

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF LA CAÑADA FLINTRIDGE
HELD ON MAY 23, 2017**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Gunter called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m.

II. ROLL

Also present were Commissioners Jain and Oh. Vice Chairman Hazen and Commissioner McConnell were absent.

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Flag Salute was recited.

IV. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were none.

V. REORDERING OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was not reordered.

VI. CONSENT CALENDAR

There were no items.

VII. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS

**A. Hillside Development Permit 15-37 / Second-floor Review
15-39; Chen/Johnson; 4200 Mesa Vista Drive:**

Planner Gjolme gave a presentation in accordance with the staff report. He explained that the project complied with all code standards. The home was designed with good proportion and asymmetry and that the architect was diligent in siting of the house while at the same time, preserving a waterline easement that bisects the lot and wooded slope to the north. He said that the project worked well with the constraints of the site.

Mr. Gjolme said that staff can make all findings and recommended adoption of the Mitigated Negative Declaration and Conditions of Approval.

Chairman Gunter asked the Commissioners if they had any questions about the project.

Commissioner Oh asked if there was paving proposed over the driveway easement.

Mr. Gjolme said that there was an erroneous indication given. The area in question was not part of the subject lot.

Commissioner Oh asked where the hedge was in relation to the property.

Mr. Gjolme said that the hedge is not on the subject property and therefore, staff did not address it.

Commissioner Oh asked if four parking spaces are required being that the project is a hillside project.

Mr. Gjolme said, "yes, though not all four spaces have to be covered."

Commissioner Jain asked for clarification of Condition No. 22.

Mr. Gjolme explained that the condition is part of the environmental review. Native American Tribes must be notified during the project excavation. He said that the project representative he spoke to indicated that he had a reference list for monitors used during ground disturbing activity.

Chairman Gunter asked if the project would use existing grade and orientation in the same way except for the second story.

Mr. Gjolme said, "yes."

Chairman Gunter asked if there was a haul route management plan so that there will not be any negative impacts on weekly trash days due to the narrow and winding streets.

Chris said, "yes."

Chairman Gunter said that he was not aware of a case that prohibited a two-story home in the City and it was his understanding that second story homes are potentially allowed in all residential zones of the City.

Mr. Gjolme said, "yes," that was the case.

Chairman Gunter asked staff if a two-story home was ever disallowed in the City.

Mr. Gjolme said, "no."

Director Stanley clarified that no second-story requests have been denied before, but they may have been redesigned.

Chairman Gunter opened the Public Hearing.

Project architect, Jay Johnson spoke. He said that he believed that the neighbor located below the proposed project would have been in attendance tonight, but had a prior commitment.

Mr. Johnson provided a rendering. He also indicated that the amount of truck loads would be reduced by 40% due to changes to the grading plan and basement design. Mr. Johnson showed the Birch trees on the rendering and indicated that they would help screen the front of the house. He said that the home would provide the owner a nice view of the valley and that balconies would be placed on the back of the house. He showed the size of the homes constructed in the past 17 years within a half-mile radius and explained that they were consistent with the square footage of the proposed project.

Mr. Johnson said that he believed that there are projects with larger square footages than what is proposed such as those located on Shepherds Lane. He said that there are a lot of different styles in the neighborhood. He also wants to be sensitive to the neighbors.

Commissioner Oh asked why the plans showed paving on the neighbor's easement.

Mr. Johnson said that the paving is on the neighbor's property and it is existing.

Mr. Gjolme clarified that there is new paving proposed that is not part of the project.

Chairman Gunter asked if the drive access will be altered.

Mr. Johnson said, "no."

Commissioner Oh asked if any landscaping would be removed.

Mr. Johnson said, "no."

Speaker, Terry Whittimeyer, 4285 Mesa Vista Drive, spoke of concerns relating to excavation and flooding during heavy rains. There are also water pressure issues in the area which can present problems in the

instance fire protection and safety issues arise. Also, there is only one place to turn around on the street which is at the top of the street. The street is very narrow and dumpsters are not even allowed on the road. Ms. Whittmeyer expressed a concern about being informed about such projects prior to project approval.

Chairman Gunter stated that the City is not a party to CC&Rs or the maintenance of a private road. He clarified that the haul route plan is a mitigation to the construction.

Director Stanley explained that any disturbance to the road during construction must be repaired.

Mr. Gjolme said that water pressure is appropriate for the project.

Speaker, Owner of 4229 Mesa Vista Drive, expressed a concern about Condition of Approval No. 20 which stated that any damage would be borne by the property owner. He was concerned that the driveways are large and are used as turnouts for trucks.

Director Stanley said that the private driveway is not being reviewed and that any damage to private property would be a civil matter.

Speaker, Martin Burton, representative for the owner of 4201 Mesa Vista, expressed a concern about privacy, the proposed project's massing and consistency with other homes in the neighborhood. He was also concerned about the amount of truck trips that would take place during construction.

Mr. Burton said that he did not believe the Commission had the authority to make approvals on the project as the affected parties had yet to give access via an easement.

Chairman Gunter asked for clarification on the motor court and courtyard.

Mr. Burton confirmed that both areas are in the front yard.

A discussion ensued over access easements and how a fence would not be allowed to be placed blocking access over the easement.

Mr. Burton said that approving the project will compromise the anti-mansionization provisions of the General Plan. He urged the Commission to reject the project.

Speaker, Georgie Cager, a city resident, said that she felt that the architect did a good job of designing the project. There are places in La Cañada Flintridge where the design would fit in well. She believed that in this particular case, the proposed design and construction impacts would be unfair for the neighbors to deal with.

Mr. Johnson said that he would be involved throughout the duration of the construction process and would help solve problems if they arose.

Mr. Gjolme said that the applicant has agreed to contribute to the streets maintenance.

The Public Hearing was closed.

Commissioner Oh said that he visited the site. He said the road is narrow and the location is secluded. There is quite an elevation difference, however, a good amount of screening landscape exists. There is a lot of landscape. He said that he did not want to grant approval if trespassing was a problem. He can make all of the findings and found the project to be reasonable.

Commissioner Jain said that he is familiar with the site. He stated that the type of access is a private matter and out of the purview of the City. The site has a lot of constraints, but the project is well done.

Chairman Gunter said that he agreed with his fellow Commissioners. He said that he believed that the house conforms to the design guidelines as it is modulated on all sides.

M/S/C – Oh/Jain to approve the project and approve the changes to Condition No. 20. Approved 3-0.

VIII. PUBLIC HEARINGS

B. Second-Floor Review 14-17 (amendment); Koeppen; 4812 Crown Avenue:

The Commission did not require an oral report to be given.

Chairman Gunter asked if any changes had occurred on the project.

Assistant Planner, Yesayan confirmed that there are no changes.

The Public Hearing was Opened and Closed.

Director Stanley confirmed again that nothing had changed and that the applicant had requested an extension due to health reasons.

M/S/C – Gunter/Jain to approve the project. Approved 3-0.

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

A. Hillside Development Permit 17-12 (Dir.); Scolnick; 5349 Ivafern Lane: allowed a new deck, balcony extension, bathroom addition and new pool/spa on a hillside lot.

B. Director’s Misc. Review 17-05 (Setback); Larsen; 1103 Atlee Drive: allowed a 382 sq. ft. 1st-floor addition to encroach into the required east side yard setback while maintaining the footprint/building line of the existing residence.

X. OTHER BUSINESS

There was none.

XI. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Jain asked about the Negative Declaration that was included in the packets for an upcoming meeting.

Director Stanley confirmed that the Negative Declaration should be reviewed and that the associated project would not get to the Commission before the second meeting of June 2017.

XII. COMMENTS FROM THE DIRECTOR

Director Stanley suggested adjourning the meeting in Council member Dave Spence’s memory.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

M/S/C – Gunter/Jain & Oh to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 p.m. in memory of City Councilmember David Spence. Approved 3-0.

Secretary to the Planning Commission