

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF LA CANADA FLINTRIDGE
HELD ON JULY 22, 2014**

- I. CALL TO ORDER:** 6:03 pm.
- II. ROLL:** Chair Walker, Vice Chairman Jain, Commissioners Gunter, McConnell and Smith
- III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- IV. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:** None
- V. REORDERING OF THE AGENDA:** None
- VI. CONSENT CALENDAR**

- A. **Minutes:** March 25, 2014

Chairman Walker stated that the draft minutes had not been received, and the item was tabled.

- B. **Resolution:** Conditional Use Permit 415/Variance 07-06/Second Floor Review 07-38/Setback Modification 07-34; Greenberg; 245 Berkshire Avenue

Assistant City Attorney Guerra noted that Provision 21, pertaining to the requirements of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District, was clarified to be limited to work "performed on land".

M/S/C Jain/Smith Aye: Walker, Jain, McConnell, Smith; Abstain: Gunter

- VII. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS**

- A. **Hillside Development Permit 14-09/Second Floor Review 14-02/Categorical Exemption; Johnson/Tashjian; 4944 Revlon Drive:** Request to allow construction of new 2,900-square foot two-story house on a hillside lot. The project complies with all floor area, setback, size, and height requirements. Staff is recommending approval of a Categorical Exemption for this project. (Assistant Planner Parinas)

Assistant Planner Parinas reviewed the changes requested by the Planning Commission at the previous hearing. She distributed a color and material board.

The walls would be medium gray, meeting the Light Reflectance Value limit, as would the roof. The trim, not subject to LRV limits, would be white.

The landscape plan incorporates drought-tolerant plantings entirely, conforming to the City's Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance.

At the rear of the property, walls and spa are proposed, requiring Director's Review approval, as reflected in the resolution for the Planning Commission approval.

Assistant Planner Parinas displayed a building section, addressing Commission concerns of a discrepancy between individual and overall vertical dimensions on the elevations. She then stated that a drainage plan had been submitted at risk to Los Angeles County and approved, with water draining to the street, and sump pumps within the light wells. She also noted that the Commission's previous desire for four-side architecture had been addressed by a revision extending shingle treatment of the walls to all four sides.

Commissioner McConnell expressed concern that the minutes of the previous hearing on the project had not been included in the packets. He also inquired about Condition 19, referring to the Director's Review items, since the Commission normally reviews such items in cases before them. Director Stanley stated that the process allows for Commission comments in such situations, including the present review.

Commissioner McConnell also inquired as to why a grading plan was not included. Assistant Planner Parinas stated that the project did not involve a level of grading requiring a plan, and referred the Commission to the project architect for more information upon Commissioner Gunter's reminder that the Commission had requested to review a grading plan.

Chair Walker requested clarification from the City Attorney. Assistant City Attorney Guerra stated that staff can request such a plan, but it is not a legal requirement.

Commissioner Smith asked about the sump pumps in the light wells, since there is also a drain shown in the plans. Assistant Planner Parinas stated that notes in the plan referred to the sump pumps.

Commissioner Gunter noted that block walls were shown in elevation but not in plan view. Assistant Planner Parinas noted that the walls would not require Planning Commission review, being under the 6-foot height threshold.

Chair Walker asked if there were other concerns about the backyard oak, which the arborist had indicated could be trimmed, in connection with the raising of the roof. Assistant Planner Parinas stated that there were not concerns in that regard.

Chair Walker opened the public hearing.

Project architect Jay Johnson noted that the project had been improved. In response to earlier Commission inquiries, he stated that typically the grading and drainage plans are on same sheet, but that in this case, no grading was called for except under the house. The effort to come up with nice colors succeeded, with materials warm and fitting into the neighborhood. He also stated that the landscape plan works well with the topography and architecture. With regard to the "wall", he stated that it is a fence with a gate.

Commissioner Gunter stated that his concern had been height, and whether it had been reliably measured from the lower point of natural or finish grade as required in code. The drainage plan obscured the datum point information need for evaluation. He also questioned the point data as related to the slopes and distances.

Project Architect Johnson noted that finish grade is lower. Assistant Planner Parinas stated that the structure's height would be 27'-10".

Commissioner Gunter inquired as to whether there had been changes to the structure. Project Architect Johnson stated that the height and pitch at the ridge had been reduced by about 8 inches, allowing the height to be 2 inches below code limit. He stated that he favors such a margin of error.

Commissioner Jain noted that, if the Commission hadn't found the height excess, the framing would have been problematic. He recommended that height be certified by a civil engineer in some cases.

Owner Andrew Tashjian recalled buying the house nearly a year ago, with his desire to beautify the street. He recalled taking the plan to all neighbors, and gaining unanimous support.

There were no other public comments, and Chair Walker closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Gunter noted his familiarity with the project and property. He had no problem with the size of the project, and was glad to see the siding added to avoid a false front appearance. He did note concern about going to the limit, particularly when drawing inaccuracies occur, but voiced support for the findings and project approval.

Commissioner Jain concurred with Commissioner Gunter's comments and conclusion.

Commissioner McConnell shared concerns about the accuracy related to height, but could make positive findings per the staff report.

Commissioner Smith was also pleased by the use of shingles all around the house. He recalled talking to neighbors who were excited to see house replaced.

Chair Walker concurred with the comments, stating that she could make all required findings. Her concern with the tree was addressed in Condition 15.

M/S/C Jain/Smith to approve as submitted. Unanimous.

- B. Second Floor Review 14-06/Director's Misc. Review 14-07/Categorical Exemption; Johnson/Henriod; 4917 Indianola Way:** Request to allow a new 3,870 sq. ft. two-story residence to be constructed on an 11,214 sq. ft. lot. A four-part Director's Miscellaneous Review (flat roof, chimney, pool equipment and sport court) is also required since the design would employ a flat roof comprising more than 25% of the overall roof structure (approx. 29%) and minor chimney/pool equipment encroachments are proposed. A compliant unlit

sport court is proposed in the back yard. Staff is recommending approval of a Categorical Exemption for this project. (Planner Gjolme)

Planner Gjolme recalled from the June 24 hearing that the Commission had had concerns with massing, the particular profile of roof form, the massing of the garage roof, and the size of a dormer in elevation view.

He stated that staff had learned that the original story poles were inaccurate, overstating height by 3 feet (31' vs 28'). He displayed photographs of the original and revised story poles, stating that staff believes the difference to be significant. He also noted the reduction of the forward garage gable, and that the story poles had been recertified.

With regard to the dormer on the north elevation, the code doesn't define a limit to what constitutes a dormer. In this case, it spanned the entire bedroom. The revision reduced it from 14 feet to 7 feet, consistent with the Commission's stated concerns.

Planner Gjolme further noted that, along with Second Floor Review, the project entailed staff-level reviews for a flat roof, a chimney projection, and a pool equipment encroachment. The previous sport court, which would have also required special staff review, was eliminated.

Another favorable revision was the addition of a 36" box front yard tree, recommended by both staff and the Commission, and consistent with the street setting.

Planner Gjolme concluded by stating that staff continued to recommend approval based on the findings.

Commissioner Smith noted that the staff report had recommended additional landscaping, and confirmed that the tree is adequate for that.

Commissioner Gunther confirmed with Planner Gjolme that the story poles were recertified, and that they had been certified originally though inaccurate.

Chair Walker inquired about the story pole process. Planner Gjolme stated that a plan is submitted to staff, and upon approval of the plan staff contacts the applicant to schedule installation according to the Commission hearing schedule. Chair Walker asked if staff verifies the certification, and Planner Gjolme stated that staff relies on the applicant's certification.

Chair Walker opened the public hearing.

Project Architect Jay Johnson recalled that, after Commissioner McConnell's comments and a neighbor speaking in favor of lowering the ridgeline at the garage, Mr. Johnson realized the the story poles were too high by almost 4 feet. The general contractor had been out of town, so that he relied on the framing crew to figure it out without supervision or general contractor inspection.

Commissioner McConnell stated that the change is significant, making the house fit its surroundings. His concern was with the certification process.

Project Architect Johnson stated that it is a good idea for the architect to verify the story pole installation.

Chair Walker asked the Assistant City Attorney if the Commission could place a condition of City verification of story poles, and the reply was positive.

Commissioner Gunter asked if Project Architect Johnson had provided the story pole plan, with a positive reply. Director Stanley stated that it's not in the code, but it is policy for applications.

Commissioner Gunter expressed appreciation for the reduction of height in the previous project on the agenda from 28' to 27'-10". Project Architect Johnson recommended using that margin for contingencies on his future projects.

Vice Chair Jain noted that the design of the Bedroom 5 dormer, of shed design, is not consistent with the project's other dormers. Project Architect Johnson stated that this was the result of the need for angle-plane compliance. Mr. Jain inquired about getting an angle-plane variance in the interest of architectural consistency. Mr. Johnson stated that the shed roof dormer is not seen at the same time as the other dormers. Mr. Jain noted that the shed roof dormer is seen first from the north, and is dominant. Mr. Johnson defended its design as related to Cape Code style. Mr. Jain noted that it's not on the roof plan in that design. Mr. Johnson noted that it is shown correctly on the site roof plan and the floor plan, and will be corrected on the roof plan. Planner Gjolme stated that the site plan takes precedence over the roof plan, and that dormer projections in setbacks are allowed with neighbor approvals, which the applicant has in this case. He further noted that a variance for such an item would be difficult to grant, and would not be recommended by staff.

Owner Joel Henriod stated that he looks forward to approval, needing more space with his large family. He emphasized sensitivity to items raised at the last meeting.

There were no further public comments, and Chair Walker closed the public hearing.

Vice Chair Jain expressed appreciation for the lower story poles, and comfort with the project aside from the shed roof dormer. He stated that he can support the project overall, encouraging staff to work for more design consistency in the future.

Commissioner McConnell stated that he can make the required findings.

Commissioner Smith stated that he hadn't noticed the story pole problem at first, and had visited the site a second time. He recommended a condition for a mandatory tree in front.

Commissioner Gunter stated that he visited the site a second time, and did not share the other Commissioners' views. He was concerned not with the floor area or second floor, but with the project being built at absolute height and angle plane limits in a neighborhood where nothing else is at maximum. He could not make Finding 2 regarding neighborhood scale or Finding 4 regarding design guidelines. He regarded the roof as too steep, and also could not find impracticality as driving the need to have the chimney 1 foot closer to the property line.

Chair Walker had also visited the site a second time. She stated that she understood Commissioner Gunter's concerns with regard of going to the maximum, but could make the findings with three conditions: story pole certification, a corrected roof plan, and a required front yard tree.

Ms. Walker also recommended that the City look into light wells within setback, expressing doubt regarding need.

Commissioner Gunter stated that certification is a good idea, and inquired about a mechanism for matching dimensions in the field. Director Stanley stated that the building inspectors measure height in the field. Chair Walker asked about a condition to verify framed height, to which Director Stanley replied that it is standard practice. Ms. Walker requested that Building & Safety be alerted to the problem. Mr. Stanley stressed that we rely on story pole certification, but that the defining act is the measurement of the actual framed structure. He stated that a condition of scrutiny can be added.

Assistant City Attorney Guerra recommended a condition that, prior to removal of the current story poles, per Condition 23, the applicant shall have the height of the story poles certified by the new contractor. If the height is not consistent, the approval is voided, requiring renewed review by the Planning Commission.

M/S/C McConnell/Smith, with aforementioned City Attorney condition and three conditions as stated by Chair Walker. Aye: Jain, McConnell, Smith, Walker. No: Gunter

VIII. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- A. **Second Floor Review 14-24/Categorical Exemption; Arthur Isdaelian/Gregor Paronian; 4537 El Camino Corto:** Request to allow construction of a code-compliant 3,348 sq. ft. 2-story residence on a 9,300 sq. ft. lot. Staff is recommending approval of a Categorical Exemption for this project. (Consulting Planner Cantrell)

Consulting Planner Cantrell noted that the street has several 2-story houses on the east side, but not on the west side near the subject property. The lot to the north is of greater size, with a proportionally large setback to the shared property line. To the south is a smaller property, but also with a comfortable sideyard setback. The proposed house would be built to the required second-floor sideyard setbacks, with the ground floor sharing the setback line and thus set back much farther than the requirement.

Staff regarded the proposed house as compact in plan and plain in massing. The house did not conform to two of the design guidelines. First is its total symmetry below the roofline, and second is its lack of integrity due to differing styles of aesthetic components. Mr. Cantrell displayed a staff alternate design that addressed the guideline issues while seeking to minimize impact on the building program.

Aside from those issues as covered by a draft condition, staff regarded the project as meeting the required findings and recommended approval.

Mr. Cantrell noted that a letter from the neighbor to the south, Jason Inouye, 4531 El Camino Corto, had been delivered at the meeting. Mr. Inouye was not able to attend the meeting, but expressed concerns about the building massing, as well as support for keeping the house as shown on the site plan because it aligns favorably with his house and back yard.

Commissioner Gunter inquired about a retaining wall within the rear yard. Mr. Cantrell stated that it is outside of the required setbacks.

Chair Walker opened the public hearing.

Arthur Isadaelian, project designer, invited Commission questions.

Commissioner Gunter asked for clarification regarding the elevations on the survey. Mr. Isadaelian stated that the grade would be raised at the back of the house. Commissioner McConnell asked if applicant is willing to lower the grade rather than raise it. Mr. Isadaelian stated that access to the garage was a controlling factor. Commissioner McConnell asked if applicant is willing to consider lowering the north side and leaving the garage at its proposed location, to which Mr. Isadaelian agreed.

Commissioner Smith stated willingness to accept staff recommendations.

Mr. Isadaelian agreed to all staff recommendations aside from adding windows to the master bedroom.

Greg Paronian, property owner, invited further Commission questions. There were none.

Wade Hannibal, neighbor, welcomed Mr. Paronian to La Canada. He stated concerns regarding screening, aesthetics, and neighborhood compatibility, noting that other 2-story houses have varied massing. Revisions suggested by staff should be incorporated in to the design of the house.

Samantha Chi, the neighbor directly to the north, recalled that much established landscaping was removed, including on her property. She asked that survey markers be staked onsite, since there are still well-established trees that should be protected. She also noted that the street is narrow, so that the house bulk will have an increased impact.

Peter Frederick, 4705 El Camino Corto, stated that the house will be bulky and tower over the street.

Tom Caswell, 4604 El Camino Corto, stated that two-story house needs to fit in with the block. He stated concerns about the mass as seen from the sides, and recommended lowering the pad.

Owner Greg Paronian stated that he has no intentions on encroaching on views, is willing to make adjustments as necessary, and is willing to lower grade to provide lower overall height. He offered further reassurance that he has no intentions of removing redwood trees, and will replace hedges on each side with beautiful landscaping.

Commissioner McConnell noted that redwood trees are not on the site plan. Mr. Paronian explained that the redwood trees are on the Chi property.

There were no further public comments, and Chair Walker closed the public hearing.

Vice Chair Jain stated concerns regarding height, bulk and mass, noting that the house looms higher because of the differences in grade. Without moving the house back and redesigning, he could not make the Second Floor Review findings.

Commissioner McConnell stated a need to focus on the south elevation, and for a landscape plan to clearly show the community to know where the proposed screening is. He also expressed concern about the effect of the driveway and grading on existing trees near the north property line.

Commissioner Smith noted that the site has some constraints, and that more thought is needed for the design to fit the site. With the imposing effect of the submitted design, he could not make the required findings.

Commissioner Gunter concurred with the other commissioners, expressing concern about a symmetrical design in the middle of the lot. He noted that he had no problem with the size, but that the design needs to have more modulation.

Chair Walker shared and summarized the concerns -- lack of modulation, bulk, box-nature of building – as to why the design is not yet compatible with neighborhood. She asked the applicant about an action that evening or a continuance to September 23.

Owner Paronian stated that he is agreeable to the date certain continuance.

M/S/C Jain/Gunter to continue the project to September 23. Unanimous.

- B. Second Floor Review 14-21/Setback Modification 14-11/Categorical Exemption; Franco Noravian/John Koulos; 4344 La Granada Way:** Request to allow a 1,100 sq. ft. 2-story addition to the rear of an existing single-story residence. The upper level of the addition would provide a 7'-1" setback, below the 12'-10" second-floor requirement for the lot, but greater than the 3-foot setback currently provided. The Setback Modification would also allow minor garage expansion into the required front yard setback. The project is identical to a request approved on April 9, 2013. That project has expired and re-approval is sought at this time. Staff is recommending approval of a Categorical Exemption for this project. (Planner Gjolme)

Planner Gjolme noted that the review was procedural. The identical project was reviewed and approved on April 9, 2013. Since that time, the approvals have expired, and the project has been resubmitted in identical form and assigned new case numbers. Staff regards the appropriate action as a straightforward re-approval with the same conditions as before.

Commissioner Smith, having not yet been on the Commission at the time of the previous approval, had questions. Planner Gjolme responded that the only grading required at the back of house was minimal below the floor, that no significant tree canopy trimming would be required, and that no letters were received from north or south neighbors at the previous review or presently.

Commissioner Gunter confirmed with Planner Gjolme that no code changes had occurred between the time of the original review and the present review.

Chair Walker confirmed with Planner Gjolme that revisions to the Tree Ordinance since the time of the original review had no effect on the project.

Commissioner McConnell noted that the subject corner of La Granada Way could use widening to mitigate a dangerous turn. He expressed concern with bringing the garage 2 feet closer to the street to comply with the depth requirement. Planner Gjolme responded that obtaining a variance for garage depth would be required, with the special privilege finding difficult to make. He noted that Public Works did not have any concerns about the street. Commissioner Gunter confirmed that the garage policy is consistent.

Chair Walker opened the public hearing.

Project Architect Franco Noravian noted that the project approval had expired because of delays in obtaining County Health Department approval of the septic system.

M/S/C Gunter / Smith to approve as submitted. Four ayes; no: McConnell.

- C. **Second Floor Review 14-12/Floor Area Review 14-01/Categorical Exemption; Samwon Design/Paul Rhee and Sue Park; 5000 Hook Tree Drive:** Request to allow a 1,187 sq. ft. one-story addition to an existing one-story house. Some of the addition would have wall height over 12'-0" and would qualify as new second floor. The project also requires Floor Area Review because the lot qualifies as a narrow lot and the applicant is proposing to exceed the 4,500 sq. ft. limitation for narrow lots. However, total floor area would be 5,190 sq. ft. which is under the 6,119 sq. ft. maximum allowed for the lot size. Staff is recommending approval of a Categorical Exemption for this project. (Assistant Planner Harris)

Assistant Planner Harris noted the irregularly shaped parcel on Hook Tree Road. The average lot width under 80 feet brings the project under Floor Area Review. To the existing 4,003 sf, 1,036 sf would be added. The addition would be single-story, but because wall height would be over 12 feet, Second Floor Review is required. The additions would be made on all sides of the house. Wall height would exceed 12 feet only outside of required setbacks.

Ms. Harris displayed renderings showing views interior to the lot and in a limited manner from the street.

She noted that the setting on Hook Tree consists primarily of single-story houses, and that the house would continue to respect that setting. She recommend positive findings and approval.

Commissioner Smith inquired as to whether Fire Department access is required on only one side. Ms. Harris stated that the other side already has access.

Commissioner McConnell asked about the lack of story poles for this project. Ms. Harris responded that the Director waived the requirement due to the low massing of the one-story project.

Chair Walker opened the public hearing.

Project Architect Steve Shin recalled that the owners wanted warm modern architecture to accommodate their family. A conventional gable design could have avoided Second Floor Review, but they wanted a more compatible design despite the process. Mr. Shin also noted that the project had made it through Fire Department plan check.

Vice-Chair Jain confirmed with Mr. Shin that the project has been submitted to Building & Safety plan check.

Commissioner Smith inquired as to whether the stone wall in front of entry would be slightly below the existing ridgeline. Mr. Shin said it would be higher, but not viewed from the north due to distance and vegetation.

Commissioner McConnell confirmed with Mr. Shin that total height in the rear was due to the grade sloping down.

Carol McDonald, of 5002 Oakwood Avenue, stated that the character of LCF keeps her here. She referred to the subject lot as misshapen, having been the product of a lot split. She noted that the code keeps the size of the house proportionate to the size of the lot. She stated that two exemptions are being sought. She stated that renovating a home is an inconvenience on Hook Tree, and asked how long to construct and whether residents would be asked to absorb repaving cost. She stated that in theory the code is the code, we destroy the spirit by chipping away, destroy the character of neighborhood. She stated that a 5,200 sf house is too large for a lot with an average width of 80 feet.

Mr. Shin responded that most of parking will be offstreet, and he could be contacted any time with problems.

Commissioner Gunter stated that the 4,500 sf review is only a threshold, and the actual limit for the lot is 6,119 sf, almost 1000 more than the proposal. The project is not an exemption; house is well within limits allowed, a sensitive addition, in spirit of review, not going to limits, well-designed for style, character, and thoughtful detailing. He can make all SFR and FAR findings.

Vice-Chair Jain concurred, stating that it is a sensitive design, really a one-story home.

Commissioner McConnell could make all findings per staff, and appreciated the design elements as nice for the neighborhood. He noted the onsite parking condition for construction vehicles. Commissioner Smith also praised the design, noting that it's not 2-story, and falls into Floor Area Review because of the long snout of the lot. He particularly liked the front design.

Chair Walker noted that construction is never easy, but that people can upgrade their homes. In this project, sensitive design, screening, scattered additions, and views limited to the driveway are positive.

M/S/C Gunter/Jain to approve as submitted. Unanimous.

Chair Walker noted the 15 day appeal period.

Commissioner McConnell noted to Director Stanley that he would have liked story poles on this project.

- D. **Second Floor Review 14-13/Categorical Exemption; Serdar Architecture/Christopher & Vanetta Barton; 2271 San Geronio Road:** to allow a new 1,192 sq. ft. second floor addition to an existing one-story residence. The applicant is also proposing to add 849 sq. ft. to the existing first floor. Total floor area would be 5,097 sq. ft. which is under the 5,849 sq. ft. maximum allowed for the lot size. Staff is recommending approval of a Categorical Exemption for this project. (Assistant Planner Harris)

Assistant Planner Harris noted compliance with the floor area limit, and that only Second Floor Review is required.

She displayed a color-coded site plan showing setback compliance and the central location of the second-floor addition. The height would reach 26'-11". At the east elevation, the only 2nd floor window facing the neighbor would be at the bathroom. An initially proposed balcony had been deleted.

Ms. Harris displayed neighborhood and story pole photos, with one or two trees to be removed for the addition, and heavy screening along Ocean View Boulevard.

Staff recommended positive findings and approval.

Chair Walker opened the public hearing.

Project Architect Laura Serdar noted that the owners are out of town. She displayed a study model.

Ms. Walker closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Smith stated that he is familiar with the property. While the addition is substantial in terms of square footage, the lot supports it well. His initial concerns about the window facing the neighbor have been addressed. He could make the findings.

Commissioner Gunter stated that it is a sensitive design.

Vice-Chair Jain concurred, and praised the central location of the second floor.

Commissioner McConnell concurred, adding that the massing fits both streets.

Chair Walker concurred, stating also that the size is reasonable and the project is respectful of neighbor privacy.

M/S/C Jain/McConnell to approve as submitted. Unanimous.

- E. **Second Floor Review 14-16/Categorical Exemption; De Angelis Designs/Susan Rossi; 4400 Commonwealth Avenue:** Request to allow construction of a code-compliant 4,182 sq. ft. 2-story residence on a 12,531 sq. ft. lot. Staff is recommending approval of a Categorical Exemption for this project. (Planner Gjolme)

Planner Gjolme noted that the basic outline and footprint make good use of the trapezoidal property. The project's 2-story house and 1-story garage attain consistency and grace in alignment with the property and basic flow of Commonwealth and Georgia. The site development is well configured.

Mr. Gjolme added that the project remedies current setback problems. The elevations feature shingle style with rich ornamentation and detailing, along with attractive modulation, good use of gables, and 4-sided architecture. A small balcony on east elevation-would relate to rear yard, well-screened from the neighbor. He noted the project's code compliance and recommended positive findings.

Commissioner McConnell inquired about whether a tree near the driveway is a street tree, and whether it would be affected by the driveway. Mr. Gjolme stated that he didn't believe it is a street tree or affected, but would check the survey.

Chair Walker opened the public hearing.

Project Architect Dave DeAngelis stated the the tree was planted by the owners in the public right of way, and that the new driveway would not affect it. He noted that it is a tricky corner lot.

Commissioner McConnell asked if there was any consideration given to additional trees on Commonwealth. Mr. DeAngelis stated that there would be upon hiring of a landscape architect. Commissioner McConnell noted that there is only one tree in front. Mr. DeAngelis stated that a crape myrtle or something else to soften the corner from the southwest would be used.

Chair Walker closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Gunter complimented the design as well-modulated and detailed, with form and façade organization consistent with what the City encourages in its guidelines. All findings can be made.

Vice-Chair Jain concurred, adding that the interesting siting reinforces the street.

Commissioner McConnell agreed, complimenting the design as well thought out.

Commissioner Smith concurred with the other commissioners.

Chair Walker expressed excitement about the project.

M/S/C McConnell/Smith to approve as submitted. Unanimous.

- F. **Minor Conditional Use Permit 497/Categorical Exemption; Markosian/Thomas Driscoll Family Trust; 2209 Foothill Boulevard:** Request to allow a real estate office use within an existing tenant space. The project is located in the Community Planned Development (CPD) zone. Staff is recommending approval of a Categorical Exemption for this project. (Assistant Planner Parinas)

Chair Walker asked of the Commission if they are comfortable with waiving the presentation of a staff report. The Commission was unanimously in favor of waiving the staff report.

Chair Walker opened the public hearing.

Owner Markosian asked if she would have to go through this again if the use returns to retail. Directory Stanley explained that retail is a by-right permitted use, so no CUP would be required.

M/S/C McConnell/Smith to approve as submitted. Unanimous.

IX. OTHER BUSINESS:

- A. **Substantial Conformance Determination:** Hillside Development Permit 13-47/Second Floor Review 13-23/Setback Modification 13-14; 4170 Cambridge Road; Sargsyan/Nazaryan

Planner Gjolme noted that it is a staff level process which the staff brings to the Commission for comments and confirmation of the decision.

There were no comments from the Commission.

Chair Walker noted that staff used good judgment.

X. REPORT OF DIRECTOR'S REVIEWS: None

XI. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner McConnell reported receiving a letter from Kathy Sivor regarding wait times for CUP processing, extending more than two months from application submittal. The concern was that owners and businesses are affected. Mr. McConnell asked if the process could be sped up.

Assistant City Attorney Guerra stated that the item would have to be agendaized for substantive discussion.

Director Stanley stated that the City takes the applications on a first-come first-served basis. The CUP processed earlier in the agenda had been quick. Any CUP involves a public notice period and staff report. Her letter involved more issues than the CUP timeframe, and Mr. Stanley had already discussed these issues with her.

Chair Walker noted that the City wants to be sensitive to businesses. Commissioner McConnell noted that deficient parking is a frequent problem.

Chair Walker asked staff to be sensitive to the issue, and stated that the Commission might agendaize it.

Director Stanley noted that another course was for the City Council to change the CUP ordinance.

Commissioner Gunter suggested that a detailed report on how building inspectors check height could be useful. He added that a policy requiring detailed survey information near property lines would be helpful. He also recommended requiring a topographic survey provided for any project reaching the height limit.

Commissioner Gunter also mentioned that the City Alternate design for the El Camino Corto project reached a level of direction too specific for Planning Commission review.

Chair Walker reiterated Commissioner McConnell's comments on the need for minutes on continued items. She added that it would be helpful to have clarification on what is required on grading plans.

Director Stanley stated that staff will bring the grading policy for Commission discussion.

XII. COMMENTS FROM THE DIRECTOR

Director Stanley noted that the reader board ordinance is scheduled for August 4 City Council review, along with drive-through regulations.

The building inspector had been scheduled to attend the meeting to address building issues, but the agenda was too long. That study session would occur in September.

Vice-Chair Jain confirmed the special Commission meeting date of August 5. Director Stanley confirmed a quorum consisting of Commissioners Gunter, Jain, and McConnell.

Vice-Chair Jain confirmed with Director Stanley that the City Council had allowed the contested door in the Hartounian project.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT: 9:18 pm

M/S/C Gunter/McConnell Unanimous.