

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE DESIGN COMMISSION  
OF THE CITY OF LA CANADA FLINTRIDGE  
HELD ON NOVEMBER 17, 2016**

- I. CALL TO ORDER:** Vice Chairman Hoopes called the meeting to order at 7:33 a.m.
- II. ROLL:** Also present were Commissioners King, Balcazar, and Fuelling. Chairman Moldafsky was absent.
- III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** The Flag Salute was recited.
- IV. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:** There were no comments.
- V. CONSENT CALENDAR:**

A. Minutes – 11/3/2016 DC Meeting – M/S/C – Balcazar/King to approve the minutes. Approved 3-0-1. Fuelling abstained as he was not present at the meeting of November 3, 2016.

**VI. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

- A. **Design Review 16-09;** McDonald's; 449 Foothill Blvd.; exterior façade changes and remodeling of existing restaurant.

Consultant, Roger Cantrell, gave a presentation in accordance with the staff report. He discussed the project color gradient and that a condition has been added relating to verification of colors on-site during construction. He said that staff supports the color and material board. Staff also supports the landscape plan and lighting plan. Overall, staff is pleased with the submittal and recommends approval.

Vice Chairman Hoopes said that the design is effective and that the before and after submittals are helpful.

Commissioner King agreed that the existing and proposed design made the review of the project easy for her.

Commissioner Fuelling asked if there is generic lighting proposed. He said that he believed the lights proposed could be bright.

Mr. Cantrell said that staff will look at this.

Commissioner Balcazar said that there may be some confusion as to the colors, SC1 and SC2 that are proposed for the south elevation.

Planner Chris Gjolme said that the applicant can provide answers for the proposed colors.

The public hearing was opened for public comment.

The applicant's representative, Chris Barry, confirmed that colors SC1 and SC2 were flipped.

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The public hearing was closed.

Commissioner Fuelling said that he liked the improvement and is in support of the project.

Commissioner King said that she agrees with the look of the building and felt that it is clean and modern. The colors are muted enough to stay in line with the rest of the boulevard.

Mr. Cantrell said that a condition is recommended for a higher parapet to be designed that is 18 inches in depth.

Vice Chairman Hoopes said that he agrees with the proposed design.

M/S/C - Fuelling/Balcazar to approve the project. Approve 4-0.

### **VII. PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

- A. **Design Review 15-05 (Amendment);** Round Table Pizza; 502 Foothill Blvd.; request to allow channel letters as part of an approved wall sign.

Planner Gjolme gave a presentation in accordance with the staff report. He discussed a change to the standard front-lit channel letters. He explained that the business is the largest tenant in the center and that given the fact that the business is separated from a good amount of businesses in the center, that he believed that the applicant's request for light-colored letters could be accommodated. Mr. Gjolme indicated that the applicant did not attend the original hearing where the Commission first approved the sign for the business and that he would like to make his new request at this time for channel letters as part of the approved wall sign.

The public hearing was opened for public comment.

The sign contractor, Arbi Manukian spoke and said that he felt that other tenants in the center had signs with greater illumination than his tenant did.

Planner Gjolme said that he believed that the use of white-illuminated channel letters for the subject property is justified given the distance away from other businesses and signs in the center that have similar signs. He indicated that he believed that findings can be made for reverse channel lettering for the subject case. Mr. Gjolme explained that the entirety of the sign program for the shopping center was not in place back when other signs were proposed and installed.

Commissioner King said that she was in favor of changing the sign to channel lettering and she feels that the sign is darker.

Commissioner Balcazar said that she agreed that for all reasons stated by staff that the project could be approved.

M/S/C – King/Balcazar to approve the project and change the reverse channel letters to channel letters. Approved 4-0.

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- B. **Design Review 16-16 (Advisory);** Flintridge Preparatory School; 4543 Crown Avenue; preliminary review of campus expansion plan, inclusive of classroom additions, auditorium expansion and a new parking structure.

Mr. Cantrell gave a presentation in accordance with the staff report.

Commissioner King recused herself.

A preliminary review has been submitted by the applicant for the Commission to review and provide advice to the City Council.

Mr. Cantrell explained that the proposed project is a comprehensive addition. The view from the 210 freeway is highlighted with solar panels being placed on top of the school gym and visible from the freeway. The lobby and performing arts center will also be improved and a new multi-level parking structure will be built.

Mr. Cantrell showed a site plan to the Commission and indicated that Building "F" is adjacent to a house that is not owned by the school. This proposed building will be going before the Planning Commission for a variance for height. It is proposed to exceed the height limit by ten feet.

Mr. Cantrell indicated that staff views the request as reasonable. He further explained that the setback area is landscaped and that there will be an opportunity for screening. He discussed angle plane requirements and said that he believed the proposed building is proposed at a reasonable height. He said that the south elevation, Structure "C," is recommended by staff to be moved farther away from the freeway or farther from the gym. The gable form architectural treatment is designed to be more in line with the building.

Mr. Cantrell walked the Commission through a Power Point provided by the applicant which highlighted the Auditorium. He explained that it was a complicated elevation and was enclosing the open lobby space. A concrete framework, currently covered with vines, would be filled in with glass. There will be coherence and continuity from Crown Avenue according to the applicant. Spanish architecture could be used and would be attractive and would provide the architect with a design challenge.

Mr. Cantrell discussed the proposed parking structure next. He explained that it would be a main portal into the campus. He said that, per the architect, that the design is schematic at this time.

Mr. Cantrell explained that the parking structure end towers would be marked with good architectural details. He said that staff encourages the architect to increase the size of the towers even though they currently exceed allowable standards. He indicated that a setback Variance may also need to be acquired as staff feels that the proposed structure will not fit on the site. He recommended a height Variance application be submitted for Planning Commission review.

Mr. Cantrell said that there is a finding that exists to in order to justify a Variance and that esthetic findings have to be made for both entitlements. He said that it would be appropriate for the item to come back to the Design Commission before it goes before the Planning Commission.

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Commissioner Balcazar asked if solar panels will be placed on the gym facing the freeway.

To clarify this, Mr. Cantrell showed a copy of the rendering to the Commission which did show the panels would be angled and facing the freeway.

Vice Chairman Hoopes said that the angle should not penetrate the building.

The public hearing was opened for public comment.

John Dale, the project architect, spoke. He said that the site is complex and dense. There have been many additions to the site over many different years.

He presented a 3-dimensional view of the site in order to see the existing massing and to view where the infilling would be. He explained that the school proposes to add to a roof garden and that the deck of the new building will have a roof terrace as well. He described the design of the leadership building, its proposed scale and that it would not be as tall as the library building. The "Randal" building is the most recent building to be constructed on the campus. The goal of the school is to weave together all of the various building designs that have been developed over the last several years on the site.

The Commission was provided with a proposed rendering which showed trees. It is believed that the view of the new building will not be in view from the street-side. The Library would be the tallest building in the distance. The trees will block many parts of the building. The intent is to maximize the setback which will be generously landscaped. There will be trees existing within the 15-foot setback.

As to the preliminary design of the parking structure, it could be modeled after the nearby Saint Francis High School parking structure. Open grill work would provide ventilation.

Regarding the Auditorium, the design calls for a reception area at the Norris Auditorium.

Mr. Dale showed a site plan that contained infill and modern additions. He showed a before and after rendering. He explained that the goal is to provide a welcoming entrance off of the parking garage. He showed a demonstration roof garden and trellis on the building. He indicated that there have been attempts to soften the building and tie it into existing buildings.

Mr. Dale showed new architectural features on the field as well as sustainable landscaping where the existing building is. There is a plan to add a balcony on the "Randall" building. He showed solar thermal panels as well as sound reducing elements meant to baffle the gym noise.

The public hearing was closed.

Commissioner Fuelling said that his main concern is the proposed solar panels and that he felt it would be overwhelming if viewed from the freeway. He said that he understands that the design for the parking structure is still preliminary in nature. He indicated that he preferred a less industrial and more architectural element for the overall project.

The public hearing was opened for public input.

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Speaker, Peter Bachman, said that he is currently the head of the school. He reiterated that there is no plan to buy other property over time.

The public hearing was closed again.

The applicant's representative said that one of the intentions of the new proposed design is to mitigate a very congested area where JPL and surrounding schools are located. The Theme is accommodating 21<sup>st</sup> century learning.

Commissioner Balcazar said that she liked the weaving of the buildings. She likes the parking structure attempts to design them carefully.

Vice Chairman Hoopes said that he is interested most in the Leadership building and that it is well-designed. It is taller than the existing building.

The Commission agreed that the Parking structure has to be designed with sensitivity to the surrounding architecture in the area and for the fact that it will be highly visible from the street.

Vice Chairman Hoopes said that he believes the parking structure design should be in keeping with the St. Francis parking structure.

Commissioner Fuelling said that since most of the structures are interior to the campus, they are not visible from the public right-of-way. Because the parking structure will be visible from the street, special focus should be placed on it.

Mr. Cantrell indicated that a Resolution can be brought back to the Commission with all of the recommendations for the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Fuelling said that he is undecided on the design of the solar panels but would like to view a design of the parking structure before it is approved.

Mr. Cantrell said that the recommendations can be put into a Resolution.

Director Stanley clarified that this is a preliminary review and that the Commission can make recommendations to the Planning Commission regarding the proposed design. Once the Planning Commission review the proposed design and weigh in on it, it would be brought back to the Design Commission for final design approval.

Mr. Cantrell said that a Conditional Use Permit and Variance would be brought before the Planning Commission.

Director Stanley pointed out that the design guidelines reference Spanish, Monterey, and Craftsman architecture.

Vice Chairman Hoopes said that he believed that Spanish elements should be present in the design proposal. He understood that the current buildings have their own design nature and that the project architect is being careful to preserve this. Mr. Hoopes said that the parking garage design really needs to be focused on as it will be highly visible from the street.

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Director Stanley said that the parking structure should really be focused on because the garage can be seen from the street.

Staff was directed to bring back a Resolution to the Commission at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

**VIII. OTHER BUSINESS:** Commissioner King returned to the meeting.

**IX. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS:** Commissioner Balcazar asked if the garden roof was approved for the Verizon business location.

Commissioner King responded to Ms. Balcazar that Verizon planned to get approval well ahead of even planning to implement the garden roof so that is why it has not been installed yet.

**X. COMMENTS FROM STAFF:** Planner Gjolme informed the Commission that there could be a meeting in two weeks, but that there will definitely be a meeting scheduled for December 15<sup>th</sup>.

**XI. ADJOURNMENT:** M/S/C – King/Balcazar to adjourn the meeting at 8:53 a.m. Approved 4-0.