

CITY OF **LA CAÑADA FLINTRIDGE**

**PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
May 24, 2016 - 6:00 p.m.
City Hall Council Chambers
1327 Foothill Boulevard**

- I. **CALL TO ORDER** – Vice Chairman Smith called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.
- II. **ROLL:** Also present were Commissioners Jain and Hazen. Chairman McConnell and Commissioner Gunter were both absent.
- 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-** Item X A. was heard prior to Item VIII. B.
- VI. **CONSENT CALENDAR**
 - A. **Minutes:** March 22, 2016 meeting – M/S/C – Jain/Hazen to approve the minutes. Approved 3-0.
- VII. **CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS-** There was none.
- VIII. **PUBLIC HEARINGS**
 - A. [Second-floor Review 13-25 \(Amendment\); 508 Georgian Road; Coane/Crawford:](#) request to amend a previously approved Second-floor Review to allow a change to exterior materials (Assistant Planner Harris).

No staff report was required to be given. The applicant's architect, James Coane, was available for questions.

Commissioners Jain, Hazen, and Vice Chairman Smith said they could make all of the findings to support what they felt is a good project.

M/S/C – Jain/Hazen to approve the project. Approved 3-0.
 - B. [Reasonable Accommodation Request 16-01; 4409 Chevy Chase Drive; Hsu:](#) request to widen a non-conforming driveway to allow for wheelchair access. Staff is recommending approval of a Categorical Exemption for this project. (Assistant Planner Harris).

Assistant Planner Harriet Harris presented a staff report and explained that the applicant is requesting a reasonable accommodation. The subject property is currently in plan check for compliant additions to the house to make it handicap accessible. In the past, the Public Works Department installed a brick driveway approach and sidewalk and they would like for them to be retained.

Staff recommends approval of the reasonable accommodation.

The Commission asked about the type of material to be used for the driveway. The applicant's representative, Brian Hsu, clarified that the applicant wishes to remove the asphalt driveway and replace it with concrete.

Director Stanley clarified that a variance is not required for this type of request; a reasonable accommodation is required since the circular driveway is non-conforming.

Vice Chairman Smith asked if additional conditions of approval should be made that would require conformance once the accommodation is no longer required to which Ms. Harris explained that she did not believe it was necessary as there are many circular driveways nearby that are nonconforming.

Mr. Hsu stated that the applicant wishes to replace the current asphalt driveway with concrete, widen it to fourteen feet, and continue the driveway to the rear of the property.

Commissioner Jain asked staff why the applicant would not just repair and patch the driveway.

Director Stanley said that the driveway is on private property and is within the Community Development's jurisdiction to regulate.

Mr. Hsu explained that the driveway is no longer smooth and that patching the driveway's asphalt could hamper easy accessibility.

Director Stanley and Mr. Guerra clarified that the applicant's request that they be allowed to install concrete to provide a safe wheelchair accessible driveway surface meets the intent of the code as a special accommodation.

Mr. Hsu clarified that he plans to improve the entire driveway with concrete.

Ms. Harris reiterated that the original items under review at this time are the circular driveway and the width of the driveway.

Commissioner Jain asked if the 50% landscaping rule would be affected by the applicant's request to install a concrete driveway.

Deputy Director Koleda clarified that the driveway is legal nonconforming. Should the reasonable accommodation be granted, then, when the property is eventually sold, the driveway and required landscaping will need to be brought into conformance.

Assistant City Attorney Guerra and Director Stanley clarified the nonconforming status and reasonable accommodation concepts for the project. Director Stanley suggested a condition of approval which rides with the land and stated that a non-conforming driveway cannot be expanded, but only for reasonable accommodation which has been granted by the Planning Commission. He also clarified that the circular driveway and front yard should satisfy the 50% or more landscaping requirements.

The Commission and staff discussed Americans with Disability Act (ADA) and landscaping requirements as well as conditions of approval that should be required as they relate to nonconforming use and its expansion. It was decided that conditions of approval should be added that reiterates the 50% landscaping and concrete requirement rule, as well as, maintaining nonconforming status.

M/S/C – Smith/Hazen to approve the project with the addition of a condition that specifies the 50% landscaping rule as well as a condition that clarifies the nonconforming status of the circular driveway. Approved 3-0.

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

- A. **Director's Misc. Review 16-15 (Setback); 1629 Torcida Drive; Blanco:** allowed a 936 sq. ft. 1st-floor addition to encroach 2'-2" into the required 12'-8" west side setback while maintaining the 10'-6" west side setback currently provided by the existing residence.
- B. **Director's Misc. Review 16-19 (Setback); 4826 Fairlawn Drive; Amin:** allowed a 1,190 sq. ft. 1st-floor addition to encroach 11" into the required 10-foot south side setback while maintaining the 9'-1" south side setback currently provided by the existing residence.
- C. **Hillside Development Permit 16-15 (Dir.) & Director's Misc. Review 16-20 (Setback); 5340 La Canada Blvd.; Sneed:** allowed repair and partial replacement of an existing front-porch roof on a hillside lot.

Commissioner Smith asked staff if light replacement would also be reviewed. Director Stanley answered, "Yes."

X. OTHER BUSINESS

- A. [Climate Action Plan](#); review and comment on the City's [draft Climate Action Plan \(CAP\)](#).

Deputy Director Susan Koleda introduced Rincon Consultant representative, Christina McAdams. Ms. McAdams explained that the Climate Action Plan will go to the City Council in June for formal adoption. The plan provides a framework for measuring greenhouse gas emissions and establishes a plan to meet the efforts. It provides a forecast for 2020 and 2035. It is not mandated that local jurisdictions adopt a plan, but the State highly recommends doing so in order to be in line with State goals.

Ms. McAdams talked about the strides that cities have made to reduce emissions. La Cañada Flintridge's inventory of emissions has dropped by 30% over the last 8 years. The consultant explained how she re-forecasted emissions based on population and employee growth and that it is consistent with the City's General Plan.

The City's targets for improving energy efficiency and reducing emissions are consistent with State goals. At this time, La Cañada Flintridge is well below target 2020 goals and the gap to 2035 needs to be met in order to keep with State goals. The consultant looked at gaps in policies along with other jurisdictions' issues to arrive at the new set of measures. Public input was also solicited through a series of public meetings.

Commissioner Hazen asked if plans for LED lighting to be installed throughout the City has been reviewed to which the consultant indicated, "yes." He also asked if the 210 Freeway running through the City unfairly counts against the City's conservation efforts. The consultant indicated that the freeway emission is based on a model the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) devised and that the negative effects stemming from the freeway are spread out evenly via the model, so that no one city has the sole responsibility of addressing impacts.

The Commission further questioned that if the City does not meet targeted goals, what happens? The consultant replied that there would be no ramifications at this time, but that it is inevitable that the City will have to eventually comply over time.

The public hearing was open for public comment.

Speaker, Lisa Novick, 1111 Unitah, said that she has been a City resident for 16 years and is the head of outreach for a charitable organization. She believes that the City has maintained a poor record for implementing good water reduction measures, which she believes will become worse over time. She asked that voluntary action be made to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and that the City leadership demonstrates how these emissions are problematic so that the community can begin to make meaningful reductions now. She feels that the City should go back over the rules of the Climate Action Plan. She also stated that she does not believe that artificial turf does anything to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. She said that 50% of water usage is on landscaping. She believes that all of the outreach by water districts stems from the involvement of the same 85 advocates. She does not believe that the rest of the community is getting a clear message.

Speaker and resident, Beth Fabinsky, said that she works at JPL and would like to voice support for the measures in the Climate Action Plan. She explained that there is funding available to help with conservation efforts.

The public hearing was closed.

Director Stanley said that La Cañada Flintridge has significantly reduced its water consumption.

Vice Chairman Smith said that he feels that someone should be assigned to monitor this effort and asked if there is a staff member to do so, currently.

Deputy Director Koleda said that the responsibility will fall with current staff. Staff can work with the models and undertake regular monitoring.

XI. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Jain indicated that he was not available to attend the Planning Commission meeting of June 14th.

XII. COMMENTS FROM THE DIRECTOR

Director Stanley discussed with the Commission that they would need 3 Commissioners for a quorum on June 14th. He also mentioned that the second reading of the Noise Ordinance would be going to the City Council on June 7th.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT – The meeting was adjourned at 7:21 p.m.