

# CITY OF LA CAÑADA FLINTRIDGE

## PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

January 13, 2015 Hearing

### Applicant :

Jay Johnson, AIA  
1125 Foothill Boulevard  
La Canada Flintridge, CA 91011

### Case Type / Numbers:

Hillside Development Permit 10-55  
Second-Floor Review 10-39  
Director's Miscellaneous 14-21

### Owner:

Glenn Garrard  
59 West Orange Grove Avenue  
Sierra Madre, CA 91204

### Project Address:

5471 La Forest Drive

### Case Planner:

Roger Cantrell ~ Consulting Architect/Planner

## 1. Request:

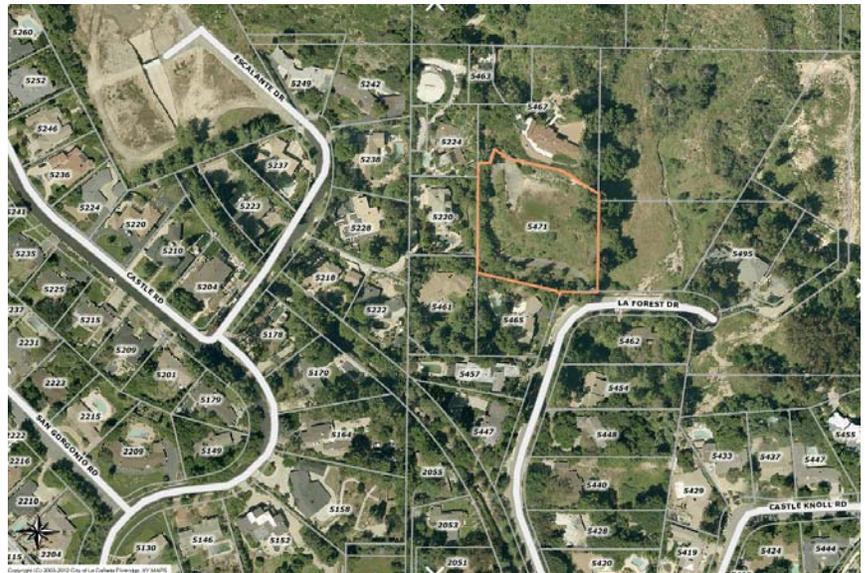
The applicant requests a Hillside Development Permit and Second-Floor Review to construct a new 7,087 sq. ft. 2-story residence, plus cabana, basement, and related site work. Director's Miscellaneous review is also required for the mansard roofs (considered flat roofs per code).

## 2. Location:

The site is on the north side of La Forest Drive in the R-1-40,000 zone.

## 3. Staff Recommendation:

It is recommended that the project **BE APPROVED**, subject to conditions contained in the attached draft resolution.



**4. Tabulation of Areas:**

Site:	60,984 sq. ft.	1 <sup>st</sup> floor:	3,019 sf
		Garages:	967 sf
		Covered outdoor areas:	412 sf
		<u>2<sup>nd</sup> floor:</u>	<u>2,689 sf</u>
		House subtotal:	7,087 sf
		Cabana:	640 sf
		Basement:	2,820 sf (exempt)
		<b>Total:</b>	<b>7,727 sf (12.7% of site)</b>

**5. General Plan/Zoning/Existing Land Use:**

The General Plan Land Use Map designates the site Estate Residential (up to 1 dwelling unit per acre). The site is zoned R-1-40,000 (Single-Family Residential - 40,000 Square Foot Minimum Lot Size). The site is vacant.

**6. Environmental Impact Review:**

Based on the review of the Initial Study Questionnaire and related materials, staff has determined that no significant environmental impacts would result from the project, and a draft Negative Declaration has been included for adoption in the event of project approval.

**7. Previous Actions:**

Tree Removal Permit (TRP 04-50), 10/5/04, for removal of one dead 16" deodar

Hillside Development Permit 04-68 / Floor Area Review 04-14 / Modification 05-36, approved 7/12/05, expired without permit issuance

**8. Pending and Potential Actions:**

Plan check, Fire and Health Dept. approval, and issuance of building permits

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**9. Staff Analysis:**

A. Context:

The site is at the north end of La Forest Drive, where it curves into an east-west orientation for its final segment. This is a very rustic, wooded part of the city, with trees generally allowing long-range views but limiting exposure to nearby houses below.

Access is via a steep, winding driveway cutting through the subject parcel and shared with two higher lots. Of those, the adjacent lot to the north, at 5467 La Forest Drive, is developed with a 2003 house, which overlooks the site at close range. From the 1950s until the early 2000s, the project site was developed with a one-story house, of which no evidence remains aside from the half-acre pad.

The site has a very steep slope (approximately 66%) up from the street to the shared driveway, and a similar slope from the shared driveway to the pad. At the back of the site, an even steeper upslope (approximately 100%) ascends to the house above. Overall average slope is approximately 40%.



Trees are chiefly on the periphery of the property. There is a single large oak in the middle of the slope between the street and driveway, and several other oaks and elms along the west side of the driveway. More sizable are the two pines found at the east end of the pad.

There are panoramic long-range views to the south, southwest, and southeast, with no blockage by other houses or trees. The street is approximately 60 feet below the pad, and the house across the street at 5462 La Forest Drive is further downslope from the street, with dense shrubs blocking potential views into the property or up the slope to the subject property. To the north, the neighboring house is sufficiently elevated, at a floor elevation more than 15 feet above the proposed house ridge, as to preclude any view blockage aside from incidental foreground from limited vantage points.

#### B. Project Description:

A Hillside Development Permit and Second-Floor Review are requested for construction of a new two-story residence. The house would take advantage of the large existing pad, though its surrounding site improvements would extend the pad, necessitating 6-ft to 8-ft retaining walls on all three downslope sides. With the basement and other work, export of 2,192 cubic yards is proposed.

The house would utilize a rustic style with its shutters, stonework, and mansard roofs, while refraining from the complex, informal massing that typifies rustic architecture. At 114 feet in length, the house approaches the 120-foot guideline limit in the Hillside Development Ordinance.

The 40% average slope over the entire property is associated with a slope factor multiplier of 0.67. Applying that to the site area yields a guideline limit far exceeding the proposed floor area. Overall parameters are as follows:

	<u>Standard:</u>	<u>Project:</u>	<u>Standard</u> <u>x slope factor:</u>
Floor Area:	14,146 sq. ft.	7,727 sf	9,478 sf
Front SB:	20 ft	110 ft	
East side SB:			
1 <sup>st</sup> -floor:	20 ft	78 ft	
2 <sup>nd</sup> -floor:	20 ft	82 ft	
West side SB:			
1 <sup>st</sup> -floor:	20 ft	56 ft	
2 <sup>nd</sup> -floor:	20 ft	62 ft	
Rear SB:	15 ft	42 ft	
Height:	28 ft	28 ft	

The neighborhood has a low density of development. Even within that context, the project would be below the average density. Other houses in the neighborhood compare as follows:

Address	Floor Area*	Lot Area	Density
5218 Escalante Drive	2,826	16,758	16.9%
5222 Escalante Drive	2,247	18,201	12.3%
5228 Escalante Drive	4,480	25,835	17.3%
5238 Escalante Drive	2,167	24,273	8.9%
5242 Escalante Drive	2,481	26,376	9.4%
5447 La Forest Drive	3,208	20,080	16.0%
5448 La Forest Drive	1,658	28,575	5.8%
5454 La Forest Drive	3,075	25,105	12.2%
5457 La Forest Drive	3,007	17,995	12.0%
5461 La Forest Drive	2,541	28,134	9.0%
5462 La Forest Drive	1,683	24,563	6.9%
5463 La Forest Drive	1,184	6,700	17.7%
5465 La Forest Drive	1,983	23,764	8.3%
5467 La Forest Drive	3,915	49,672	7.9%
5495 La Forest Drive	7,288	30,770	23.7%
<b>Average:</b>	<b>2,916 sf</b>	<b>24,459 sf</b>	<b>11.9%</b>
<b>Project:</b>	<b>5,708 sf</b>	<b>60,984 sf</b>	<b>9.4%</b>

*\*Floor figures exclude garages and other exterior covered areas and are intended for general comparison only. area*

### Massing & Roof Design

Because more than 25% of the roof area is flat, the project is subject to Flat Roof review, classified as a Director's Miscellaneous Review. This is before the Commission for confirmation as part of the entire project.

The house has a straightforward appearance. It is dominated by a long ridge, with minor lower-roofed transitional elements at the ends. A mansard roof is used, with three articulating projections and a single mansard breaking it up along the long portion of the roof facing south. The north elevation, with its offsite exposure limited to the single neighbor high above, has much more articulation and liveliness. Despite the rustic touches, the overall effect is monumental due to the extent of the primary mass, particularly given the length of the primary east-west roof ridge. This monumentality is mitigated to a large extent by the site's prevention of a full street view, and by the extremely limited view audience.

The aforementioned length and tendency toward monumentality run counter to the intent of the Hillside Development Ordinance, particularly in this neighborhood. The Ordinance encourages roof slopes to correspond to slopes. As seen in Section CC on Sheet L2, the line of sight prevents most wall views and thus the house becomes primarily a roof.

Staff does not regard the project as posing problems with regard to the extent of flat roof, due to limited visibility of the house in general, and most importantly due to the use of mansard roofs in an appropriate manner. That involves integration with the house style as well as depth and articulation adequate to presenting a convincing appearance of a sloped roof in fitting with the hillside setting.

#### Views

As previously noted, the siting of the house alone prevents any view blockage regardless of the particulars of its massing. However, the creation of a roof well raises the issue of rooftop equipment visibility. This would be a concern of only the house to the north. A condition requiring screening of equipment from all vantage points is included.

#### Pad Expansion

A continuous retaining wall of varying heights is proposed to ring the entire downslope edge of the pad – essentially the entire perimeter of the pad except the driveway entrance and the steep upslope to the north. The wall would range in height from 3 to 8 feet. The extent of pad expansion accommodated by this retaining wall would vary from one to 15 feet, with most of it being under 5 feet.

That pad expansion amounts to less than 1,500 sf as compared to approximately 20,000 sf existing pad area. It appears to be much less the product of open space need than a formal statement. In a sense, the retaining wall would just be replacing one subtle artificial edge (the top of slope) with another, much bolder artificial edge. A Grevillea hedge is proposed to be planted against the retaining wall ringing the expanded pad. However, the Grevillea would seem to accentuate that artificial appearance.

If not for the retaining walls, the pad edge could be softened with a combination of vines, shrubs, and trees for a more natural and varied profile. Staff regards this as essential to upholding the spirit of the Hillside Development Ordinance as well as its required findings. The project could continue with its various elements at the edge of the pad without the retaining wall. A draft condition to delete the pad expansion and associated retaining wall is included.

#### Landscaping

The first layer of landscape improvement is significant, since it involves screening and selective tree removal and planting in conjunction with the replacement of the retaining wall along the long driveway.

There is no sizable landscaping to soften the view of the house from the south, or to even provide a green backdrop for the house. Without that, staff would regard the massing of the house as seen from the south as inconsistent with the site – a palace dropped into its hillside setting. However, the slope up to the property is so steep that, combined with the house's setback from the edge of its pad, there would be little close-range view from offsite other than possibly the upper portions of the roof. Farther range views would also be nonexistent. A section is provided showing the house in relation to the street and the house above (Landscape Sheet C2, Section EE). That section actually understates the amount of view blockage from the slope, since it has the street somewhat above its actual elevation at the site frontage.

Thus, more in relation to the retaining walls than to the house, more integration of the project with the site is recommended, even if not needed for positive hillside findings, and staff believes that landscaping can attain that. Such landscape accent trees (avoiding the term "screening" as implying more complete coverage) would not compromise the views out from the property, but rather give them more depth and framing interest.

Plant species are well-suited to their roles per the categories "Screening Trees", "Screening Shrubs", "Typical Slope Plantings", and "Ornamental Shrubs – Near House". All are rugged and reasonable with regard to water use.

#### Site Work

Despite the huge existing pad, the project involves a significant amount of earthwork. A total cut volume of 2,284 cubic yards of cut is proposed, half of it for the basement. Fill would be limited to 92 c.y., so that 2,192 c.y. would be exported. This would amount to approximately 220 single-bed truck trips.

As mentioned under Landscaping, a major sitework component is the replacement of the existing retaining wall along the shared driveway along with repaving the driveway. That wall is in disrepair, having survived for too long with its limited reinforcing. The Grading Plan, Sheet C3, shows the new walls.

The existing driveway has an adequate width of 20 feet at the top half, but narrows to 16 feet at the bottom half, where gradients are also abrupt at the transition to the street. The Grading Plan alleviates both the width and gradient conditions.

#### Second Floor Massing and Privacy

Potential issues regarding second floor massing are common to both Hillside review and Second-Floor Review, while the latter review also takes into account privacy issues. In the case of this project, its total isolation from other properties, including its huge east sideyard setback from any potential future development on that side, remove from its review any concerns about second floor massing or privacy.

## Color

As with the overall building massing, color is of minimal concern because the views of the house from offsite would be so limited. Compliance with the ordinance's Light Reflectance Values is an adequate measure (Condition #15), with no additional condition needed.

### C. General Plan & Hillside Development Permit:

Through conditions regarding the driveway width and slope, and regarding the proposed pad extension and retention, the project can conform to the following goals, objectives, and policies.

#### *Issues*

Goal 4 of the General Plan Land Use Element pertains to Hillside Areas:

*Maintain hillside areas for the purpose of preserving the visual quality of the City, protecting the public from safety hazards, and conserving natural resources.*

Supporting this goal are the following objectives and policies:

Objective 4.1: New development and/or remodeling of existing structures and property will be designed, constructed, and maintained to preserve important views, topographic and other natural features, and the semi-rural character of the City's hillsides.

*Policy 4.1.1: Preserve ridgelines, natural slopes, knolls, canyons, and bluffs in their natural state to protect important views and topographic and other natural features.*

*Policy 4.1.3: Ensure that development preserves the City's natural environment, setting, and viewsheds, through design, siting, and construction that avoids obtrusive breaks in the natural skylines and minimizes the visual impact of grading, intrusion of highly visible cut and/or fill slopes, building and roof lines, and/or roadway surfaces.*

*Policy 4.1.5: Continue to implement the City's Hillside Development Chapter of the Zoning Ordinance, which establishes standards to minimize landform alteration, preserve significant environmental features, and control development densities.*

*Policy 4.1.6: Encourage residences developed in hillside areas to be designed, landscaped, and built of materials that blend with the existing environment; use of bright or reflective surfaces will be disallowed.*

Objective 4.2: Ensure that hillside development will be designed, constructed, and maintained to minimize natural and human-made safety hazards to persons and property.

*Policy 4.2.1: Require that development in hillside areas be designed and constructed in such a manner as to avoid flooding, mudslides, erosion, and subsidence to residents and structures on or near hillside areas as well as downstream of any project.*

*Policy 4.2.2: Ensure that the appropriate goals, objectives, policies, and implementation programs in the Safety and Conservation elements are applied to hillside development.*

*Policy 4.2.3: Discourage development in areas of known slope instability and/or high landslide risk.*

This is further supported in the Hillside Development Ordinance, Section 11.35.020.a, which states:

*Existing community character, as defined by such factors as visual appearance, density, road widths and vegetation shall be preserved and/or enhanced.*

#### D. Findings:

##### Hillside Development Permit

*H1. The project, through elements of architectural and landscape design, will enhance its setting.*

The massing of the house is only modestly articulated in proportion to its size, but given its isolated location and lack of offsite views is appropriate to its setting. The landscaping, as conditioned for variety along the pad retaining wall, is attractive and sensible for the climate. Staff supports the finding.

*H2. The project will maximize potential for sensitive use and effective preservation of open space.*

While the project would extend the already-expansive pad over the more gradual sloped areas adjacent to it, the requisite retaining walls would be well-screened as conditioned. The undisturbed slope areas would be improved with appropriate landscaping. The finding can be made.

*H3. The project will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, or general welfare.*

With regard to safety, the project would not modify the longstanding access or to any significant extent the existing grading. It would improve safety for the owners of the subject property and the other properties sharing the driveway by replacing the dilapidated and unsafe retaining walls along its entire course. The finding can be made.

*H4. The project will not adversely affect the orderly development of property within the City.*

The project would add to the subdivided area a 2-story house on a spacious lot at less than its allowable density, and even less than the average density in its semi-rural neighborhood, replacing another recently demolished single house. Staff recommends the finding.

*H5. The project will conform to the goals and policies set forth in the General Plan.*

The multi-level house is large, but it would be well-modulated and proportionate to the site as well as in character with the land use designation and the presence of sizable homes on nearby parcels.

It would respect the existing terrain and existing trees, and introduce reasonable development in terms of density on the site. It would uphold General Plan Land Use Element Goal 4 to "(m)aintain hillside areas for the purpose of preserving the visual quality of the City, protecting the public from safety hazards, and conserving natural resources", and the supporting objectives and policies that ensure new development in hillside areas do not alter the character of existing neighborhoods. Staff recommends the finding.

*H6. The project will not create a nuisance, hazard or enforcement problem within the neighborhood or the City or require the City to provide an unusual or disproportionate level of public services.*

The project, consisting of a single-family residential use, will not result in a change of use or intensification of development beyond those allowed in the General Plan and zoning codes. Staff recommends the finding.

*H7. There are special conditions or unique characteristics of the subject property and its location or surrounding which justify exceeding one or more of the provisions set forth in this Chapter to permit project development.*

The project conforms to the Hillside Development Ordinance. Staff supports the finding.

*H8. Any potential for the project to present visibly excessive bulk from any vantage point, near or far, is mitigated by screening or siting characteristics.*

The house would not present excessive bulk in any setting because it would be fully visible from offsite only from the house elevated far above it adjacent to the north. Long range views of the house are screened by the dense tree cover of the area, and the view from the terminus of La Forest Drive would be so foreshortened by the site's steep slope that only the upper portion of the roof would be visible, aside from screening. The retaining wall ringing the pad is proposed to be provided with dense landscape screening, which will be conditioned to provide a more varied profile and set of colors and textures, in keeping with the natural setting. The finding can be made.

*H9. The project does not create an avoidable or unreasonable impairment of the view from any other property.*

No proximate houses are oriented or elevated so as to have primary views that would be affected by the project. The property is within the viewshed of a single house, adjacent to the north, and the roof ridge would be at least 15 feet below floor elevation of that house, so that the project would block only foreground views and not any mid-to-long range views. Any view of rooftop equipment from that house would be prevented by required screening. Staff supports the finding.

*H10. Additionally, for any project on a lot or parcel with an average slope of forty (40) percent or greater:*

- a. The height of the project, or any part of the project, does not present visibly excessive bulk from any vantage point, near or far:*

See Finding H8.

- b. *The project will not create an undue fire, flood, mudslide, subsidence, seismic safety, or other environmental risk for any persons or their property:*

The house is proposed for an existing pad, with most of the grading involving the creation of a basement and the functional improvement of the driveway retaining walls. Slope disturbance will be minimal, and slopes are distant from other properties. The project will be required to comply with current building codes. The finding can be made.

- c. *The privacy of the residents of other properties will not be unreasonably compromised:*

The house will have no direct view of another property. Staff supports the finding.

#### Second-Floor Review

*SFR1. The two-story design includes adequate setbacks, screening and modulation.*

All setbacks to the second floor are several times the minimum requirements, and there are no nearby properties that would be affected by the vertical extent of the house. Screening is adequate to that context, and the design features a reasonable extent of modulation. Staff supports the finding.

*SFR2. The two-story design preserves the existing scale and character of the surrounding neighborhood.*

The neighborhood is typified by a mix of one-story and larger two-story houses. The project's low density is used well to isolate its mass from any offsite view, retaining the open semi-rural character of the neighborhood. The finding can be made.

*SFR3. The two-story design protects public views, aesthetics, privacy and property values of the neighbors.*

The second floor is set back far from the property line shared with the only nearby neighbor, which is situated far above. Thus privacy is not an issue. Aesthetically, the house is well-designed, with a pleasing amount of variety gracing its considerable mass. No view is blocked by the second story, and no negative effect on property values would result from the project. Staff recommends the finding.

*SFR4. The two-story design is consistent with the Residential Design Guidelines as adopted by resolution of the City Council.*

The massing, materials and detailing utilized by the project are consistent with a somewhat formal rambling design and would not upset the residential character of the area. Additionally, the Guidelines' provisions to assure design integrity are met by the project. Staff supports the finding.

## Flat Roof Review

*FR1. The roof configuration accommodates an architectural objective, as dictated by style, scale, and/or architectural consistency with the subject structure.*

The depth of the house plan creates spans that complicate any use of entirely sloped roofs without using a shallow pitch, a ridge height exceeding the 28-foot limit, or complex design. Thus the design can be said to accommodate the architectural objectives of simplicity, steeply pitched roofs, and modest building height. Beyond that, the roofs work with the rest of the monumental yet rustic building treatment within a French country vernacular associated with the mansard roofs. The finding can be made.

*FR2. The proposed project preserves the existing scale and character of the surrounding neighborhood, and protects public views, and is sensitive to private views and aesthetics and other property values in such neighborhoods in a manner compatible with development of the subject lot and with the residential design guidelines.*

The project does not pose any problems with regard to the extent of flat roof, due to limited visibility of the house in general, and most importantly due to the use of mansard roofs in a stylistically appropriate manner. A condition to screen the upslope neighbor's view of any roof equipment allows the finding to be made.

### F. Conclusion:

Based on the above discussions, conditions, recommended modifications to project design, and related Hillside Development Permit, Second-Floor Review and Director's Miscellaneous Review (Flat Roof) findings, staff has concluded that the proposal fulfills the City's objectives for those reviews as expressed through the positive findings. For that reason, staff recommends that the project **BE APPROVED**, subject to the conditions in the attached draft resolution.

*cc: Jay Johnson, AIA / 1125 Foothill Blvd. / LCF  
Glenn Garrard / 59 West Orange Grove Ave. / Sierra Madre, CA 91204*

# CITY OF LA CAÑADA FLINTRIDGE

## RESOLUTION NO. 15-

**A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION  
OF THE CITY OF LA CAÑADA FLINTRIDGE  
APPROVING HILLSIDE DEVELOPMENT PERMIT 10-55,  
SECOND-FLOOR REVIEW 10-39,  
AND DIRECTOR'S MISCELLANEOUS REVIEW 14-21  
FOR A NEW TWO-STORY HOUSE  
AND RELATED SITE WORK  
AT 5471 LA FOREST DRIVE  
AS REQUESTED BY  
GLENN GARRARD**

WHEREAS, a request by Jay Johnson, Architect, on behalf of owner Glenn Garrard has been received for a Hillside Development Permit, Second-Floor Review, and a Director's Miscellaneous (Flat Roof) Review to allow a new two-story residence and associated site work, said request attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission, on January 13, 2015, after publication and posting of notice in the prescribed manner, held a public hearing on the Hillside Development Permit, Second-Floor Review, and Director's Miscellaneous Review requests; and

WHEREAS, based on review of the Initial Study Questionnaire and related materials, the Commission reviewed the project and determined that no significant environmental impacts would result from the project, and hereby adopts a Negative Declaration for the project; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission has reviewed the facts contained in the staff report dated January 13, 2015 regarding the application for a Hillside Development Permit, Second-Floor Review, and a Director's Miscellaneous Review at 5471 La Forest Drive, and heard and considered the testimony of the applicant and the public; and

WHEREAS, based on the evidence presented by the application materials, staff report, and public testimony, the Planning Commission hereby finds the following:

### Section 1.

#### Hillside Development Permit

- H1. The project, through elements of architectural and landscape design, will enhance its setting, because the massing of the house is only modestly articulated in proportion to its size, but given its isolated location and lack of offsite views is appropriate to its setting. The landscaping, as conditioned for variety along the pad retaining wall, is attractive and sensible for the climate.
- H2. The project will maximize potential for sensitive use and effective preservation of open space, because, while the project would extend the already-expansive pad over the more

gradual sloped areas adjacent to it, the requisite retaining walls would be well-screened as conditioned. The undisturbed slope areas would be improved with appropriate landscaping.

- H3. The project will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, or general welfare, because, with regard to safety, the project would not modify the longstanding access or to any significant extent the existing grading. It would improve safety for the owners of the subject property and the other properties sharing the driveway by replacing the dilapidated and unsafe retaining walls along its entire course.
- H4. The project will not adversely affect the orderly development of property within the City, because the project would add to the subdivided area a 2-story house on a spacious lot at less than its allowable density, and even less than the average density in its semi-rural neighborhood, replacing another recently demolished single house.
- H5. The project will conform to the goals and policies set forth in the General Plan, because the multi-level house is large, but it would be well-modulated and proportionate to the site as well as in character with the land use designation and the presence of sizable homes on nearby parcels. It would respect the existing terrain and existing trees, and introduce reasonable development in terms of density on the site. It would uphold General Plan Land Use Element Goal 4 to "(m)aintain hillside areas for the purpose of preserving the visual quality of the City, protecting the public from safety hazards, and conserving natural resources", and the supporting objectives and policies that ensure new development in hillside areas do not alter the character of existing neighborhoods.
- H6. The project will not create a nuisance, hazard or enforcement problem within the neighborhood or the City or require the City to provide an unusual or disproportionate level of public services, because the project, consisting of a single-family residential use, will not result in a change of use or intensification of development beyond those allowed in the General Plan and zoning codes.
- H7. There are special conditions or unique characteristics of the subject property and its location or surrounding which justify exceeding one or more of the provisions set forth in this Chapter to permit project development, because the project conforms to the Hillside Development Ordinance.
- H8. Any potential for the project to present visibly excessive bulk from any vantage point, near or far, is mitigated by screening or siting characteristics, because the house would not present excessive bulk in any setting because it would be fully visible from offsite only from the house elevated far above it adjacent to the north. Long range views of the house are screened by the dense tree cover of the area, and the view from the terminus of La Forest Drive would be so foreshortened by the site's steep slope that only the upper portion of the roof would be visible, aside from screening. The retaining wall ringing the pad is proposed to be provided with dense landscape screening, which will be conditioned to provide a more varied profile and set of colors and textures, in keeping with the natural setting.

- H9. The project does not create an avoidable or unreasonable impairment of the view from any other property, because no proximate houses are oriented or elevated so as to have primary views that would be affected by the project. The property is within the viewshed of a single house, adjacent to the north, and the roof ridge would be at least 15 feet below floor elevation of that house, so that the project would block only foreground views and not any mid-to-long range views.
- H10. Additionally, for any project on a lot or parcel with an average slope of forty (40) percent or greater:
- a. The height of the project, or any part of the project, does not present visibly excessive bulk from any vantage point, near or far, for the reasons cited for Finding H8.
  - b. The project will not create an undue fire, flood, mudslide, subsidence, seismic safety, or other environmental risk for any persons or their property, because the house is proposed for an existing pad, with most of the grading involving the creation of a basement and the functional improvement of the driveway retaining walls. Slope disturbance will be minimal, and slopes are distant from other properties. The project will be required to comply with current building codes.
  - c. The privacy of the residents of other properties will not be unreasonably compromised, because the house will have no direct view of another property.

#### Second-Floor Review

- SFR1. The two-story design includes adequate setbacks, screening and modulation, because all setbacks to the second floor are several times the minimum requirements, and there are no nearby properties that would be affected by the vertical extent of the house. Screening is adequate to that context, and the design features a reasonable extent of modulation.
- SFR2. The two-story design preserves the existing scale and character of the surrounding neighborhood, because the neighborhood is typified by a mix of one-story and larger two-story houses. The project's low density is used well to isolate its mass from any offsite view, retaining the open semi-rural character of the neighborhood.
- SFR3. The two-story design protects public views, aesthetics, privacy and property values of the neighbors, because the second floor is set back far from the property line shared with the only nearby neighbor, which is situated far above. Thus privacy is not an issue. Aesthetically, the house is well-designed, with a pleasing amount of variety gracing its considerable mass. No view is blocked by the second story, and no negative effect on property values would result from the project.
- SFR4. The two-story design is consistent with the Residential Design Guidelines as adopted by resolution of the City Council, because the massing, materials and detailing utilized by the project are consistent with a somewhat formal rambling design and would not

upset the residential character of the area. Additionally, the Guidelines' provisions to assure design integrity are met by the project.

#### Flat Roof Review

FR1. The roof configuration accommodates an architectural objective, as dictated by style, scale, and/or architectural consistency with the subject structure, because the depth of the house plan creates spans that complicate any use of entirely sloped roofs without using a shallow pitch, a ridge height exceeding the 28-foot limit, or complex design. Thus the design can be said to accommodate the architectural objectives of simplicity, steeply pitched roofs, and modest building height. Beyond that, the roofs work with the rest of the monumental yet rustic building treatment within a French country vernacular associated with the mansard roofs.

FR2. The proposed project preserves the existing scale and character of the surrounding neighborhood, and protects public views, and is sensitive to private views and aesthetics and other property values in such neighborhoods in a manner compatible with development of the subject lot and with the residential design guidelines, because the project does not pose any problems with regard to the extent of flat roof, due to limited visibility of the house in general, and most importantly due to the use of mansard roofs in a stylistically appropriate manner.

#### Section 2.

Based on the above findings, the Planning Commission of the City of La Cañada Flintridge hereby approves the Hillside Development Permit, Second-Floor Review, and Director's Miscellaneous (Flat Roof) Review for a new house at 5471 La Forest Drive, subject to the conditions listed in Exhibit "A", attached to this resolution.

**PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED** this 13th day of January, 2015.

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Chair of the Planning Commission

ATTEST:

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Secretary to the Planning Commission

**EXHIBIT "A"**  
**CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL**  
**HILLSIDE DEVELOPMENT PERMIT 10-55**  
**SECOND-FLOOR REVIEW 10-39**  
**FLAT ROOF REVIEW 14-21**  
5471 La Forest Drive

1. Compliance with and execution of all conditions listed herein shall be necessary prior to obtaining final building inspection clearance and/or prior to obtaining any occupancy clearance. Deviation from this requirement shall be only by written consent of the Director of Community Development.
2. This approval is granted for the land or land use as described in the application and any attachments thereto, and as shown on the site plan submitted, labeled Hillside Development Permit 10-55, Second-Floor Review 10-39 and Director's Miscellaneous Review 14-21.
3. Prior to obtaining a building permit or when applicable initiation of use, the applicant and property owner shall file with the Secretary of the Planning Commission written acknowledgment of the conditions stated herein on forms provided by the Planning Department.
4. All structures, site work and other features including but not limited to, buildings, roadways, parking areas, landscaping and other facilities shall be located and maintained as shown on the site plan labeled Hillside Development Permit 10-55, Second-Floor Review 10-39 and Director's Miscellaneous Review 14-21, Sheet A-1, except as otherwise stated in these conditions.
5. All buildings and structures shall be of the design as shown on the elevation drawings labeled Hillside Development Permit 10-55, Second-Floor Review 10-39 and Director's Miscellaneous Review 14-21, Sheets A-5, A-6, and A-7, except as otherwise stated in these conditions.
6. This approval will expire unless "start of construction" is commenced within 12 months after approval is granted and diligently pursued thereafter. The Director of Community Development may extend the original expiration date by as much as 12 months upon receipt of a written request from the applicant prior to expiration of the original project if the approved project and applicable zoning standards are unchanged. Start of construction is defined as:
  - a. All zoning and related approvals are effective; and
  - b. All required building and grading permits for the project have been issued; and
  - c. The "foundation inspection" and "concrete slab or underfloor inspection" have been made and received approval from the Division of Building and Safety; i.e., all trenches must be excavated, forms erected, and all materials for the foundation delivered on the job and all in-slab or underfloor building service equipment, conduit, piping accessories

and other ancillary equipment items must be in place. Nothing in this definition shall be construed to alter the applicable legal standards for determining when vested property rights to complete the project have arisen.

7. All applicable requirements of any law, ordinance, or regulation of the City of La Cañada Flintridge shall be complied with.
8. This approval is subject to the applicant paying all fees and assessments to the City of La Cañada Flintridge, as established by ordinance, resolution or policy of the City Council.
9. In the event the City determines that it is necessary to take legal action to enforce any of the provisions of these conditions, and such legal action is taken, the applicant agrees to pay any and all costs of such legal action, including reasonable attorney's fees, incurred by the City, even if the matter is not prosecuted to a final judgment or is amicably resolved, unless the City should otherwise agree with the applicant to waive said fees or any part thereof. The foregoing shall not apply if the permittee prevails in the enforcement proceeding.
10. The applicant shall defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the City and its officers, agents, and employees from any claim, action or proceeding against the City or its officers, agents, or employees to attack, set aside, void, or annul approval of this Hillside Development Permit, Second-Floor Review and Director's Miscellaneous Review. The City shall promptly notify the applicant of any such claim, action, or proceeding and shall cooperate fully in the defense.
11. An approval granted by the Planning Commission does not constitute a building permit or authorization to begin any construction. An appropriate permit issued by the Division of Building and Safety must be obtained prior to construction, enlargement, relocation, conversion, or demolition of any building or structure within the City.
12. All construction/contractor parking shall be on-site only except for soil export loading. At the time of approval, if it is deemed by the Planning Commission that sufficient on-site parking may not be available, then on-street parking in front of the site will be permitted if it can be demonstrated that such parking will not interfere with the immediate neighbors, and will not interfere with the public's use of the surrounding streets. If this cannot be found, then any additional construction vehicle or equipment parking must occur off-site at a location approved by the Director of Community Development. Approval of the off-site location shall be based on the submittal of a Parking Management Plan by the applicant that demonstrates that the site shall not interfere with the neighbors in the area or hinder the public's use of the surrounding streets. Contractors and construction workers will be required to carpool to the construction site. No construction, no deliveries and no movement of construction materials shall occur on Sundays or City recognized holidays.
13. All work shall comply with City Ordinance 313 (Chapter 9.14 of the Municipal Code). A Building Debris management Report (BDMR) is required to provide documentation that verifies a minimum of fifty (50) percent of the debris or material generated was diverted

from a landfill. A performance security is required prior to the issuance of the grading and building permits.

14. This property is located in Sewer District 3A and will be required to connect to the public sewer prior to final inspection clearance.
15. Primary roof and wall materials shall comply with Light Reflectance Value (LRV) guidelines as stipulated in the Hillside Ordinance.
16. Screening of rooftop equipment as seen from the house above shall be indicated on the plans prior to permit issuance, subject to approval by the Director of Community Development.
17. The site plan shall be revised to delete the expansion of the existing pad and the addition of retaining walls at its edge, and Grevellia landscaping adjacent to the pad shall be modified to allow greater variety of shrub, tree, and vine species, subject to approval by the Director of Community Development or his designee prior to building permit issuance.
18. All planting indicated on the landscape plan and conditions shall be installed prior to final clearance and issuance of occupancy.
19. Screening along the west side of the upper driveway curvature shall be retained to the maximum extent possible. If removed to accommodate driveway expansion, compensatory plantings shall be provided to the satisfaction of the Director of Community Development.
20. An Urban Storm Water Mitigation Plan (USWMP) is required. The approval of the USWMP by the Public Works Department and the recordation of a covenant and restriction by the property owner are required prior to the issuance of the grading and building permits. The USWMP shall address issues including, but not limited to, landscape and hardscape maintenance; fertilizer, herbicide, and pesticide applications; and sediment, oil, and grease discharges from the property.
21. An initial fee of \$1,500 will be required for the review of the USWMP. There may be additional fee or refund of fee depending on the actual amount of work needed to revise the USWMP.
22. All work shall comply with the geotechnical engineering, geology, and hydrology reports that are to be prepared by a professional geotechnical engineer, geologist, and civil engineer, respectively.
23. A curb or wall shall be provided at the downslope side of the driveway.
24. Any subsequent substantive change to these approved plans by the Fire Department or any other agency having subsequent approval authority shall cause these plans to be returned to the Planning Commission for additional review and approval prior to permit issuance.

25. Director of Public Works and Traffic approval of a reconstructed drive approach at La Forest Drive, verifying optimal gradient transition, shall be required prior to issuance of any building or grading permits.
26. Director of Public Works and Traffic approval of a haul route and schedule shall be obtained prior to building permit issuance or site preparation activity.

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