

**ACTION MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE DESIGN COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF LA CANADA FLINTRIDGE
HELD ON SEPTEMBER 4, 2014**

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Moldafsky called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.
- II. **ROLL:** Present were Commissioners Balcazar, Hoopes, King, Roberts, Director of Community Development Stanley, Senior Planner Buss and Planner Gjolme.
- III. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** The Flag Salute was recited.
- IV. **COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:** There were no comments.
- V. **CONSENT CALENDAR:** Minutes - 7/17/2014 Design Commission meeting. Approved with minor changes.
- VI. **PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

A. Design Review 14-11; La Canada Presbyterian Church; 626 Foothill Blvd.; landscaping and lighting improvements in conjunction with a new parking lot.

Senior Planner Buss gave an overview of the project's history and explained that the parking lot's design - mainly landscaping - was before the Design Commission at this point. Wall and lighting improvements were also proposed. Prior Planning Commission approval has already been granted. Approval was recommended.

Commissioner Hoopes was curious about the specific location of the new lighting.

Senior Planner Buss displayed a photo-metric plan that showed the location of the new lights.

Jon Pride, landscape architect for the project, explained the location of the lights - along the double parking aisles and suspended within certain oaks to mitigate ambient light.

Commissioner Hoopes noted there was some confusion with regard to the bollard and lighting location, which were difficult to differentiate.

Mr. Pride commented that this was likely an error on the lighting plan.

Commissioner Roberts asked about screening along the west property line.

Mr. Pride explained that the street wall and landscaping already in place would be retained.

Commissioner Hoopes clarified the design and location of the new wall along the south property line. It would be split-face and textured along the south face per the preference of the adjacent neighbors. He also noted that the streetscape would be largely retained along Woodleigh Lane.

Mr. Pride explained that the project retained several major oaks. Five protected trees would be removed, but 11 new trees were proposed for a net gain of 6 trees.

Commissioner Roberts commented that this was private property and the project would not really impact the community as a whole. He noted that when driving south along Woodleigh, a sea of crape myrtles in the middle of the lot would be visible. Another species would help to break up the trees and make the lot look more residential, as opposed to a typical commercial parking lot.

Mr. Pride responded that he could certainly explore greater diversity in the trees to achieve a more natural look.

Commissioner Roberts also noted that star jasmine in the planters was better than rosemary in the long run.

Commissioner Roberts asked staff if the tree trade-off was equitable relative to other comparable projects.

Senior Planner Buss responded that an overall deficit of 3-5 trees would result when all is said and done. From a baseline perspective, there is no real reference given the pre-existing hodgepodge of landscaping. Staff was looking for an adequate number of trees to compensate for the trees removed and adequately serve the project as a whole. The Design Commission has the authority to add more trees if deemed necessary.

Commissioner Roberts confirmed that the proposed landscaping along the south property line was adequate in staff's estimation.

Commissioner Hoopes confirmed that Boston ivy would be installed on the south wall.

Commissioner Roberts stated that the south planters have minimal shrubbery and the new wall will be visible. This was just a personal observation. From a City perspective, he reiterated his opinion that the parking lot trees should be more diversified.

Mr. Pride noted that the Boston ivy will provide stealthing of the wall.

Michael Gross - resident at 4431 Woodleigh Lane adjacent to the south - thanked staff and Fred for all the work on the project. He noted the variation along the south wall - several jogs for a better aesthetic and to protect several existing trees. A reciprocal easement has been signed to allow the wall to flow between his property and the church property. He felt this is a transitional property between commercial and residential properties and the proposed use/design is appropriate given the unique nature of the lot. He stated that some details still needed to be pinned down, but that it had been great to work with the church to this point.

There were no other comments.

Director of Community Development Stanley reminded the Design Commission of approval conditions which could be subject to staff confirmation at a later date.

Mr. Gross liked the idea of codifying the final color and material of the wall and gate design.

Director Stanley confirmed this could be done.

Commissioner Balcazar questioned how much of the improvement would be visible from public vantage points and if more discussion on the colors/materials was needed.

The Commission was satisfied with the project and staff confirmation of final details at a later date.

M/S/C Hoopes/King to approve the project as submitted subject to two trees along the northeast edge of the parking lot changed from crape myrtle to an alternate species per staff review and approval; southerly wall and gate subject to staff review for colors and materials, but will incorporate a smooth face to the north and variant texture to the south per the Gross's review. Approved 4-0-1. Abstain - Commissioner Roberts.

B. Design Review 14-13; Color Me Green Nail Lounge; 466 Foothill Blvd.; new wall sign.

Planner Gjolme gave a brief overview of the request to install a new internally illuminated wall sign with a simulated wood face and routed letters. The sign was well regarded and consistent with the character of the center, which has diversity in the size, shape and color of existing signs.

Commissioner Hoopes liked the composition of the sign but felt an irregular shape would work better, rather than the rectangle currently proposed.

Commissioner King commented that the coloring and illumination was fine; she agreed with Commissioner Hoopes about the rigid shape of the rectangle.

Commissioner Roberts thought the 'nail lounge' copy and logo were quite small and should be painted rather than illuminated.

Commissioner Balcazar agreed that the 'nail lounge' copy and logo needed to be a little stronger. She noted that the business name might be confused with 'Color Me Mine', but understood that the content of the sign was not under review.

The Commission's consensus was that the rectangular box is the problem. It should be irregular in shape like the other signs in the center.

The Commission felt a continuance was in order to revise the design.

M/S/C Roberts/Hoopes to continue the item in order to see the next iteration of the design. Unanimous 5-0.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS: There was no other business.

VIII. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS:

Commissioner Hoopes mentioned the unauthorized banners that had been installed at the Proper restaurant.

Chairman Moldafsky mentioned that the Electronic Message Center (EMC) Ordinance would be heard by the City Council in October.

IX. COMMENTS FROM STAFF:

Director Stanley commented that the City's Sign Ordinance would be updated in the near future.

Commissioner Hoopes felt there should be an allowance for 'sandwich signs', which can be very attractive and benefit the Blvd. if done right.

X. ADJOURNMENT:

M/S/C Roberts/Hoopes to adjourn the meeting at 8:58 a.m. Unanimous 5-0.