

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION
OF THE
CITY OF LA CAÑADA FLINTRIDGE
HELD JANUARY 24, 2006**

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Gelhaar called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL:

Present were Commissioners Cahill, Engler and Mehranian, Deputy City Attorney Cobey, Director of Community Development Stanley, Senior Planner Buss, Planner Gjolme, and Planning Intern Mikhail.

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Gelhaar led the salute to the flag.

IV. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Comments were not offered.

V. REORDERING OF THE AGENDA

Chairman Gelhaar advised the agenda would remain as submitted.

VI. CONSENT CALENDAR

A. M/S/C Mehranian/Engler to adopt the minutes of January 10, 2006 as submitted. Unanimous.

B. Request for Reconsideration of the Planning Commission's 11/22/05 decision re: Tentative Tract Map 53647 and Variance 02-10.
Peter Kudrave requested that the Commission reconsider its decision to integrate Lots 5 and 6, based on new information that they conform to surrounding properties as separate lots. He stated that critical and supportive information from Staff regarding those Lots was inadvertently not provided to all the Commissioners. He noted that the EIR states in a number of ways that the project as then proposed would be consistent with the adopted Land Use policies and of the Hillside Ordinance, once the requested Variance was granted. He asked that the Commission extend the courtesy of a reconsideration.

Commissioner Mehranian commented on a number of unresolved issues that were raised at the last hearing, e.g., maintenance of the open space and Euston Place.

Director Stanley responded that thus far, the Tentative Map has not been revised to reflect the Commission's vote, including the fact that Euston Place is a public street.

Senior Planner Buss explained that Mr. Kudrave was requesting that the approval be set aside and that the matter be reset for public hearing. Though the intent of the request is to focus on Lots 5 and 6, re-opening the public hearing would not limit broadening the scope of discussion.

Deputy City Attorney Cobey read the issues contained in the Commission's motion in November.

Commissioner Cahill supported granting reconsideration. He stated that allowing separate Lots 5 and 6 was a close call and if there is information the applicant feels was not provided, he was willing to listen.

Commissioner Mehranian concurred.

Commissioner Engler and Chairman Gelhaar opposed granting the request.

Chairman Gelhaar noted that the decision makers had walked the site.

M/S/C Cahill/Mehranian to allow reconsideration. Engler and Gelhaar dissenting. The motion failed as a result of a tie vote.

VII. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

A. Conditional Use Permit 230 (amendment); Perfectly Fit, Inc., 1051-53 Foothill Boulevard:

Planner Gjolme described the applicant's request to discontinue group exercise classes at 1051 Foothill, one of two units for which the CUP was originally approved. Retail sales and one-on-one classes will continue at 1053 Foothill.

The subject site is located in the building at the northeast corner of Foothill and Hill Street, in the Downtown Village Specific Plan Zone. The previously approved 10 parking spaces at the rear would be reduced to 5, compliant for the revised use, and hours of operation reduced by 1. One-on-one classes would continue Monday through Saturday from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., with 10 daily sessions on average; a clear disintensification of use. The focus of the request is to review the original conditions of approval and modify them accordingly, including a condition prohibiting future class instruction.

Commissioner Mehranian was concerned with cumulative parking impacts from future tenants.

Planner Gjolme advised that another gym use, a boot camp, is proposed for 1049 Foothill and will have comparable parking requirements as Perfectly Fit. A tutoring business has also applied for a CUP at 1051 Foothill.

Director Stanley reminded the Commission that the Commission has the authority to impose conditions on future uses within the Center.

Commissioner Engler foresaw a traffic problem and confirmed that the Commission could restrict the hours of operation.

Director Stanley commented that another option was for the Commission to continue the matter and consider all submittals simultaneously.

Planner Gjolme interjected that the overall scope of operation would decrease significantly, rather than increase and agreed that the Boot Camp and tutoring business should be considered simultaneously.

Chairman Gelhaar opened the public hearing. Since comments were not offered, the public hearing was closed.

Commissioner Engler stated he was leaning towards reviewing all 3 uses simultaneously.

Commissioner Cahill did not view the instant request tied to the boot camp and tutoring. There will be a 50% reduction in use and ample parking provided.

Commissioner Mehranian stated she could support this request as a stand-alone case.

Chairman Gelhaar agreed.

M/S/C Mehranian/Cahill to approve amendment to Conditional Use Permit 230 as conditioned. 4 Ayes; Engler dissenting.

B. Modification 05-88; Trocker; 4625 Daleridge Road:

Planning Aide Mikhail described the applicants' request to allow a 912-sf, first-floor addition to encroach into the required north side yard setback. The addition would maintain the existing building line at 3'-2", where a 6'-4" setback is required. This type of request is eligible for an Administrative Modification, but because the most adjacent neighbors could not be located for signatures, the application is subject to a full Modification and Commission review.

The 12,130-sf site is located on the west side of Daleridge Road in the R-1-7,500 zone where there are single-story homes with non-conforming setbacks. The project would increase the home's footprint to 3,176-sf, well below the maximum allowed floor area for this site.

Staff determined that aligning the addition with the existing building line at the rear was a logical solution, where there is adequate landscape screening.

The applicants were in the audience, prepared to respond to any questions.

Chairman Gelhaar opened the public hearing. Comments were not offered and the public hearing was closed.

Commissioner Mehranian found the request supportable and noted that the single-story profile is maintained.

Commissioner Cahill agreed. He pointed out that the request was consistent with the existing encroachment and located mostly along the neighboring garage.

Commissioner Engler appreciated that the project maintained the existing building line.

Chairman Gelhaar was grateful that the project is single-story and below the allowed floor area.

M/S/C Mehranian/Engler to approve Modification 05-88. Unanimous.

C. Front Garage Review 06-01; Reinhard; 2255 Richey Drive:

Panning Aide Mikhail reported the applicant's proposal to add 420-sf to his two-car garage, located at the front of his residence. Front Garage Review is triggered for garages located in front of homes when their width exceeds 35% of the lot width measured at the front property line. In this case, the proposed 34-ft-wide garage represents 69% of the property's 49-ft frontage.

The 15,900-sf site is located at the end of Richey Drive, in the R-1-15,000 Zone.

The garage would be expanded 12 ft to the south, 3½-ft forward to the west, and maintain its westerly orientation and access. A minor portion would encroach and maintain a nonconforming side yard setback, which was conditionally and administratively approved, pending approval of the Front Garage Review.

Ms. Mikhail pointed out that the garage faces the west property line and is screened by mature hedges. Additionally, all nearby neighbors have provided supportive signatures. Staff recommended positive findings and project approval.

Chairman Gelhaar opened the public hearing. Comments were not offered and the public hearing was closed.

Commissioner Engler advised that the project did not raise concerns for him and that it was compatible with the neighborhood.

The Commissioners agreed.

M/S/C Engler/Mehranian to approved Front Garage Review 06-01.
Unanimous.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS:

A. Continued Tree Removal Permit 05-33; Stassi; 313 Baptiste Way:

Planning Aide Mikhail recalled that the Commission continued it's November 22, 2005 hearing in this matter, with direction that a structural engineer and arborist be hired and submit their expert opinions. Staff only recently received a deposit and is in the process of locating a structural engineer.

The recommendation is to continue the matter to a date uncertain and allow Staff to locate and engineer and review the report.

Ronald Stassi described the problems his family is experiencing from tree roots affecting the structural integrity of his home, which he felt were addressed in the Tree Ordinance. He related that the threshold of his house is completely compressed on the east side, where all others have a 1½" clearance; a ball on the floor rolls to the west because the corner of the house has been damaged by a sycamore. He advised that the "culprit" sycamore has a 28-inch-diameter trunk and is growing 2 ft from the home. He was willing to accept a structural engineer's assessment and invited the Commissioners to make site visits.

Chairman Gelhaar confirmed that Staff is responsible for hiring a structural engineer.

Commissioner Cahill supported a continuance, stating that a structural report would shed a lot of light.

Commissioner Mehranian agreed.

Commissioner Engler made a site visit and observed what he believed were structural problems initiated by tree roots.

Chairman Gelhaar also made a site visit and stated that he has no problem with approving the request so long as a structural engineer confirms the applicants' position.

M/S/C Mehranian/Cahill to continue Tree Removal Permit 05-33 to a date uncertain. Unanimous.

IX. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Engler referenced an e-mail from Senior Planner Buss regarding the Canalda Way project and the County's refusal to sign-off on a proposed crib wall. Apparently, the County has adopted an ordinance prohibiting crib walls; if that is the case, he requested a copy of that Ordinance.

Director Stanley advised that Staff was also reviewing whether below grade steps can be approved administratively. The Fire Department mandated that steps of a certain width be provided.

On another subject, Chairman Gelhaar confirmed that among the Commission's recommendations for R-1 revisions was to eliminate signatures on issues similar to the Daleridge Road project just heard.

Commissioner Cahill wanted assurance that, even so, neighbors would have the opportunity to comment before a decision is made.

X. COMMENTS FROM THE DIRECTOR

Director Stanley asked if the Commissioners recalled making site visits and reviewing plans for 4141 Cambridge. The property owner, whose submittal is pending, advised Staff that he met with all the Commissioners individually on site with his plans and that he received favorable comments.

With the exception of Commissioner Engler, the Commissioners recalled making site visits, but not reviewing the plans. Commissioner Engler walked the site and recalled a conceptual plan.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

M/S/C Engler/Cahill to adjourn at 6:53 p.m. Unanimous.

Secretary to the Planning Commission