

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF LA CANADA FLINTRIDGE
HELD ON FEBRUARY 12, 2013.**

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL: Chairman Der Sarkissian, Commissioner Curtis, Commissioner Walker, Commissioner Gunter, Director Stanley, Deputy City Attorney Guerra, Senior Planner Buss, Planner Gjolme, and Assistant Planner Parinas were present. Vice Chairman Jain was absent.

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Commissioner Curtis led the flag salute.

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.

Mr. Steven Brown, 3757 Normandy Drive, spoke about the construction on 3745 Normandy Drive. He discussed the history of the project and its current status.

V. REORDERING OF THE AGENDA

VI. CONSENT CALENDAR

VII. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS

VIII. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

A. Hillside Development Permit 12-51/Second-floor Review 12-25/Setback Modification 12-13; Sam and Liz Melehani; 5361 Harter Lane: Request to allow a 2-story addition comprising 1,448 sq. ft. to an existing 2-story residence. A Setback Modification is required since the additions would encroach into the required 25-foot front yard setback, which is necessary along both Harter Lane AND Mountain Meadow Lane given the site's through-lot configuration. The home's existing 12-foot front setback along Harter Lane would be preserved. Along Mountain Meadow Lane, the site's secondary frontage to the rear, the front setback would be reduced by 2'-7", from 23 feet to 20'-5". Staff is recommending that a Categorical Exemption be approved for this project. (Planner Gjolme)

Planner Gjolme presented the project in accordance to the staff report.

Chairman Der Sarkissian opened the public hearing.

Sam Melehani, property owner, expressed his family's need for the project.

Laura Serdar, architect, stated that she is available to answer any questions.

Chairman Der Sarkissian closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Walker stated that she visited the site and feels that the project is reasonable. She supports the project as is.

Commissioner Gunter concurred with Commissioner Walker.

Commissioner Curtis stated that he supports the project and can make the required findings.

Chairman Der Sarkissian supports the project. He commented that the proposed entry is strange and suggested that the entry be redesigned.

Commissioner Gunter motioned to approve Hillside Development Permit 12-51, Second-floor Review 12-25, and Setback Modification 12-13, Commissioner Curtis seconded, 4-0.

B. Landscape Plan Review for Hillside Development Permit 10-57/Second Floor Review 10-41/Modification 11-12; Johnson/Chang; 3800 Domal Lane: Request to review changes to the approved landscape plan for this approved project. The Mitigated Negative Declaration and the project were approved on September 11, 2012 and are still in effect. (Senior Planner Buss)

Chairman Der Sarkissian recused himself. He lives within 500 feet from the project site.

Senior Planner Buss presented the project in accordance to the staff report.

Commissioner Curtis asked about the size of the plantings.

Senior Planner Buss stated that the plantings are 36" box-sized.

Commissioner Curtis asked about the growth rate of the trees. He also asked about when the plantings will be installed.

Senior Planner Buss explained that the plantings could be required to be installed at the time the wall is constructed. He stated that the landscape architect is present to answer the questions regarding the growth rate.

Commissioner Gunter clarified the items that are being looked at by the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Walker asked about addressing other trees on the property that are dead.

Senior Planner Buss stated that the entire landscaping is subject to Planning Commission review, including the dead trees.

John Pride, landscape architect, explained the fire department's requirement in regards to the landscaping. He explained that the average height for 36" box-sized trees are 11-

13 feet tall and could gain an average of 2 feet a year. He stated that the spread/width of the tree is dependent upon the trees' maintenance. He added that the larger the plant, the slower the plant establishes.

Commissioner Walker asked if the row of podocarpus indicated on the landscape plan are new.

Mr. Pride stated that the potted plants are a different variety of podocarpus.

Steve Shin, representing the property owner, clarified that the potted plants were planted by the previous property owner and will be removed.

Commissioner Walker asked about the dead hedge and dead Oak tree.

Mr. Pride stated that he will look at the Oak tree and hedge, and if they are dead something will be done to address them.

Commissioner Gunter asked about the trees below the wall.

Mr. Pride stated that the Fire Department requires that landscaping to be at least 10 feet away from the structure so the landscaping had to be relocated below the wall.

Commissioner Gunter clarified that the correct plans are labeled A-1.1.

Dr. Sen Ji, 1350 Sugar Loaf Drive, briefly went over the previous Planning Commission meeting when the project was approved. He stated that he and his neighbors are against removing the trees and approval of the tree removal should come from the City Council because there is a conflict in the policy. He would like to have the right to appeal to the City Council on the issue.

Mr. Pride stated that he pled with the Fire Department to save the trees but the Fire Department requirements take precedence.

Mr. Shin stated that the Fire Department wants the pine trees removed because of safety and safety trumps view preservation and costs. He stated that most of the screening was provided at 9-10 feet and provides screening of Dr. Ji's roof.

Commissioner Gunter closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Curtis stated that he dealt with Fire Departments from many jurisdictions. He is glad that the Fire Department is taking a practical approach in allowing some type of planting. He believes that the project will stabilize the slope. The proposed trees will provide more screening and protecting than the current trees in the long-run. He would like to add condition of approval requiring the dead Oak tree to be replaced.

Commissioner Walker concurred with Commissioner Curtis. She stated that she believes that the new trees will provide more screening than the existing trees.

Commissioner Gunter concurred with his fellow Commissioners. He stated that the erosion control wall provides benefits and the landscaping proposed provides greater screening than the existing trees.

Commissioner Curtis made a motion to approve the landscape plan review for Hillside Development Permit 10-57, Second Floor Review 10-41, and Modification 11-12 with direction to staff that to make sure that the landscaping is installed with the wall. Commissioner Walker seconded, 3-0.

IX. OTHER BUSINESS:

X. REPORT OF DIRECTOR'S REVIEWS: None

XI. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS: There were no Commissioner comments.

XII. COMMENTS FROM THE DIRECTOR: Director Stanley stated that the RV Ordinance, Tree Ordinance and the Drive-through Ordinance will be reviewed at the next City Council Meeting on February 19, 2013.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT: 6:59 p.m.