

CITY OF **LA CAÑADA FLINTRIDGE**

**PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
May 10, 2016 - 6:00 p.m.
City Hall Council Chambers
1327 Foothill Boulevard**

- I. **CALL TO ORDER** – Chairman McConnell called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.
- II. **ROLL:** Also present were Vice Chairman Smith and Commissioners Gunter, Jain, and Hazen.
- III. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** The Flag Salute was recited.
- IV. **COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:** At this time, members of the audience may address the Commission regarding matters that are not on the agenda or matters that are on the Consent Calendar. – There was none.
- V. **REORDERING OF THE AGENDA-** The agenda was reordered with item X B. taken first.
- VI. **CONSENT CALENDAR**
 - A. **Minutes:** [March 8, 2016 Meeting](#) – M/S/C – McConnell/Jain to approve the minutes. Approved. 4-0-1. Smith abstained as he was not present at the March 8, 2016 meeting.
- VII. **CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS**
 - A. [Second-floor Review 15-35/Tree Removal Permit 15-18; Yee/Chin; 2064 Lyans Drive:](#) request to construct a new compliant 2- story residence and attached garage comprising 4,230 sq. ft. and remove one 26” oak tree. Staff is recommending approval of a Categorical Exemption for this project. (Consulting Planner/Architect Cantrell)

The applicant filed a request to continue the item. City staff recommends continuing the item to a date certain of June 14, 2016. Director Stanley stated that in order for the project to be agendized for June 14, 2016, all required application items must be turned in by May 23, 2016.

The Public Hearing was opened and no one was there to speak on the item.

The Public Hearing was closed.

Vice Chairman Smith asked if staff had any information about the property owner having any luck getting all property owners to speak and agree with the access issue.

Director Stanley clarified that the applicant is still working on getting all parties together to discuss and agree to an access agreement.

M/S/C – McConnell/Hazen to continue the item to June 14, 2016.
Continued 5-0.

VIII. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- A. [Second Floor Review 15-42/Floor Area Review 16-03/Large Garage Review 16-01; 1719 La Taza Drive; Szebelledy/Johnson:](#) request to allow the construction a new two-story house comprising 5,242 sq. ft. Floor Area Review is also required since total project area would exceed 4,500 sq. ft. on a lot with an average width of less than 80 feet; the subject lot is 75 feet wide. Large Garage Review would allow a non-street facing 3-car garage with an overall width of 33 feet at the front of the residence. Staff is recommending approval of a Categorical Exemption for this project. (Planner Gjolme).

Director Stanley presented the project to the Commission. He explained that the Floor Area Review is required because the proposed project exceeds the maximum floor area allowed by code. The Large Garage Review complies with all setbacks. Mr. Stanley showed the Commission the site plan and indicated that the partially covered patio can be viewed at the rear of the property. He stated that the neighbor to the west is located slightly higher on the ridge than the subject property and there is substantial screening and distance from the subject house. The design and siting of the house is similar to that of the home to the east.

The story pole shows the proposed project's relation to the pool. The project complies with code requirements. There is a grade difference resulting in a 20 – 25 foot drop as well as an increased rear setback of 52 feet. The average width of the lot is 75 feet. The proposed height of the project is 29 feet.

The public hearing was opened for public comment.

The applicant's representative, landscape architect, Roy Leisure, said that he is available for any questions the Commission had.

Vice Chairman Smith asked if the Italian Cypress trees will be removed from the property to which Mr. Leisure indicated that, yes, most of them would be removed. He said that a fast-growing tree, a Podocarpus, which is more fire retardant, is proposed.

The applicant's architect, Jay Johnson, spoke and indicated that the proposed design reflects an East Coast traditional look which blends nicely with the rest of the neighborhood. The home is large and "L"-shaped. The massing will be mitigated by the generous setback and with the second story being set back towards the rear of the house.

The public hearing was opened for public comment.

Glen Houser, located at 5011 Jarvis, to the north of the subject property, spoke. He has an issue with a large house on a small lot. He believes it is significantly larger than the rest of the homes in the neighborhood. He is also concerned about the fact that a natural creek flows nearby and is worried that should a significant rain event ever occur, the creek could turn into a river.

Applicant Matt Szebelledy said that he believes that the proposed design is the best layout for the site. He believes it conforms to the neighborhood. He clarified that the drainage from the creek is funneled through corrugated pipe that discharges into the street.

Director Stanley confirmed that the Building and Safety Department has reviewed and approved the private drainage which drains into a street drainage collection system. It will ultimately drain into the flood control channel.

The public hearing was closed and the Commissioners offered their comments.

Commissioner Gunter visited the site. He feels the design is good and that the applicant's architect has done well designing it within design guidelines. He believes that careful engineering is evident on this project. He conveyed that he really appreciates the project being designed within code. He is pleased that the applicant is not asking for any modifications.

Vice Chairman Smith agreed with Commissioner Gunter's comments. He said he appreciates the challenging lot. He is supportive of the project and can make all of the findings.

Commissioner Jain said that he visited the site and said that he felt that the architect did a good job of complying with city ordinances. He can make all of the findings.

Commissioner Hazen said that he visited the site and he commends the applicant. He can make the findings.

Chairman McConnell said that originally, his biggest concern was the grading. He said he felt different about the project once he visited the site. He felt that through the Large Garage review that the garage should be situated to the side, out of view. He believes the mass of the project has been well screened and placed in the interior of the lot. He can make all of the findings.

M/S/C – Gunter/Smith to approve the project. Approved 5-0.

IX. REPORT OF DIRECTOR'S REVIEWS – Was reported.

- A. **Hillside Development Permit 16-09 (Dir.); 2007 Derwood Drive; Grigorian:** allowed enclosure of a 73 sq. ft. roof overhang to expand an existing bedroom of a one-story residence on a hillside lot.
- B. **Hillside Development Permit 16-12 (Dir.); 1213 Flintridge Circle; Asghari:** allowed a 44 sq. ft. addition to an existing bedroom of a one-story residence on a hillside lot.

X. OTHER BUSINESS

- A. [Substantial Conformance Determination; Hillside Development Permit 14-40/Second-floor Review 14-38/Setback Modification 14-23/Dir. Misc. Review 14-08](#) (flat roof); 4068 Chevy Chase Drive; Chraghchian/AGD.

Director Stanley explained that the item was brought before the Commission last year. The residence consists of a split-level design. There have been two minor revisions to the swimming pool. The applicant would like to increase the length of the pool to be cantilevered. The vertical clearance would not exceed code and is less than 7 feet, 6 inches and the underside is landscaped and retained. The rear yard setback exceeds requirements.

Proposed, are two transformers to be located along Chevy Chase Drive and two new code compliant retaining walls. The transformers must be painted green to match the landscaping. Director Stanley believes the project is in substantial conformance. Additional trees can be conditioned for installation on the site, as well.

The public hearing was opened for public comment.

The applicant indicated that he is waiting to see about the pool extension and if the slab can be poured. The lowest grade is 7 feet, 6 inches.

Commissioner Gunter asked if the pool is framed. The architect indicated that there are columns.

Chairman McConnell asked why two transformers were required. The applicant replied that Edison needs access to the private property as there is no undergrounding allowed in hillside areas of the City.

The public hearing was closed.

Commissioner Jain recommended that the Director review and determine the outcome of this application.

Commissioner Gunter said that he does not believe the request is in compliance with code.

Vice Chairman Smith said that he had no problem with the Director making a determination on the application.

Commissioner Hazen agreed with Vice Chairman Smith's comments.

Chairman McConnell believed that the items should be brought back for further review.

Assistant City Attorney, Guerra, said that a motion needs to be made to bring the item back for review. There was none made, therefore, the project will continue to be reviewed by the Community Development Director.

B. General Plan Consistency Determination for the Fiscal Year 2016-2017 Capital Improvements Program. -

Deputy Director, Susan Koleda, gave a staff report. She pointed out that the agenda lists the Fiscal Year for the General Plan Consistency Determination as 2015 – 2016 which is incorrect; the correct Fiscal Year is 2016 – 2017. Ms. Koleda clarified that in order to conform with the goals and policies of the General Plan with respect to the Capital Improvements Program, a General Plan Consistency determination must be made. A total of \$5.6 million is proposed for Capital Improvement projects for Fiscal Year 2016-2017. Of the \$5.6 million proposed, \$2.8 million is planned to be obligated for seven new projects.

The Commission asked about the City Hall access improvements referred to in page 3, item 35 of the staff report. City Engineer, Kris Markarian, explained that Public Works proposes to obligate monies to be spent on the design work associated with the improvement of the City Hall parking lot and installation of an elevator. Also proposed is the before-and-after analysis of sound walls. The project will be funded with Measure R monies and no City funding match will be required.

Vice Chairman Smith asked for clarification as to whether Olberz Park improvements are comprised of all City land. City Engineer Markarian indicated that Olberz Park does consist of all City land.

Staff asks that the Resolution be amended to reflect the correct Fiscal Year for the Plan of 2016 – 2017.

M/S/C – Jain/Smith to approve the amended resolution. Approved 5-0.

C. Planning Commission Budget Requests

Director Stanley asked that any additional requests the Commission has for Planning-related expenditures for the next Fiscal Year, 2016-17 be requested at this time.

Commissioner Gunter inquired about funding for the Zoning Ordinance to which Director Stanley replied that funding for completion of the Ordinance and for items relating to CEQA have been requested for the next Fiscal Year.

Deputy Director Koleda responded to comments Commissioner Gunter made regarding working with the Los Angeles County Fire Department and their requirements that involve Public Works issues. On occasion, conflicts with L.A. County Fire's Land Development Division have arisen during the plan check phase of projects. This can significantly hamper the progress of projects. Ms. Koleda said that she is in the process of arranging for a meeting with County Fire to address these issues.

Chairman McConnell said that the discussion regarding Los Angeles County Fire processes is an item that should be reviewed at a later time as it is not an agenda item.

Director Stanley also informed the Commission that new permit tracking software is proposed to be in the requested budget for the 2015-2016 Fiscal Year.

XI. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Hazen commented on the budget request for Americans with Disability Act (ADA) improvements and said that he felt that the requested amount was excessive. Director Stanley responded that the requested amount included a handicap access report for City Hall and ADA restrooms would be required.

XII. COMMENTS FROM THE DIRECTOR

Director Stanley informed the Commission of upcoming meetings for the Climate Action Plan: Planning Commission meeting, May 24, 2016 and the City Council meeting, June 14, 2016. He also mentioned that the Noise Ordinance is scheduled to be presented to the City Council on May 17, 2016.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT – The meeting was adjourned at 7:19 p.m.