

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF LA CANADA FLINTRIDGE
HELD ON JUNE 28, 2016**

- I. **CALL TO ORDER** – Chairman McConnell called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.
- II. **ROLL:** Also present were Commissioners Gunter and Jain. Commissioner Hazen was absent and Vice Chairman Smith has resigned from the Planning Commission.
- III. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** The Flag Salute was recited.
- IV. **SELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIRMAN** – M/S/C – McConnell/Jain to defer the matter to July 26, 2016 as Commissioner Hazen was absent. Deferred to July 26, 2016; 3-0.
- V. **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. There were none.
- VI. **REORDERING OF THE AGENDA** – Item IX B. was taken first and Commissioner Gunter explained that he must recuse himself as he lives close to the subject site. The item was removed from the agenda due to a lack of a quorum and no action was taken.
- VII. **CONSENT CALENDAR**
 - A. Minutes – 4/26/2016 Meeting – M/S/C – McConnell/Jain to continue to July 26, 2016 as there is a lack of a quorum to vote. Continued 3-0.
 - B. Resolution 16-38 - approving Second-floor Review 16-04, Floor Area Review 16-02 and Setback Modification 16-01 for a new 2-story residence at 4377 Chevy Chase Drive. M/S/C – McConnell/Gunter to approve. Approved 2-0-1; Jain abstained.
- VIII. **CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS**
 - A. **Variance 16-02; Singh/Johnson; 4377 Chevy Chase Drive:** request to retain and expand a legal non-conforming semi-circular driveway on a lot less than 100 feet wide in conjunction with construction of an approved 2-story residence. Staff is recommending approval of a Categorical Exemption for this project. (Planner Gjolme).

No staff report was required.

The public hearing was opened.

The applicant, Ms. Singh, spoke about the fact that she currently has a circular driveway, just like many other property owners on her street. She stated that Chevy Chase Drive is busy and dangerous, in her opinion.

The public hearing was closed.

Commissioner Jain mentioned that he did not attend the last Planning Commission meeting. He said he believed that the location of the driveway and garage is not new and therefore, if the area is changed or altered, new codes would have to be abided by. He did not feel he could make the findings.

Chairman McConnell suggested continuing the item as he did not believe that there would be a consensus.

Commissioner Gunter agreed with the Chairman. He said that his opinion has not changed and he agrees with all of Mr. Jain's comments.

M/S/C – Gunter/McConnell to deny the project. Approved 3-0. A Resolution of Denial will be brought back to the Commission on July 26, 2016.

IX. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A Second-floor Review 15-25/Director's Misc. Review 16-26 (flat roof); De Angelis/Lim; 1156 Descanso Drive: request to allow construction of a new 2-story residence comprising 7,653 sq. ft. with a flat roof component comprising more than 25% of the overall roof structure. Staff is recommending approval of a Categorical Exemption for this project. (Assistant Planner Harris).

Assistant Planner Harris gave a staff report and described the site location and size of the proposed second floor house. There is a covered patio that will be counted towards floor area. Ms. Harris referred the Commission to a site plan and showed the numerous protected trees, including Oaks on the site. She provided an overview of the first floor layout, the second floor layout, front and rear elevations and the three-car garage floor plan. The lot dips down to a more level pad. The maximum height is 32 feet. The project is compliant with angle plane.

Ms. Harris explained that there are very few windows on the west elevation and no windows on the east elevation.

Ms. Harris showed east and west facing photos. A Condition of Approval has been included to add more screening. A photo showing the existing

single story house and story poles were also viewed by the Commission. Ms. Harris showed more story pole photos looking west. Photos of the existing Sycamore trees and slope that would be filled-in were viewed.

Staff recommends approval of the project.

Chairman McConnell asked Ms. Harris to clarify whether the removal of two or more trees were permitted on the site.

Ms. Harris said that she believed there were Oak trees near the accessory structure. There were 4 trees that were crowded and they were not doing very well.

Ms. Harris indicated that the neighbor located to the west of the subject property had grading and drainage concerns. There are project engineers in attendance that can answer questions.

Commissioner Gunter asked if the property has been fenced off for a long time.

Ms. Harris said that a percolation test and some demolition work has been completed and that is why the fencing has been up for a while.

Commissioner Gunter asked about Condition of Approval No. 18 that refers to transporting off-site flows and what the plan was for off-site flows that come on to the property.

Ms. Harris said that it would be reviewed by the Building and Safety Department. She indicated that Condition No. 18 can be revised to include any historic on-site flows.

Chairman McConnell asked about the trees on the site and protecting them.

Ms. Harris said that requirements pertaining to trees would have to be complied with.

The public hearing was opened.

The applicant's representative, Dave De Angelis, spoke. He indicated that the owner proposed remodeling and expanding the existing house. He also explained that fill had originally been brought onto the property from another project site. He said that fencing was placed on the property as the house was in disrepair and there was a concern of keeping people off of the site. As to drainage, the plan for on and off-site drainage will be reviewed by Geotechnical and Civil Engineers. The grade will be raised. Landscaping will screen the property. The design is Country French.

Commissioner Gunter asked if screening is necessary.

Mr. De Angelis said that the lot is big enough to place some screening. He does not oppose planting and screening.

Ms. Harris brought up a plan for the Commissioners to view and see the flat roof area and the fact that a total of 29% of the area will be removed, higher than the 25% threshold.

Chairman McConnell asked how high the balustrade would be.

Mr. De Angelis said that it would be 42 inches, maximum.

Commissioner Gunter asked about a letter from a neighbor to the west that had concerns with the water and drainage. He is worried about minimizing the drainage impact on the neighbor to the east. Engineer, Ivan Chu, is available for questions.

Chairman McConnell questioned if the grade is raised, will the pad be higher than the neighbor to the west?

Mr. Chu said that there is no survey data, but that a surveyor can be sent to the site.

Chairman McConnell expressed concern that the new grading will alter the current drainage.

Mr. Chu said that he will submit all documents and drawings to Public Works for review.

Chairman McConnell asked if the hump and berm will be removed.

Mr. Chu said that he cannot remove the berm because of the existing trees.

Mr. De Angelis explained that the grade at the trees cannot be lowered.

Chairman McConnell asked if this was part of the review that Public Works would complete.

Ms. Harris indicated, "Yes," that anything in the public right-of-way is handled by Public Works.

The public hearing was closed.

Commissioner Gunter said that he visited the site. He felt it is a good design that meets the letter and intent of the design guidelines. The

Estate design fits well with the rest of the neighborhood. He said that he could make the findings for all entitlements and would like to remind the Commission about Condition of Approval No. 18. He said that he does not like screening but would rather design the residence in a manner that results in it being properly sited and well designed. His design preference is more wooded with scattered slow-growing trees to create a beautiful backdrop.

Commissioner Jain said that he visited the site and that he agreed with all of Commissioner Gunter's comments. The drainage will be taken care of during the plan check process. He believed that screening is good.

Chairman McConnell visited the site and can make all of the findings. He does not like that the applicant had to raise the grade to be above the rest, but feels that the project is compliant in every other way.

M/S/C – Gunter/Jain to approve the project and require Condition No.18 to address the offsite flows.

- B. **Second-floor Review 16-07/Setback Modification 16-02; Lachner/Dhariwal; 4818 La Cañada Boulevard:** request to allow construction of a new 850 sq. ft. second-story addition and to allow an encroachment into the north side setback by an existing, legal non-conforming garage and a front-yard encroachment by the existing residence. Staff is recommending approval of a Categorical Exemption for this project. (Assistant Planner Yesayan).

This item was removed from the agenda and no action was taken.

X. REPORT OF DIRECTOR'S REVIEWS

- A. **Hillside Development Permit 16-20; 812 Inverness Drive; Erickson:** Allowed a series of low retaining/garden walls and decorative fencing on a hillside lot.
- B. **Director's Misc. Review 16-24 (Setback); 1161 Descanso Drive; Ingrassia:** allowed a 195 sq. ft. 1st-floor addition to encroach 5'-5" into the required 10'-11" west side setback and relocation of existing mechanical equipment within the required west side setback.

XI. **OTHER BUSINESS** There was no other business.

XII. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS

The next meeting of July 12, 2016 was cancelled. A special meeting will take place on July 21, 2016.

The plan for the Commissioner vacancy is to put the item on the next City Council meeting date of September 20, 2016.

Commissioner Gunter suggested that an item be brought back at the next meeting recommending that the Commission be dark during the month of August.

XIII. COMMENTS FROM THE DIRECTOR

Deputy Director Koleda informed the Commission that the City Council approved the Climate Action Plan after seven months of public, Commission and City Council review.

The Council held the final budget meeting and plans to adopt the budget in July.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 pm.