

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE DESIGN COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF LA CANADA FLINTRIDGE
HELD ON APRIL 15, 2010**

- I. CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 7:31 am
- II. ROLL:** Present were Commissioners Friedman, Hoopes, Roberts, Tobias and Chair Vavoulis, Director of Community Development Stanley, Planner Clarke, and Assistant Planner Lang.
- III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** The Flag Salute was recited.
- IV. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:** none
- V. CONSENT CALENDAR:**
A. Minutes-April 1, 2010 DC meeting. The minutes were approved unanimously.
- VI. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS:** none
- VII. PUBLIC HEARINGS:**
A. **Design Review 10-07 & 10-08;** 845 & 849 Foothill Blvd.; Thomas Sawyer; exterior façade changes and new signage.

Planner Clarke gave an overview of the proposed project. He showed a power point presentation and sample boards provided by the applicant.

Commissioner Roberts asked if the separate color samples provided were the actual colors as opposed to the ones that were on the board.

The designer, Nathan Seimans (Wren Group), showed stone and roof samples that were proposed for the property.

Commissioner Roberts asked about plans for the future landscaping to be located in front of the buildings alongside Foothill Boulevard.

The applicant stated that was pending and that landscaping plans would be available at a later date.

Staff indicated that that would be reviewed at a future Commission meeting.

Commissioner Tobias asked if the right side of the building was of stucco materials.

Commissioner Roberts thought that the buildings should have more shingles.

The applicant felt that additional shingles would yield too many materials on the front facade.

Commissioner Roberts recommended that taller plants should be placed in the back of the front landscaped area.

It was noted that most buildings facing Foothill Boulevard are shingled including AT&T and Taylor's.

Commissioner Roberts said that he was initially concerned about the color palette shown but was pleased with the actual color samples that were shown at the meeting.

Chair Vavoulis asked Commission members if there were any issues regarding the proposed signs.

M/S/C Hoopes/Friedman to approve. Unanimous 5-0.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS:

Director Stanley asked for comments regarding the color samples for Panera Bread signs. The sign locations and awnings have already been approved in a prior meeting.

Commissioner Roberts asked to see where the colors would be in relation to the building. He felt that the signs would help the colors of the awnings.

Commissioner Tobias asked when Panera Bread would be opening. (June 2, 2010)

There was consensus among Commissioner about the colors chosen. It was okay for the sign fabricators to start work and that the colors would come back formally to the Commission for approval.

Director Stanley stated that Council consideration items are due for budget meetings in June. He related that the sign ordinance would be revised and explained some of the items that will be for change.

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Director Stanley also spoke about the International Convention of Shopping Centers (ICSC) meeting which is held annually in Las Vegas and the possibility of sending some of the commissioners to the meeting.

Commissioner Hoopes was unsure whether or not a commissioner should go to the conference and suggested that city management should attend. He asked if there were sign conventions that would be useful for Commissioners to attend since a majority of Commission reviews related to signs.

Chair Vavoulis agreed with Commissioner Hoopes's comments about sign conventions. He asked the Director if the Commission needed to provide specific budget line items or a general statement about education opportunities for Commissioners.

Director Stanley explained that costs for out of state travel to conferences needed additional approval from the City Council.

Chair Vavoulis clarified that they indicated they would be interested in attending a sign convention or conference

Commissioner Tobias suggested that one of the better sign companies could give the Commission a study session.

Chair Vavoulis said that he preferred a conference in-state, but that out-of-state was okay too. He also agreed with Commissioner Tobias about the benefits of having a study session with a sign company.

Planner Clarke asked the Commission for examples of signs they like so staff can contact those sign companies and see if they could attend a study session.

Commissioner Tobias suggested that they could have a Saturday study session and invite the public

Commissioner Friedman said that he would like to see how signs are constructed and have study session at a sign shop. He also wanted to expand the study session to include colors and landscaping and have alternating years for study sessions.

Commissioner Roberts spoke about landscaping for commercial projects and about what works and what doesn't. He also mentioned what is successful in commercial projects vs. residential projects.

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Chair Vavoulis asked for funds to be included in the budget request for a conference and study sessions and both in house and field trips to a sign shop.

Director Stanley talked about the annual League of California Cities conference for Planning Commissioners but which applies to Design Commissioners also. He also mentioned that Commissioners can get their ethics training at this conference. He will include 3 commissioners in the budget request to attend conferences. The entire Commission could attend and it's not a brown Act violation as long as cases are not discussed.

Commissioner Tobias asked if Commissioner Hoopes could attend the ICSC meeting in Las Vegas in May.

Director Stanley noted that this request would have to go to the Council for approval and that he would try to work with a Council agenda.

Commissioner Friedman suggested a yearly sign excellence award included in the budget for best design and best presentation. He thought that this would provide some feedback to the commercial community and help the Commission focus.

Director Stanley noted that it could bring publicity to winners.

Commission Tobias suggested awards 2-4 times a year for property maintenance and landscaping and get pictures in the paper. It does not have to be a plaque but a window sticker could work.

Chair Vavoulis suggested a \$500 budget for a plaque and any other materials.

Director Stanley asked if the Commission had consensus about hiring a consultant to work on the sign ordinance.

Commissioner Tobias suggested interviewing a few consultants before making a decision.

Commissioner Hoopes noted that Roger Cantrell has a good working history in the City and that he had experience with the existing code.

Commissioner Roberts asked if they could see other cities sign, landscaping and building design ordinances.

Director Stanley said that staff would use a planning list serve to get more information about other cities.

Chair Vavoulis specifically wanted to see the ordinances for the cities of Santa Barbara and Carmel.

Commissioner Tobias would like reference materials in the room and requested a color wheel and plant samples books.

Materials needed for meeting including a white board and markers - up to \$500 to be budgeted.

IX. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS:

Chair Vavoulis asked that since Commissioner Friedman is leaving the commission if he could be hired as a consultant on some sign applications for feedback as he has extensive expertise. Chair Vavoulis thought that it would be useful to have Commissioner Friedman comment on various projects presented to the Commission.

Commissioner Friedman said that he was willing to do this and that he was honored to be considered.

X. COMMENTS FROM STAFF:

Director Stanley stated that staff has been working with the Paneno family which owns the Big Lots property. He outlined how that the owners were supposed to remove the pole sign and install landscaping on the property. The owners have a prior Commission approval for the landscape plan.

XI. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 8:21 am.