower school is
93 in the Catholic Youth Organization and includes Football, Volleyball and Basketball
94 outdoor events.
95

96 Commissioner Spears clarified that the California Interscholastic Federation provides a
97 schedule for homeschool games. He asked if the applicant foresees a conflict between a
98 home game being hosted at the same time as other events.

99
100 Julia Fanara
101 Head of Alverno
102 Ms. Fanara stated no, because the games and play practice take place after school.
103
104 Commissioner Spears asked if it would be both Varsity and Junior Varsity teams.
105
106 Julia Fanara
107 Head of Alverno
108 Ms. Fanara stated for both Softball and Soccer on the Varsity teams would have games
109 and clarified that the events must end before dark.
110
111 Commissioner Spears expressed concerns about multiple sporting events taking place
112 during the same time or during other events creating an intensity of use and impacting
113 the neighbors.
114
115 Julia Fanara
116 Head of Alverno
117 Ms. Fanara explained that the only intensity of use would be 2 sporting events going on
118 at the same time.
119
120 Commissioner Spears asked if they consider holding sporting events only with athletes
121 and without parents attending.
122
123 Julia Fanara
124 Head of Alverno
125 Ms. Fanara said no, because the events are for parents to attend, however, a change of
126 scheduled is feasible.
127
128 Commissioner Spears pointed out that 1 sporting event must not have observers to
129 avoid intensity of use.
130
131 Julia Fanara
132 Head of Alverno
133 Ms. Fanara explained that practice going at the same time as another game would not
134 create a conflict.
135
136 Commissioner Spears clarified that practice is moot as it is not accompanied by
137 observers and people cheering. He added that games have fans and games could be
138 held without fans because of too many events on campus.
139
140 Julia Fanara
141 Head of Alverno
142 Ms. Fanara stated the sporting events do not typically yield a high volume of fans.
143
144 Commissioner Spears stated that the focus is on intensity of use.
145
146 Chair Denison asked how many special Sunday events are held in a year?
147

148 Ken Farfsing
149 President of Alverno
150 Mr. Farfsing stated, typically 3 a year.
151

152 Commissioner Spears asked if these special Sunday events take place in the chapel?
153

154 Julia Fanara
155 Head of Alverno
156 Ms. Fanara stated it depends on the size of the event and that use of the Villa is to
157 accommodate more guests.
158

159 Director Gonzalez stated that the Public Comment for items not on the agenda at the
160 beginning of the meeting was not under Broadcast and Deb Sheridan's comment was
161 not captured.
162

163 Chair Denison stated the Public Comment can be made again between the 2 hearings.
164

165 **Public Comment**
166

167 Keith Stephens
168 W. Grandview
169 Mr. Stephens recapped previous meetings he has attended and expressed concern
170 about the noise from Villa. He made a point that there was a plan to install central air
171 conditioning in the building so that events may be held indoors to help contain the noise.
172 He asked that the Planning Commission mandate AC be installed in the Villa and new
173 lower school buildings.
174

175 Leesa Puleo
176 W. Highland
177 Ms. Puleo agreed that the City Council may choose to have events end at 10:00 pm.
178 She asked that the Planning Commission postpone that vote until City Council makes a
179 decision. Ms. Puleo also expressed concerns about how religious events are defined.
180

181 Cynthia Swenka
182 Wilson St.
183 Ms. Swenka expressed concerns about conditions regarding meeting annually. She also
184 suggested corrections to condition 8 to change the word may to will or shall.
185

186 Kristin Stephens
187 W. Grandview
188 Mrs. Stephens expressed concern about noise levels and asked for evaluation of noise
189 studies. She stated that practice and games produce the same level of noise and cause
190 a nuisance. Mrs. Stephens played recordings of noise from the Villa and sporting events.
191 She explained that people are still making noise beyond curfew and asked that the
192 Planning Commission meet in October to address issues.
193

194 **Discussion**
195

196 Chair Denison invited Commissioners to speak on any changes to the general conditions
197

198 Commissioner Hutt agreed to change the wording in section 8 from "may" to "shall."

199

200 Commissioner Spears agreed.

201

202 Commissioner Hutt also asked to change the word may on line 7 to shall.

203

204 Chair Denison asked if the line should read every year thereafter instead of every other
205 year thereafter.

206

207 Commissioner Hutt agreed to remove other.

208

209 Commissioner Spears stated that because of the ongoing contention in the
210 neighborhood the adaptive reuse of the Villa must be monitored to ensure progress.

211

212 Commissioner Hutt Agreed

213

214 Commissioner Spears brought up questions in section 1.4 regarding concurrent events.
215 He explained that schools can hold athletic events without spectators which could be a
216 solution to hosting a sporting event with other events the same day. Commissioner
217 Spears stated there is language in California Interscholastic Federation rules allow
218 sporting events without an audience.

219

220 Commissioner Pevsner agreed.

221

222 Commissioner Hutt asked for clarity on the proposed edit.

223

224 Commissioner Spears stated the sporting events would be held without visitors.

225

226 Commissioner Dallas asked if the visiting team would not be considered visitors?

227

228 Commissioner Spears clarified the first 3 lines should state that only the athletes come
229 to compete without additional visitors not competing. He added that staff can create the
230 language to communicate the proposed changes.

231

232 Chair Denison asked if the applicant would accept the proposed edit.

233

234 Ken Farfsing

235 President of Alverno

236 Mr. Farfsing he did not understand the proposal.

237

238 Chair Denison stated the concern is to allow concurrent events contrary to the proposed
239 language.

240

241 Ken Farfsing

242 President of Alverno

243 Mr. Farfsing asked if hypothetically a volley ball game in the Michillinda parking lot and a
244 girls' soccer game in the athletic field would be concurrent events?

245

246 Commissioner Spears stated these would be concurrent events and clarified there would
247 only be 2 athletic teams without spectators if there is another event.
248

249 Julia Fanara
250 Head of Alverno
251 Ms. Fanara specified the school is small as well as the visiting schools in their league.
252

253 Ken Farfsing
254 President of Alverno
255 Mr. Farfsing asked if parents visiting schools cannot visit.
256

257 Commissioner Spears stated that the Planning Commission could stick to the proposed
258 language with no concurrent events.
259

260 Ken Farfsing
261 Alverno
262 Mr. Farfsing pointed out that the noise studies do not reflect any violation of the noise
263 ordinance and that he feels there is a problem trying to be resolved without violation.
264

265 Commissioner Spears stated there was a recording played from the public that shows
266 the impact of noise levels.
267

268 Ken Farfsing
269 President of Alverno
270 Mr. Farfsing stated that is not admissible. He also stated his understanding of the
271 enforcement of noise code requires noise monitoring and if an issue cannot be resolved
272 then the school and City will end up in litigation.
273

274 Commissioner Spears stated we could maintain the original language with no concurrent
275 events.
276

277 Ken Farfsing
278 President of Alverno
279 Mr. Farfsing expressed these to be unrealistic expectations.
280

281 Chair Denison brought back for deliberation.
282

283 Commissioner Dallas asked to clarify that the 8:00am start time includes event setup in
284 section 2.2?
285

286 Commissioner Hutt agreed, also adding that include setup and all other activities.
287

288 Commissioner Dallas stated 10:00 pm is the end of breakdown to be in line with City
289 code for other similar events.
290

291 Chair Denison asked to clarify if the code is currently written and was passed by City
292 Council for events to end breakdown by 10:00 pm.
293

294 City Attorney Giragosian clarified the code must still be approved by Council but is
295 currently written as 10:00 pm.
296 Commissioner Dallas asked if 10:00 pm is when the breakdown must be completed.
297
298 City Attorney Giragosian stated that is correct, the gates must be closed.
299
300 Commissioners Spears, Pevsner and Chair Denison agreed.
301
302 Commissioner Pevsner expressed some of the breakdown is variable and they should
303 have some allowance to get events cleaned up.
304
305 Commissioner Dallas stated it goes to fairness across the town.
306
307 Commissioner Pevsner stated it is up to City Council but agrees it is reasonable and that
308 consistency throughout the City might mitigate public concerns.
309
310 Commissioner Spears agreed to keep the curfew consistent making it more likely to be
311 regularly enforced.
312
313 Chair Denison confirmed 10:00 pm would be the edit.
314
315 Commissioner Dallas clarified setup to break down.
316
317 Chair Denison stated everything must be done by that hard time.
318
319 Commissioner Dallas made a comment on section 3.4 where the language should reflect
320 dancing is to be inside with doors and windows closed and AC without anything outside.
321
322 Chair Denison clarified in the last meeting it was determined as long as the speakers
323 remain inside dancing would be allowed outside. He also added that regardless of where
324 the dancing is, the music and noise level is still governed by the overarching code.
325
326 Commissioner Dallas asked if the AC installation ever happened or if it will need to be
327 installed.
328
329 Director Gonzalez clarified the AC has not been installed and that the installation and
330 timeframe of AC was a condition the Planning Commission determined should not be
331 under the purview of the Planning Commission.
332
333 Commissioner Hutt recalled that there was an edit to section 3.6 with mitigation
334 measures for sound dampening that would be mutually agreeable between Alverno and
335 the City to avoid ambiguity about negotiating with neighbors. He also expressed concern
336 with amplified music inside with doors open and clarified that speakers should not be
337 pointed towards open doors
338
339 Commissioner Spears added speakers should not be outside on the terrace.
340

341 Commissioner Hutt clarified music and noise is specifically banned on the Terrace. He
342 suggested changing the language in section 3.4 to state all music will be focused
343 indoors.

344
345 Commissioner Dallas stated the loud music would be happening presumably at all 26
346 events and all school events.

347
348 City Attorney Giragosian pointed out that the opening of the doors would be for
349 ventilation purposes with a large attendance of people dancing and an increase of
350 temperature.

351
352 Commissioner Dallas asked the applicant why AC has not been installed yet as this has
353 been an ongoing issue.

354
355 Ken Farfsing
356 President of Alverno
357 Mr. Farfsing stated the condition on the Temporary Use Permit indicated that the AC be
358 installed in agreement with neighbors. He stated the struggle faced was bringing
359 together 190 neighbors to find a solution. Mr. Farfsing added that central air would not
360 be practical in such a large building, also stating that AC would be needed on the ground
361 floor where people are congregating. He also mentioned the noise consultant reviewed
362 noise measurements for past events and did not find any violations. Mr. Farfsing asked
363 why the additional AC expenses are necessary if the ordinance is not being violated.

364
365 Commissioner Hutt clarified the conditions on uses help reduce future issues without
366 having to rely on difficult Code Enforcement. He explained that past issues with
367 neighbors need regulation by Commission rather than rely solely on Code Enforcement.

368
369 Ken Farfsing
370 President of Alverno
371 Mr. Farfsing stated the event monitor is important and asked what information will be
372 given to the event monitor. He also expressed a need for rules that detail limits to be
373 understood by the school and neighbors.

374
375 Commissioner Hutt explained the concept of the checklist will act as a roadmap for
376 compliance.

377
378 Commissioner Hutt suggested appending all music shall be played indoors in the Villa
379 with all music speakers oriented to project indoors to section 3.4 to provide guidance to
380 City Council for when addressing section 3.6.

381
382 Commissioner Spears stated it may need to be added to the checklist for the event
383 monitor.

384
385 Commissioner Hutt agreed.

386
387 Commissioner Dallas asked to clarify if speakers are indoors and pointed inside.

388
389 Commissioner Hutt said yes all speakers must be indoors.

390

391 Commissioner Dallas asked if the music should stop at 9:30 pm for event to be broken
392 down by 10:00 pm.
393
394 Commissioner Hutt said yes.
395
396 Commissioner Dallas asked why the neighbors were asked to consult on the AC.
397
398 Commissioner Spears stated it may have been offered as a measure of mitigation
399 between Alverno and the neighbors.
400
401 Commissioner Dallas stated the technology has changed for the installation of Air
402 Conditioning.
403
404 Commissioner Hutt stated the inclusion of central air may have created problems.
405
406 Chair Denison stated the involvement of the City there will not be any confusion for 10
407 years
408
409 Commissioner Hutt added that the annual review will provide an opportunity to follow up
410 on section 3.6
411
412 Chair Denison pointed that instead of waiting 12 years neighbors would only have to wait
413 12 months.
414
415 Commissioner Hutt mentioned the 150' buffer for generators onsite from residential
416 property asking if it should be increased.
417
418 Commissioner Spears asked if it is to the curb on Grandview.
419
420 Commissioner Dallas asked if it is to the property line.
421
422 Commissioner Spears stated the generators should be placed far enough where
423 neighbors are not impacted by noise.
424
425 Commissioner Dallas asked if the buffer should be measured 150' from the Alverno
426 property line.
427
428 Commissioner Hutt agreed and stated the buffer would gain the distance of the road
429
430 Commissioner Dallas stated it is much easier to measure.
431
432 Commissioner Hutt agreed and asked if it can be called AHA property line.
433
434 Chair Denison asked how wide the acreage is.
435
436 Ken Farfsing
437 President of Alverno
438 Mr. Farfsing agreed to 150' from AHA property line.
439

440 Director Gonzalez asked Mr. Farfsing if he knows the width of the campus.
441
442 Ken Farfsing
443 President of Alverno
444 Mr. Farfsing stated he does not know but will pull the plans to confirm.
445
446 Chair Denison stated the 150' from AHA property line should not be a problem.
447
448 Commissioner Dallas suggested looking at the residential properties at the bottom of the
449 parking map for an estimate.
450
451 Commissioner Hutt asked to review section 3.7.1.
452
453 Chair Denison asked if the section prohibits any noise in excess of 70 dBA at the
454 property line at any time.
455
456 Director Gonzalez clarified areas such as the Villa should not exceed the noise limit of
457 local ambient noise that is 70 dba at the property line. He also stated noise cannot be
458 more than 84 dba for 1 minute intervals per hour if it should exceed the limit.
459
460 Commissioner Spears asked if the section is stating 70 dBA above the ambient.
461
462 Director Gonzalez stated the ambient noise is 70 dBA
463
464 Commissioner Spears asked if above the ambient should be included in the language.
465
466 Chair Denison stated 70 dBA is the ambient noise level.
467
468 Indy Sabatala
469 CSA Design Group
470 Mr. Sabatala stated the ambient noise level is 70 dba.
471
472 Commissioner Hutt asked if that is at the Villa.
473
474 Indy Sabatala
475 CSA Design Group
476 Mr. Sabatala clarified up to the property line, also stating that noise is louder at the Villa
477 and reduces further away from the Villa.
478
479 Chair Denison asked if up to should be changed.
480
481 Commissioner Hutt stated yes as well as within.
482
483 Indy Sabatala
484 CSA Design Group
485 Mr. Sabatala stated at the property line would be more acceptable.
486
487 Commissioner Spears asked for the purpose of measuring the ambient.
488

489 Indy Sabatala
490 CSA Design Group
491 Mr. Sabatala explained that the ambient may be lower before an event and neighbors
492 may feel the event sounds louder.
493
494 Commissioner Spears asked if the language should reflect that the event monitor will
495 take a reading before the event, throughout the event and another reading at 10:00 pm
496 that should be at the ambient noise or lower.
497
498 Chair Denison asked how much of the time and how close the ambient was to 70 dba.
499
500 Indy Sabatala
501 CSA Design Group
502 Mr. Sabatala explained that the neighborhood is dominated by traffic noise and closer to
503 10:00 pm there is a significant dip with ambient noise returning back to normal.
504
505 Chair Denison asked what the ambient noise was with traffic.
506
507 Indy Sabatala
508 CSA Design Group
509 Mr. Sabatala explained that it was a range between 50-65 dba as the traffic ebbs and
510 flows.
511
512 Commissioner Hutt asked if the ambient reading will work at the beginning of the event if
513 the traffic ebbs and flows.
514
515 Chair Denison explained that the important reading is at 10:00 pm because any noise
516 after would be a violation.
517
518 Commissioner Hutt stated measuring at the property line limits the event monitor from
519 taking measurements at the event.
520
521 Commissioner Spears stated the event monitor can take measurements at the event but
522 is not specified in the code.
523
524 Commissioner Hutt asked if the event monitor would be monitoring the event or the
525 property line.
526
527 Chair Denison stated the problems are at the property line.
528
529 Commissioner Spears agreed.
530
531 Indy Sabatala
532 CSA Design Group
533 Mr. Sabatala stated the property line is where the noise needs to be monitored the most.
534
535 Commissioner Spears asked purpose of measuring ambient?
536
537 Indy Sabatala

538 CSA Design Group
539 Mr. Sabatala stated that low ambient before event will make the ambient limit seem
540 louder than normal.

541
542 Commissioner Dallas asked that a record be kept of each event with certain spots at
543 certain times to cross examine the differences in events.
544

545 Commissioner Spears stated certain areas of property are more sensitive to noise
546 production with or without trees. He also mentioned areas without trees do not have
547 noise mitigation.
548

549 Chair Denison asked if noise readings would be constant with a handheld device.
550

551 Indy Sabatala
552 CSA Design Group
553 Mr. Sabatala stated yes it is a continuous measurement.
554

555 Commissioner Spears asked if it would be a like a V U meter.
556

557 Indy Sabatala
558 CSA Design Group
559 Mr. Sabatala clarified the noise monitor will continuously watch the device to record
560 noise readings.
561

562 Chair Denison asked City Attorney Giragosian if the 70 dba is a number already in the
563 code.
564

565 City Attorney Giragosian deferred to Director Gonzalez.
566

567 Director Gonzalez stated yes.
568

569 Commissioner Hutt asked sections 3.7.2b and 3.7.1 are redundant.
570

571 Commissioner Dallas asked for clarification on 3.7.2a.
572

573 Director Gonzalez stated 3.7.2a is in the code.
574

575 Commissioner Hutt stated it is about the ambient noise level.
576

577 City Attorney Giragosian stated 3.7.1 is on the property line and 3.7.2 is on the Alverno
578 campus.
579

580 Commissioner Dallas asked if the event is at the Villa it should not exceed 70 decibels
581 except for an occasional 1 minute of 84 dba.
582

583 Chair Denison asked the section should be simplified to 70 dba at the property line.
584

585 City Attorney Giragosian stated that is the edit he has written down.
586

587 Chair Denison asked for clarification on 3.7.2.
588
589 Commissioner Hutt asked if there should be a different noise level at 9:30 pm,
590 suggesting 70 dba until 9:30 and lower dba after.
591
592 Chair Denison stated the code is 70 dba City wide.
593
594 Director Gonzalez clarified there is no time frame specified.
595
596 Chair Denison clarified at no time can you exceed 70 dba.
597
598 Commissioner Hutt stated the sound level must go down at night.
599
600 Commissioner Spears agreed and asked how the language would be written.
601
602 Commissioner Hutt explained the noise limit at the property line cannot exceed 70 dba
603 before 9:30 pm and from 9:30 pm - 10:00 pm cannot exceed 64 dba.
604
605 City Attorney Giragosian pointed out that the sound may spike briefly but not for a full
606 minute.
607
608 Commissioner Hutt asked if that is 1 minute only per hour.
609
610 Chair Denison stated the language is ambiguous.
611
612 City Attorney Giragosian stated it was left that way to give the event monitor the
613 discretion to take a recording when they feel the event is getting loud. He also
614 mentioned that an interval basis might miss out on the expertise of the event monitor.
615
616 Commissioner Dallas stated she is okay with leaving it in.
617
618 Commissioner Spears asked to simplify the rules so the event monitor can advise the
619 school if events get too loud.
620
621 City Attorney Giragosian stated measurement should be taken at the property line with
622 70 dba being the relevant standard or the measurement does not need to be defined
623 and left at the discretion of the event monitor.
624
625 Chair Denison agreed.
626
627 Ken Farfsing
628 President of Alverno
629 Mr. Farfsing stated the monitor will cover all 4 sides of the campus and may need
630 flexibility.
631
632 City Attorney Giragosian added that a staff member would be present with the event
633 monitor to alert the school that noise may need to be reduced.
634

635 Chair Denison proposed changing section 3.7.1 to read event noise limits shall not
636 exceed 70 dBA at the property through 9:30 pm. He asked for input on section 3.7.2
637 from 9:30 pm on.
638

639 Commissioner Hutt suggested using the same language proposed but between 9:30 pm
640 and 10:00 pm except at 64 dba.
641

642 Ken Farfsing
643 President of Alverno
644 Mr. Farfsing asked if it would be an amendment to the code and change for entire City.
645

646 Commissioner Hutt clarified making the reading of ambient noise easier for the monitor.
647 He stated the goal is to simplify what is in the code to 6 dba above local ambient.
648

649 Commissioner Dallas asked if 6 dba above local ambient is being proposed.
650

651 Chair Denison said no.
652

653 Indy Sabatala
654 CSA Design Group
655 Mr. Sabatala clarified that ambient will be easier to read after 10:00 pm. He also
656 suggested changes to section 3.7.1 to read 70 dba up to the property line through 10:00
657 pm and section 3.7.2 from 10:00 pm on for the noise not to exceed 6 dba above the local
658 ambient.
659

660 Commissioner Hutt stated the event must be over at 10:00 pm and would need to be
661 ambient at 10:00 pm. He stated the concern is regulating the noise generated by the
662 temporary event.
663

664 Chair Denison stated measuring 70 dba at the property line through 10:00 pm should be
665 standard to maintain conformity across codes.
666

667 Director Gonzalez clarified that the baseline for ambient in residential areas is 30 dba
668 and 50 dba in commercial areas.
669

670 Chair Denison suggested event noise limits shall not exceed 70 dba at the property line
671 at any time.
672

673 Commissioner Hutt suggested removing sections 3.7.1 and 3.7.2 to only be 3.7.
674

675 Commissioner Spears agreed
676

677 Commissioner Dallas agreed
678

679 Commissioner Spears asked that section 5.5 have flow arrows indicating direction of
680 internal traffic accompanied with the traffic plan map. He stated he has walked internal
681 roads once.
682

683 Ken Farfsing

684 President of Alverno
685 Mr. Farfsing stated the Villa roads are on the west side of the property using the
686 PowerPoint display to indicate the direction of traffic. He added that traffic will be
687 restricted to remain on campus.
688
689 Commissioner Spears asked if they do not want people using the driveway
690
691 Julia Fanara
692 Head of Alverno
693 Ms. Fanara clarified alternating events will change the flow of traffic.
694
695 Chair Denison asked if everyone would use the Michillinda entrance.
696
697 Julia Fanara
698 Head of Alverno
699 Ms. Fanara stated yes except vendors would use the Wilson entrance.
700
701 Commissioner Spears asked if the Wilson gate would be closed to mitigate traffic.
702
703 Julia Fanara
704 Head of Alverno
705 Ms. Fanara stated yes.
706
707 Commissioner Spears clarified the only ins and outs are on Michillinda and Highland.
708
709 Commissioner Dallas asked how the entrances are communicated to vendors.
710
711 Julia Fanara
712 Head of Alverno
713 Ms. Fanara stated it is written in the contract.
714
715 Commissioner Dallas asked if it is all in writing or if any maps would be used.
716
717 Ken Farfsing
718 President of Alverno
719 Mr. Farfsing stated the map will be used to communicate.
720
721 Commissioner Dallas advised to shade roads to avoid confusion.
722
723 Ken Farfsing
724 President of Alverno
725 Mr. Farfsing agreed.
726
727 Chair Denison asked if section 5.4 would be in conflict with the code regarding Sundays.
728
729 Commissioner Spears stated the venue must be reset for school to function Monday.
730
731 Chair Denison recalled the Planning Commission being told Sunday cleanup's after
732 events are not often and the Planning Commission requested a limitation.

733
734 Commissioner Spears stated the issue came up to keep Sundays quiet for neighbors.
735
736 City Attorney Giragosian stated the event monitor can track the frequency of Sunday
737 pickups to avoid adopting a regulation.
738
739 Chair Denison stated it can be addressed during the 1 year review.
740
741 Commissioner Hutt brought up concerns that conditions cannot be changed at the 1 year
742 review, limiting the Planning Commissions ability to contain any problems with Sunday
743 pickups.
744
745 Chair Denison invited the applicant to state how many Sunday pickups they anticipate a
746 year.
747
748 Ken Farfsing
749 President of Alverno
750 Mr. Farfsing stated 1 pickup a quarter.
751
752 Chair Denison clarified 4 a year.
753
754 Commissioner Hutt clarified the language to read on not more than 4 occasions per
755 year.
756
757 Chair Denison asked to review section 7 to maintain language that says set lighting to
758 avoid hazards for people leaving the Villa. He also asked if the School will have to figure
759 out any safety lighting so long as it doesn't project towards the neighbors.
760
761 Commissioner Spears stated there is already lighting on the campus.
762
763 Commissioner Hutt stated it has the same language in 14.6 with regard to set lighting.
764 He also stated lighting pathways should direct the light down and away from neighbors.
765
766 Commissioner Dallas asked if section 6.1 that reads all property gates shall be locked 1
767 hour after the event ends changes from 10:00pm to 11:00pm.
768
769 Commissioner Hutt stated that would make it 11:00pm.
770
771 Chair Denison stated it may be a carryover from when there would be some grace
772 period for striking.
773
774 Commissioner Dallas stated it is more preferable to have everyone out and gates locked
775 at 10:00pm.
776
777 Chair Denison stated the event monitor will remain at Alverno until after 10:00pm if
778 necessary to work with the facilities person to report any noise until people attending the
779 event have left.
780
781 Commissioner Spears asked if the event monitor is the last person to leave.

782
783 Julia Fanara
784 Head of Alverno
785 Ms. Fanara stated no, the facilities person will be the last to leave.
786
787 Commissioner Spears asked if they would be leaving together.
788
789 Ken Farfsing
790 President of Alverno
791 Mr. Farfsing stated yes.
792
793 City Attorney Giragosian advised to strike the provision entirely if the Planning
794 Commission does not have any interest when the gate is locked.
795
796 Commissioner Hutt pointed out saying they have to lock their gates after the event
797 makes it seem like the people attending the event have an hour to exit.
798
799 Chair Denison advised striking section 6.
800
801 Commissioner Hutt agreed.
802
803 Commissioner Dallas stated she does not agree with section 9.3 where Alverno will hire
804 the event monitor. She advised that the City hire an event monitor and charge a fee back
805 to Alverno.
806
807 Chair Denison clarified the City will vet a list of approved monitors for Alverno to choose
808 from.
809
810 Commissioner Dallas asked if under the filming section the event monitor would be hired
811 by the City.
812
813 City Attorney Giragosian stated that the City Manager will regulate the effectiveness of
814 the event monitor. He also clarified there will be a film monitor for film permits with
815 expenses incurred by the production company and that in the special event/temporary
816 use permit context it will be Alverno incurring the cost.
817
818 Commissioner Hutt confirmed that the City will not hire the monitor in either case.
819
820 City Attorney Giragosian stated yes and clarified that in the past the City has used a part
821 time monitor acting as a City employee.
822
823 Commissioner Dallas expressed partiality to a situation where the City will have an
824 employee that can monitor events.
825
826 City Attorney Giragosian stated it was considered for Alverno as the City has an
827 employee to monitor films but the City Manager did not want to hire another monitor for
828 this similar purpose as a cost saving measure.
829
830 Commissioner Dallas suggested having a checklist that the event monitor must follow.

831
832 City Attorney Giragosian stated there is a checklist that Director Gonzalez can review.
833
834 Chair Denison stated the City Manager or staff would review the reports from the event
835 monitor to determine the quality of the report.
836
837 Commissioner Dallas asked who will review the reports.
838
839 City Attorney Giragosian stated the film report would be reviewed by the Community
840 Services Commission and temporary use permit events will be reviewed by the Planning
841 Department.
842
843 Commissioner Hutt stated the neighbors can comment on the accuracy of the event
844 monitor's reports.
845
846 Chair Denison pointed out the reports can be reviewed in the annual report.
847
848 City Attorney Giragosian stated the reports can be posted online.
849
850 Commissioner Dallas agreed stating they can be posted online as they happen.
851 Commissioner Hutt added that an event monitor providing a thorough report would instill
852 confidence.
853
854 Commissioner Dallas asked to clarify in section 9.3 to have the event monitor reports
855 posted online.
856
857 Director Gonzalez stated it can be added to the event monitor checklist.
858
859 Commissioner Hutt clarified the City will post the reports.
860
861 Director Gonzalez said yes.
862
863 City Attorney Giragosian stated these conditions are imposed on Alverno as the
864 applicant not the City.
865
866 Commissioner Hutt commented on a conflict between the heading for sections 10 and
867 10.1.
868
869 Director Gonzalez stated the title will need to be amended.
870
871 Commissioner Hutt asked to add language to section 13.1 that help differentiate from
872 section 1.1.
873
874 Chair Denison stated section 14.5 if locked gates will not be required.
875
876 Commissioner Hutt pointed out there will need to be an edit to section 14.4 in regards to
877 the generator and the property line. He also clarified in section 14.2 where the film is
878 limited to 45 days per year is not subject to the limit in section 1.1.
879

880 Chair Denison asked if the amendments should be reviewed.
881 Director Gonzalez reviewed the requested changes.
882
883 Ken Farfsing
884 President of Alverno
885 Mr. Farfsing asked if the word semi would be removed from the second sentence to just
886 read annual meetings.
887
888 City Attorney Giragosian clarified that is a different section.
889
890 Director Gonzalez continued to review additional proposed changes noting section 1.4.
891
892 Commissioner Spears stated section 1.4 can remain prohibit.
893
894 Ken Farfsing
895 President of Alverno
896 Mr. Farfsing agreed to work with City staff and School staff for multiple sporting events at
897 the same time be limited
898
899 City Attorney Giragosian clarified the proposed condition to be if there are 2 concurrent
900 sporting events Alverno would need to limit 1 of the events to be athletes only.
901
902 Commissioner Spears said yes.
903
904 City Attorney Giragosian asked if the rest of the Planning Commission agrees.
905
906 Commissioner Hutt stated yes.
907
908 Commissioner Dallas agreed.
909
910 Chair Denison expressed he does not feel a need to regulate school events is
911 necessary, also stating that events going on should not be concurrent.
912
913 Commissioner Pevsner agreed.
914
915 Ken Farfsing
916 President of Alverno
917 Mr. Farfsing asked if the concurrent event would mean a wedding on a Friday would
918 prohibit a soccer game.
919
920 Chair Denison said yes.
921
922 Commissioner Hutt clarified at the same time.
923
924 Ken Farfsing
925 President of Alverno
926 Mr. Farfsing asked if there is filming scheduled, then there cannot be any concurrent
927 school events.
928

929 Chair Denison said yes.
930
931 Ken Farfsing
932 President of Alverno
933 Mr. Farfsing said that may be difficult to agree with.
934
935 City Attorney Giragosian stated the staff's understanding was that if there is filming there
936 would not be a wedding at the same time.
937
938 Julia Fanara
939 Head of Alverno
940 Ms. Fanara clarified that if there is actual footage being taken, there would not be any
941 concurrent events. She also stated that if the set is being prepared then other events
942 may take place.
943
944 Chair Denison suggested having staff work with the applicant on this issue due to a lack
945 of consensus.
946
947 Commissioner Hutt stated there is an issue of events typically being something
948 immediate whereas filming is over a span of time.
949
950 Chair Denison pointed out that even if the filming set is being prepared quietly,
951 breakdown of the set may not be as quiet.
952
953 Commissioner Spears agreed also pointing out that the filming permit may be for a few
954 days and concurrent events would create a heightened intensity of use.
955
956 Chair Denison suggested asking staff to revisit the issue of concurrent events as a
957 consensus could not be met.
958
959 Chair Denison asked about time of use.
960
961 Director Gonzalez clarified and reviewed changes, clarifying start and end time for
962 Friday and Saturday rental events.
963
964 Commissioner Spears said okay.
965
966 Director Gonzalez continued to review changes to section 3.4 regarding the Villa.
967
968 Ken Farfsing
969 President of Alverno
970 Mr. Farfsing asked if dancing will still be allowed on the Terrace.
971
972 Commissioner Hutt said yes.
973
974 Director Gonzalez continued to review edits and amendments.
975
976 City Attorney Giragosian asked about section 5.5 per Commissioner Dallas request that
977 Alverno provide a revised map with traffic flow and shaded roads.

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Director Gonzalez asked to confirm if lights will be shut off by 10:15 pm.

Commissioner Hutt clarified lights in all parking lots shall be shut off by 10:15 pm.

Director Gonzalez continued to review amendments and requested edits.

City Attorney Giragosian clarified in section 13.1, religious events and not for profit events that further Alverno's religious mission are not subject to limits under section 1.1.

Director Gonzalez reviewed changes and amendments.

City Attorney Giragosian clarified section 14.5 was struck.

Commissioner Hutt agreed.

Director Gonzalez continued to review requested edits.

Commissioner Hutt made a motion to continue discussion of the item on October 6.

Commissioner Spears seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

Chair Denison reopened Public Comment for items not on the agenda.

Director Gonzalez responded to the time frame issue and clarified the purpose of previous special hearings.

Chair Denison recalled these issues being addressed at the previous meeting.

Chair Denison asked to retire for 10 minute break at 9:50 pm and reconvened at 10:01 pm.

2. CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT AMENDMENT 21-19, AND ADDENDUM TO THE MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION TO UCDATE THE ALVERNO HEIGHTS ACADEMY MASTER PLAN

Director Gonzalez gave a presentation summarizing previous meetings for the Alverno Heights Master Plan.

Ken Farfsing
Alverno

Mr. Farfsing presented on the Alverno Heights Master Plan. He explained that commissioners attending by phone were disconnected at the November 18 meeting and invited the traffic engineer to speak.

1027 Bill Zimmerman
1028 Alverno Traffic Engineer
1029 Mr. Zimmerman spoke on traffic counts taken in November and February with levels of
1030 service. He explained a level of service labeled A to represent very good free flow traffic
1031 and a label of F being a failure with stop and go traffic.
1032
1033 Commissioner Hutt asked to clarify if the proposal to remove the tree is because it
1034 impedes on turning pattern.
1035
1036 Mr. Farfsing stated that the tree poses a turning hazard and that the road regulation
1037 dates back to 1925. He also pointed out that there is damage to the sidewalk and gutter
1038 that the school would repair.
1039
1040 Commissioner Spears asked if a person could be placed at the driveway directing traffic.
1041
1042 Mr. Zimmerman stated there is an increase of liability that would fall on the school if a
1043 person were to be directing traffic.
1044
1045 Director Gonzalez brought up a condition of approval from the Public Works Department
1046 to remove the tree for the same reasons.
1047
1048 Ken Farfsing
1049 President of Alverno
1050 Mr. Farfsing continued the presentation.
1051
1052 Indie
1053 Alverno Noise Expert
1054 Indie presented on the noise study with annual measurements taken during 2021 and
1055 2022.
1056
1057 Commissioner Hutt asked if the measurements were taken at the 4 utility poles in the
1058 presentation.
1059
1060 Indie stated yes.
1061
1062 Ken Farfsing
1063 President of Alverno
1064 Mr. Farfsing continued the presentation and invited Kurt Peterson to speak on the
1065 grading plan.
1066
1067 Kurt Peterson
1068 Alverno Civil Engineer
1069 Mr. Peterson spoke on behalf of the Alverno arborist to review the grading and tree
1070 preservation with any modifications.
1071
1072 Ken Farfsing
1073 President of Alverno
1074 Mr. Farfsing presented the Master Plan summary in regards to building and
1075 landscaping.
1076

1077 Commissioner Spears asked that City Attorney Giragosian look into the survey taken
1078 with the Field Act Code for schools in mind. He also recalled asking Mr. Farfsing on July
1079 7, 2011 where he agreed to build a multipurpose room that complies to the Field Act.
1080

1081 Ken Farfsing
1082 President of Alverno
1083 Mr. Farfsing clarified the Field Act doesn't apply to private schools, also stating there is a
1084 unique State Law for private schools.
1085

1086 Commissioner Spears clarified the State Law is part of the California Seismic Survey
1087 commission. He also asked if Mr. Farfsing wants more specificity on the survey.
1088

1089 Ken Farfsing
1090 President of Alverno
1091 Mr. Farfsing expressed it would be unfair to only enforce the survey on Alverno without
1092 involving other schools in Sierra Madre that would also require the survey.
1093

1094 Commissioner Spears agreed to ask City Attorney Giragosian to conduct survey and
1095 stated the other schools in Sierra Madre are not present. He pointed out that there is
1096 only one applicant present and they would have to abide by the code.
1097

1098 Ken Farfsing
1099 President of Alverno
1100 Mr. Farfsing asked to be provided with an adopted code.
1101

1102 City Attorney Giragosian agreed to conduct a study and determine the fiscal impact on
1103 Alverno.
1104

1105 Commissioner Hutt asked if the school intends to plant anymore trees on the Wilson side
1106 of the school
1107

1108 Ken Farfsing
1109 President of Alverno
1110 Mr. Farfsing stated no and explained that the original landscape contractor had planted
1111 Italian Cypress and Olive Trees to surround the field.
1112

1113 Commissioner Hutt asked if there are other trees the School wants to cut down aside
1114 from the one street tree to alleviate the drive way.
1115

1116 Ken Farfsing
1117 President of Alverno
1118 Mr. Farfsing stated there are no other street trees they want cut down but the School
1119 was asked by the Planning Department and Public Works to comply with the City code
1120 for tree trimming. He also pointed out that the neighbors do not want any trees removed.
1121

1122 Commissioner Hutt agreed and stated that one street tree is feasible.
1123

1124 Chair Denison invited Public Comment.
1125

1126 **Public Comment**

1127
1128 Keith Stephens
1129 W. Grandview
1130 Mr. Stephens expressed concerns with the development of the multipurpose room to
1131 contain noise and provide students protection from heat. He also expressed concerns
1132 about construction noise and asked to suspend the Villa Conditional Use Permit during
1133 construction.
1134

1135 Leesa Puleo
1136 W. Highland Ave.
1137 Ms. Puleo expressed concern about removal of the street tree as well as 2 oak trees on
1138 the property. She also expressed concern about the neighborhood meetings, stating that
1139 neighbors are notified with little advance notice.
1140

1141 Cynthia Swenka
1142 Wilson St.
1143 Ms. Swenka stated she only wanted to speak on item 1.
1144

1145 Kristin Stephens
1146 W. Grandview Ave.
1147 Ms. Stephens stated she disagrees with any use of the noise studies, expressing that
1148 the data is not accurate and does not appropriately reflect concerns of the neighbors.
1149 She also stated noise levels have not been appropriately addressed with excess traffic
1150 and tree loss contributing to increased levels of noise. Ms. Stephens pointed out that
1151 planting more trees may not be a viable solution and stated the multipurpose room
1152 cannot be postponed.
1153

1154 Jason Dill
1155 Holdman Ave
1156 Mr. Dill expressed concerns with drop off and pick up of children on streets surrounding
1157 the School, also explaining these streets are typically avoided for safety and traffic
1158 concerns. He also stated that noise levels are excessive at other Schools in Sierra
1159 Madre. Mr. Dill pointed out that trees should not be removed or replaced. He also
1160 expressed appreciation to the Planning Commission with hopes that the neighbors and
1161 Alverno come to a consensus.
1162

1163 Chair Denison stated the City Code is limited to 70 dBA and that the General Plan is not
1164 codified, nor does it apply to what the Code reflects.
1165

1166 City Attorney Giragosian stated he will have to look up the decibel rule in the City Code.
1167 He also pointed out that the general plan would typically trump the code but he would
1168 have research the Code to confirm at the next meeting.
1169

1170 Chair Denison expressed concerns with the report where times recorded were at 100
1171 dBA and 90 dBA within 1 hour intervals.
1172

1173 Indy Sabatala
1174 CSA Design Group
1175 Mr. Sabatala explained the various noise measurements taken on Wilson were done in 3
1176 classifications. He also clarified that the measurements taken only reflect a max dBA,

1177 continuous noise level and minimum dBA but do not specify what may have caused the
1178 noise.

1179
1180 Commissioner Spears asked if the recordings brought by local residents are singular
1181 events.

1182
1183 Indy Sabatala
1184 CSA Design Group
1185 Mr. Sabatala explained there is a challenge in presenting recordings where the device
1186 and means of recording are all factors that influence judgment of the noise level.

1187
1188 Commissioner Spears clarified the data presented in the noise report and asked if the
1189 residents adjacent to the school are hearing continuous loud noise or spikes of noise
1190 level.

1191
1192 Indy Sabatala
1193 CSA Design Group
1194 Mr. Sabatala stated that they are only presenting the recorded results taken at Alverno
1195 and he cannot attest to the noise levels residents may be experiencing.

1196
1197 Chair Denison clarified that the concerns of the Planning Commission is understanding
1198 the high noise levels reflected in the report.

1199
1200 Commissioner Dallas stated the spikes in noise cannot be underestimated as they can
1201 be emotional triggers.

1202
1203 Commissioner Hutt asked for clarification about the phasing plan and when the
1204 multipurpose room will be constructed.

1205
1206 Ken Farfsing
1207 President of Alverno
1208 Mr. Farfsing explained that the phasing plan implemented in 2011 provide flexibility with
1209 the cost of construction for the Multipurpose room. He explained that the cost has
1210 changed over time with inflation. Mr. Farfsing expressed the School may need to
1211 campaign for funding as well as apply for grants to construct the multipurpose room. He
1212 also brought up concerns that there will still be a need for space outdoors for outdoor
1213 events.

1214
1215 Commissioner Spears asked if the two fields near Highland would work for outdoor
1216 events.

1217
1218 Julia Fanara
1219 Head of Alverno
1220 Ms. Fanara explained that the younger students need a hardscape to participate in
1221 outdoor events.

1222
1223 Commissioner Hutt expressed a need for a construction timeline of the Multipurpose
1224 room to ensure the project does not continue to be postponed.

1225

1226 Chair Denison pointed out a conflict between filming and construction. He asked to
1227 ensure that construction will not be postponed for filming events.
1228
1229 Julia Fanara
1230 Head of Alverno
1231 Ms. Fanara expressed that filming would be impacted by construction and forced to work
1232 around the construction schedule.
1233
1234 Ken Farfsing
1235 President of Alverno
1236 Mr. Farfsing added that construction must be done on a timeline as the school would
1237 either suffer from the City or from a lack of income from special events.
1238
1239 Commissioner Spears stated that filming is one more thing that adds to the intensity of
1240 use of the property.
1241
1242 Ken Farfsing
1243 President of Alverno
1244 Mr. Farfsing stated not all filming is intense with a wide range of filming types.
1245
1246 Commissioner Hutt asked that the hard surface noise be addressed in the next meeting.
1247
1248 Chair Denison asked if the applicant would like to return at a certain date.
1249
1250 Ken Farfsing
1251 President of Alverno
1252 Mr. Farfsing asked to return on October 6.
1253
1254 Chair Denison agreed
1255
1256 Director Gonzalez agreed
1257
1258 Commissioner Pevsner moved to continue the meeting on October 6.
1259
1260 Commissioner Spears seconded.
1261
1262 Motion carried unanimously.
1263
1264 Chair Denison asked for Planning Commission Reports.
1265
1266 None
1267
1268 Community Preservation Reports
1269
1270 Director Gonzalez asked that the Planning Commission cancel the September 15
1271 meeting to allow a special meeting of the City Council for the Meadows at Bailey Canyon
1272 Specific Plan Project.
1273
1274 Chair Denison asked if 2 meetings were canceled.

1275
1276 Director Gonzalez stated only one Planning Commission meeting will be canceled.
1277
1278 Commissioner Pevsner made a motion to cancel the regular scheduled September 15
1279 meeting.
1280
1281 Commissioner Spears seconded.
1282
1283 Motion carried unanimously.
1284
1285

1286 **ORAL COMMUNICATION**

1287
1288 **Planning Commission**

1289
1290 **Staff**

1291
1292 Chair Denison adjourned the meeting at 11:24pm to October 6, 2022.
1293

1294
1295
1296 
1297 Secretary to the Planning Commission
1298 Vincent Gonzalez, Director of Planning & Community Preservation