

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF LA CANADA FLINTRIDGE
HELD ON JANUARY 14, 2014**

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** 6:05 p.m.
- II. **ROLL:** Chairman Gunter, Vice Chairman Jain, Commissioners Der Sarkissian, McConnell and Walker, Community Development Director Stanley, Assistant City Attorney Guerra, Planner Clarke and Planning Intern Gary Yesayan.
- III. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- 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.

Steve Brown spoke about the Normandy project and Condition of Approval (COA) # 3 – written acknowledgement of conditions required. He said that the building permit was on hold in Building & Safety. How can that be since the COA not signed. Failed on 3 COAs: 14, 17, (size of doors on garage) and 18 (landscaped screening – 8 ft. from the structure and not labeled), 15 (lighting – no site lighting plan was submitted). There were misdrawn property lines. He wanted staff to fix the plans and for the project to be built according to the COAs.

V. REORDERING OF THE AGENDA

Director Stanley explained how the cases were not noticed properly by the newspaper. The City will be refunded and next ones are free. The two items will be heard at a later date.

Chair Gunter said that Oakwood will be re-noticed. He gave an overview of the meeting.

VI. CONSENT CALENDAR:

- A. **Minutes:** March 26, 2013
- B. **Minutes:** April 23, 2013

The Commissioner did not receive copies and did not vote on them; continued to January 28, 2014.

VII. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS

VIII. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

- A. **Variance 13-10/Categorical Exemption; Gelson's Market; 635 Foothill Boulevard:** Request to allow a new wall sign to exceed the maximum 27" letter height permitted by code. Maximum letter height would be approximately 44". The Design Commission has completed advisory review of the proposal and has endorsed the size of the sign. Staff is recommending approval of a Categorical Exemption for this project. (Planner Gjolme) Continued to January 28, 2014, 5-0.
- B. **Second Floor Review 13-24; Harde/Zohrabians; 5037 Oakwood Avenue:** Request to allow a two-story addition of 1,087 sf (add 358 sf to first floor, 729 sf to the second floor and demolish 75 sf of the first floor) to an existing 4,128 sf two-story residence with an attached garage for a new total house size of 5,215 sf. Staff is

recommending approval of a Categorical Exemption for this project. (Planner Clarke)
Continued to January 28, 2014, 5-0.

IX. OTHER BUSINESS:

- A. **APPEAL Tree Removal 13-39; Yuhan; 5022 Jarvis Avenue:** Appeal of the Director's denial for removal of a 33-inch diameter Deodar cedar tree in the City's special protected zone.

Planning Intern Yesayan mentioned that the homeowners were at the meeting. He gave an overview of the appeal of the tree removal permit denial as written in the staff report.

Commissioner Walker asked when the house was remodeled and if the garage put there – 2006.

Director Stanley noted that it was two lots before and got approval from Public Works for a new curb cut. Garage is compliant built.

Commissioner Der Sarkissian asked how wide the ROW was – 40 feet. The tree is on private property. He asked if there a survey.

Commissioner McConnell said the street was 34 feet wide.

Director Stanley spoke about the survey attached to the staff report. It was not a street tree according to Public Works.

Commissioner Der Sarkissian asked if the sewer was 17 feet below grade. Yes.

Commissioner McConnell asked about the width of the garage door opening?

Director Stanley replied 16 feet approximately.

Joseph Yuhan (Owner) gave his own PowerPoint presentation. He said that the turning radius did not work and that it was virtually impossible to get into garage. Because of the lot split the tree was left there. He was concerned about crime in area. He would like to park both cars in the garage for safety. There were close calls getting out of garage. The property value is affected since it is essentially a one-car garage. It has possible insurance impacts. The sewer issue is important. It is an infringement on his rights as a property owner.

Mr. Yuhan spoke about the driveway and accessibility. They had a petition signed by the neighbors with full support. He handed petition over to the Commission.

Owner noted the house was an investment and not owner-occupied before he moved in.

Commissioner McConnell asked about sewer blockage.

Mr. Yuhan said it was blocked by the location of the tree. He doubted the depth of the sewer at the street level.

Commissioner Jain visited the site and noted extra wide driveway. He suggested using the space in front to park.

Halley Yuhan (owner) said it was difficult to maneuver.

Ms. Yuhan spoke about the size of cars and the impacts on the size of cars he leases.

Commissioner Jain spoke about how to solve the problem if tree were removed. Have the owners asked Public Works?

Ms. Yuhan said they could widen driveway to middle of tree.

Planning Intern Yesayan spoke about the location of the sewer line.

Mr. Yuhan said they put in the sewer line 3 years ago.

Commissioner Der Sarkissian asked if the owners had explored gaining access on the other side of the tree.

Mr. Yuhan said they could consider that. They could have two driveways on either side of tree.

Chair Gunter said that the house was built in 2006 and purchased in 2010. It was formerly occupied by a renter.

Closed public hearing.

Director Stanley spoke about the distance from the manhole to the lateral.

Commissioner Walker said she had visited the property and the area to see if the tree removal would change the character of the neighborhood. She noted that it was a prominent tree in the area. The new tree ordinance had direction from the City Council to protect trees unless there were mitigating circumstances. She gave an example of buying a home in New York State. The owners may have needed more due diligence before they bought the house. The owners could consider smaller cars or widening the curb cut and saving the tree.

Commissioner McConnell spoke about impacts on the sewer line. He was leaning toward removing the tree.

Commissioner Der Sarkissian agreed with Commissioner Walker in that you have to accommodate the tree. They could drive around the tree. He said that there was a solution.

Commissioner Jain said he had visited the site. He did not think it was a good idea to remove the tree. He felt a solution existed to widen the driveway and curb cut and save the tree. The applicants should have looked at the property before they bought the house. Inconvenience is not a reason to cut the tree. He supported staff and wanted to save the tree.

Commissioner Gunter said that he had visited the site and agreed to uphold staff's recommendation. Deodars are resource to protect. The sewer line was put in recently. It sounds like a sewer problem and not a tree problem

M/S/C Gunter/Jain Vote 4-1 to deny appeal (McConnell).

Chair Gunter said that it can be appealed to the City Council in the next 15 days. They can apply again if the facts change.

B. Selection of a new Administrative Hearing Officer and alternate.

Chair Gunter said that he needed to pass on the responsibility to another commissioner. Commissioner Jain can be alternate with Commissioner Der Sarkissian as prime.

M/S/C Gunter/Walker 5-0 to approve.

C. Discussion regarding electronic messaging centers/signs.

Director Stanley spoke about the future joint meeting and the timing for it.

Chair Gunter mentioned meeting with a Design Commission member for a multi-item meeting. It may not be in City Hall but it could be in Lanterman instead. He did not want a single item agenda only with reader boards.

Commissioner Der Sarkissian spoke about indirect lit signs. He also mentioned that the Commission had being involved in sign variances for size.

Chair Gunter spoke about the roles and purview of the two commissions.

Director Stanley mentioned other venues and different nights. He suggested an evening during the week.

Commission Jain said he was okay with a Saturday.

Director Stanley said that he would get possible dates and send them to both commissions.

Chair Gunter suggested an open meeting.

X. REPORT OF DIRECTOR'S REVIEWS: No comments

- A. Hillside Development Permit 13-56; Dabbah/Temianka; 3870 Chevy Chase Drive:** Approval of a minor roof alteration of the first floor on the north portion of the residence. The alteration will allow visibility from the existing second floor window while maintaining the existing characteristics and design elements of the residence.

XI. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS

Chair Gunter asked that the conference information be sent to Commissioners again.

Commissioner Der Sarkissian asked about the antennae on Chevy Chase. Director Stanley had visited site.

XII. COMMENTS FROM THE DIRECTOR

Director Stanley mentioned the Planners Institute. He said that there were additional classes at this conference. The City will pay for conference, hotel and travel.

The City Council will hear Zoning Map, text amendment and current GPA. In February, there will be a vote. The Eissa appeal is on February 18, 2014 City Council agenda.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT: 7:05 p.m.