

**City of Alamo Heights**  
**PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**  
**MINUTES**  
April 15, 2025

The Planning and Zoning Commission held a special meeting in the Council Chambers of the City of Alamo Heights, located at 6116 Broadway St, and via Zoom with teleconference on Tuesday, April 15, 2025, at 5:30 p.m.

**Members present and composing a quorum of the Board:**

Lori Becknell, Chairman  
Stephen McAllister, Vice-Chair  
Richard Bilanceri  
Richard Garison  
John Grable  
Al Honigblum  
Laura Propp  
Christopher Walker

**Members absent:**

La Una Cuffy  
Katherine Gish  
Carlos Platero, Jr.

**Staff members present:**

Buddy Kuhn, City Manager  
Phil Lancy, Assistant City Manager  
Frank J. Garza, City Attorney  
Lety Hernandez, Community Development Services Director  
Rick Pruitt, Police Chief  
Allen Ottmers, Fire Chief  
Cindy Pruitt, Deputy Police Chief  
Sarah Olivares, Planner

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The meeting was called to order by Chairman Becknell at 5:33 p.m.

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Chairman Becknell announced that public comments would be limited to two (2) minutes. If someone had already made similar comments, it was respectfully requested that they waive their right to speak in order to afford other ideas to be stated. For Case No. 444, a subcommittee of the Planning and Zoning Commission met with representatives of The Argyle and the organized neighborhood opposition group, Neighborhood Preservation League of Alamo Heights (NPLAH) in four (4) mediation meetings since November 2024. Individuals representing The Argyle included Beth Smith, former Alamo Heights Mayor Louis Cooper, Byron LeFlore, and Kennon Guglielmo. The Neighborhood Preservation League of Alamo Heights was represented by Ann McGlone, Mike McGlone, Maggie Herdeg, and Andrew Herdeg. The P&Z subcommittee members included Chairman Becknell, Vice Chair McAllister, Al Honigblum, and Laura Propp. The subcommittee members also met with City staff including City Manager Kuhn, Assistant City Manager Laney, Director Hernandez, and Chief Pruitt. Chairman Becknell thanked each person for their time and attention to this matter.

Vice-Chair McAllister summarized the topics discussed at the four mediation meetings, including noise and outdoor music. He felt the mediation was successful and thanked all parties for their

participation. Chairman Becknell stated that the applicant, The Argyle, would be given approximately 15 minutes to present their case, and then allow equal time for the organized opposition group NPLAH to present.

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Chairman Becknell announced that the April 07, 2025 meeting minutes were not available for review and rescheduled to the next regularly scheduled meeting.

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#### Case No. 444

**Public hearing, consideration, and action regarding a request of Beth Smith of The Argyle, applicant, representing the Texas Biomedical Research Institute, owner, for a Specific Use Permit (SUP) to add on north side of existing building an addition at 934 Patterson and to consolidate all prior Specific Use Permits relating to The Argyle into an omnibus SUP to support its operation of a dining, social club and venue on the premises located at 934 Patterson Ave, 815 Patterson Ave, 820 Patterson Ave, 423 Argyle Ave, a 2,417sq ft track of land, and the northernmost one hundred fifty feet (150ft) of 401 Torcido Dr all zoned Single Family District (SF-A).**

Mr. Laney presented the case. Commissioners requested further information on whether written public comments received after the finalization of the presentation and not reflected in the public notification slide were within 200ft radius of the property. Mr. Laney responded that if the comments were from individuals within the 200ft radius, they would be reflected in the responses presented at future meetings. It was unknown if any of the comments applied at that time.

Ms. Smith, Frank Burney, and Kennon Guglielmo, representatives for The Argyle and Texas Biomedical Research Institute (TBRI), were present and addressed the board. The representatives discussed the contributions The Argyle generates for TBRI and the Alamo Heights community.

The specific use permit (SUP) would allow The Argyle to build a north addition to host special events that have been typically held outside the building in temporary tents constructed on site. The SUP would allow the continued use of The Argyle while addressing neighbor concerns that have existed for many years. Since the last meeting in November, the subcommittee has met a number of times to discuss the concerns of the neighbors and incorporate solutions to those concerns within the text of the SUP. The Argyle felt that reductions in the number of events, transparency of when events would occur, hours of operation and use restrictions on leaf blowers, and other changes addressed the concerns expressed. They appreciated the feedback and contributions from all subcommittee members and asked the board to approve the submitted SUP request.

Mr. McGlone of 732 Patterson; Fred Jones, attorney and representative for NPLAH; Lady Romano of 734 Patterson; April Hixon of 207 Montclair; and Jerry Lambers of 502 Corona were present and addressed the board as members of the Neighborhood Preservation League of Alamo Heights. Concerns with the requested SUP included expanding the property's use from the 1955 variances, compatibility with surrounding residential use, claims of spot zoning and non-compliant zoning, parking, and enforcement and proposed self-policing by The Argyle and/or TBRI.

The board recessed at 7:09 p.m. and reconvened at 7:17 p.m.

Chairman Becknell opened the Public Hearing at 7:19 p.m.

Those present and speaking regarding the case were as follows:  
Kate Kinnison, Encino (Did not state full address) (Opposed)

Ted Flato, Encino (Did not state full address) (Opposed)  
Ashley Hixon, 114 E King's Hwy (Support)  
Sarah Lake Westhamper, 210 Morton (Opposed)  
Walter Embrey, 171 Paddington (Support)  
Ray Romano, 734 Patterson (Opposed)  
Steve Chiscano, 341 Redwood (Support)  
Ed Dingivan, 412 Harrison (Opposed)  
Elizabeth Roberts, 204 Newbury Terrace (Support)  
Albert Dickson, 207 Montclair (Opposed)  
Chrissie Sorenson, 775 Estes (Opposed)  
David Graham, (Did not state address) (Opposed)  
Hannah Cohen, 775 Estes (Opposed)  
Eli Cohen, 775 Estes (Opposed)  
Maggie Herdeg, 801 Patterson (Opposed)  
Andrew Herdeg, 801 Patterson (Opposed)  
Ceci Herdeg, 801 Patterson (Opposed)  
Chris Lopez, 600 Patterson (Opposed)  
Bennett Allison, 747 Estes (Opposed)  
John McDougall, 309 Corona (Opposed)  
Collin Stone, 134 Argyle (Opposed)  
Todd Romano, 122 Chester (Support)  
Ann McGlone, 732 Patterson (Opposed)  
James (Did not state full name), 206 Bronson (Opposed)

No one else requested to speak regarding the case. Chairman Becknell closed the public hearing at 8:11 p.m.

Support of those speaking regarding the case included less noise, elimination of tents, more parking and traffic control, management of events at The Argyle, The Argyle's efforts to be good neighbors, concessions made to address neighbor concerns, and mission of The Argyle to support Texas Biomedical Research Institute. Concerns of those speaking regarding the case included non-harmonious use, expansion of non-conforming use, number and size of events, traffic, parking, and enforcement. A speaker requested that Commissioner Honigblum recuse himself from the meeting due to his status as mayor-elect. Commissioner Honigblum asked City Attorney Frank Garza if recusal is necessary. Mr. Garza stated that Commissioner Honigblum's participation did not pose a conflict with state law.

The board recessed at 8:11 p.m. and reconvened at 8:23 p.m.

Open discussion among Commissioners considered the neighborhood concerns, the concerns expressed during the subcommittee meeting, and whether those were addressed in the latest SUP. Mr. Guglielmo, representing The Argyle, introduced an updated copy of the SUP that included additional changes. This document was distributed to board members. Additional concerns discussed the compatibility of the use, what occurs if the parking leases expire or are not renewed, and how SUPs do not change the underlying zoning of a property.

Mr. Garza explained the voting options available for the case. Commissioners expressed that more conversation was needed between The Argyle and the NPLAH representatives to address concerns.

Chairman Becknell called the board to enter into executive session to discuss Case No. 444 as authorized by Texas Government Code §551.071 (Consultation with Attorney). The board recessed into executive session at 8:56 p.m. and reconvened at 9:42 p.m. No action was taken.

Open discussion among Commissioners requested clarity on the enforcement of the SUP with City Attorney Garza. Violations of the SUP, per the language of the SUP and the City's zoning laws, could result in suspension, modification, or revocation of the SUP or fines and violations up to \$2,000 per day per offense. In addition, Mr. Garza addressed the question of specific use permits and how they do not change the underlying zoning. Special event permits will continue to be submitted by The Argyle and any other group wanted to host a qualifying event in Alamo Heights.

Vice-Chair McAllister moved to recommend approval of the Specific Use Permit with the changes The Argyle submitted, to include the reduction in number of events to 52, the number of events is calculated using the trailing 365 days, event information would be displayed on a publicly available website, two (2) biennial meetings would be held with the City and area neighbors, and The Argyle and TBRI shall not purchase any additional properties in Alamo Heights except 401 Torcido. Commissioner Propp seconded the motion.

The motion to approve was passed with the following vote:

FOR: Becknell, Bilanceri, Garison, Grable, Honigblum, McAllister, Propp, Walker

AGAINST: None

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There being no further business, Vice-Chair McAllister moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Garison seconded the motion followed by unanimous consent of the board. The meeting was adjourned at 9:55 p.m.

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**THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING ARE ALSO DIGITALLY RECORDED, AND THESE MINUTES ARE ONLY A SUMMARY OF THE MEETING. THESE MINUTES ARE NOT A VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT OF THE PROCEEDINGS AND DO NOT PURPORT TO INCLUDE ALL IMPORTANT EVIDENCE PRESENTED OR STATEMENTS MADE.**

  
Lori Becknell, Chairman  
(Board Approval)

12/01/2025  
Date Signed & Filed

  
Lety Hernandez, Director  
Community Development Services