

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION
OF THE
CITY OF LA CAÑADA FLINTRIDGE
HELD SEPTEMBER 25, 2007**

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Cahill called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL:

Present were Commissioners Davitt, Gelhaar, Hill and Mehranian, City Attorney Ezri Vargas, Director of Community Development Stanley, Senior Planner Buss, Planner Clarke and Assistant Planner Parinas.

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Gelhaar led the salute to the flag.

IV. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Comments were not offered.

V. REORDERING OF THE AGENDA

Chairman Cahill confirmed there was no need to re-order the agenda.

VI. CONSENT CALENDAR

Resolution denying Variance 07-08; 5028 Jarvis Avenue.

M/S/C Hill/Mehranian to adopt Resolution 07-92; unanimous.

VII. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARING:

A. Hillside Development Permit 05-53; Modification 05-69; Floor Area Review 06-01; Johnson; 5284 Gould Avenue:

Senior Planner Buss advised that though on the agenda, this item was not ready to present to the Commission. Nonetheless, since it is an agenda item, public testimony can be accepted.

Chairman Cahill confirmed that no one in the audience wished to address the Commission on this matter.

M/S/C Gelhaar/Davitt to continue Hillside Development 05-53; Floor Area Review 06-01 for 5284 Gould Avenue to October 9th. Unanimous.

VIII. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

A. Conditional Use Permit 411; Variance 07-02; Zentmyer; 1434 Foothill Boulevard:

Senior Planner Buss advised that due to a faulty notice, this item could not be heard and would have to be renoticed.

B. Variance 07-05; Hansen/Isaacson (Los Gringos Locos Restaurant); 458-468 Foothill Boulevard:

Senior Planner Buss reported the applicants' proposal to expand their restaurant into the adjoining 750-sf tenant space formerly occupied by a barbershop. They also request a reduction in the required number of parking spaces that the expansion would trigger. The entire center currently provides 43 parking spaces (including spaces for the handicapped) – 32 in the front and 11 at the rear, whereas the current combined uses require the Center to provide 85 spaces.

The subject site is located within a commercial center at the southeast corner of Foothill and Gould Avenue and is the only restaurant within the center. The change from a barbershop to a restaurant use widens the parking gap even more, and would require 92 spaces. Mr. Buss commented that if the Center were entirely retail use, only 57 spaces would be required.

The site cannot be expanded to accommodate more parking spaces and current code requires landscaping improvements within the parking lot, which would reduce available parking even further.

The City's Traffic Engineer performed a Parking Demand Analysis as well as a Shared Parking Analysis and concluded that a significant impact to the surrounding streets and neighborhood would be expected. He also noted the dearth of commercial properties that could accept overflow parking.

Staff could not make positive findings and recommended denial of the request.

Subsequent to preparation of the staff report, there was more discussion with the applicants, who believe that the requested expansion area would not open until after a majority of the other tenants would have closed for the day. He pointed out however, that the other tenants' leases do not call out a closing time.

Commissioner Gelhaar confirmed that Staff did not verify the applicants' chart, which shows that most businesses in the Center close by 6:00 p.m. and some by 5:00 p.m.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Mehranian, Mr. Buss reported that there is no off site or street parking for employees. Each restaurant shift is comprised of 4 employees.

Commissioner Hill remarked that perhaps the applicants could arrange for their employees to park in the Ralphs market. He inquired if it was true that numerous parking variances have been granted along Foothill.

Director Stanley responded that Ichiban restaurant, located in the CenFed Center was allowed a variance on a shared use basis; this request is one of the more difficult ones to support.

Senior Planner Buss advised that he and the City's Traffic Engineer briefly discussed the idea of tandem parking in the rear lot, which would provide more than the 11 spaces in that area.

Director Stanley advised that the City had received proposals from parking consultants and for preparation of a Parking Management Plan, which will include recommendations for the parking issues in the Downtown Village Specific Plan area. Selection of a consultant and receipt of the recommendations is 6 months away at a minimum.

Commissioner Hill commented on the popularity of the restaurant and noted it seemed that around 6:00 p.m. there are many people outside the restaurant waiting to be seated. He inquired if that was factored and if the expansion would trigger more cars or simply accommodate more seating area.

Mr. Buss responded that only inside waiting areas are factored in parking calculations.

Business owner Bent Hansen stated that he and his partners realized they might want to change their course of action after reading the staff report and draft resolution, which included a condition that the expansion area would not be available to the public until 5:00 p.m. He stated that the project would increase the required number of parking spaces by 4. After 6:00 p.m., they would be shy only 7 spaces due to the closure of adjacent businesses. He felt that could be mitigated by requiring employees to park in tandem at the rear, which would result in the Center being 10% short of current requirements.

Responding to a question from Chairman Cahill, Mr. Hansen advised that the expansion would provide 10-12 more seats, depending on whether they install booths or use tables.

Commissioner Mehranian inquired about take-out traffic.

Mr. Hansen anticipated it would increase by 10%, and noted that it could be more efficient. He advised that the extra space is needed for the dinner hour, not the lunch hour and that the area would be less congested as they would have room to seat overflow customers.

Commissioner Gelhaar remarked that Taco Deli and Dominos Pizza in the adjacent Center stay open late, and the photo shop closes at 6:00 p.m. on

weekdays and is closed on weekends. Just Tires, nearby, closes around 6:00 p.m.

Commissioner Hill asked if Mr. Hansen was willing to contact Ralphs and Just Tires regarding overflow parking.

Mr. Hansen responded that he definitely could do that and would also talk with Firestone Tires. He reported that Friday nights is their busiest time and when the parking deficiency is apparent. Fourteen employees work on the busiest shift and that is what the parking calculations are based on.

Commissioner Davitt confirmed that Mr. Hansen did not anticipate that the expansion would require more employees. Their busiest time requires 14 employees. He also asked if the property owner was contacted with regard to new tenants and restricting their hours of operation.

Mr. Hansen reported that his past experience told him that the property owner would not be amenable to doing that.

Sid Karsh supported the request on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce. He acknowledged the parking deficiency and was hopeful that the parking consultant would help in that regard.

John Andraos, 463 Richmond, who resides immediately south of the Center, recalled that he addressed the Public Works & Traffic Commission a year and a half ago regarding the Center's parking deficiency, specifically, the restaurant. The Commission recommended restricted street parking. Thereafter, the City Council allowed removal of the restricted parking at the behest of the Center's business owners. Mr. Andraos reported that neither he nor his neighbors received a Notice of that hearing. He opposed allowing a business to expand when the business owner allows his employees to park in the neighborhood. He stated it would be insensitive for the Commission to disregard the neighbors' concerns.

Event coordinator Rebecca Hovey, supported the request and cited the numerous contributions the applicant makes to charitable requests.

Further comments were not offered and the public hearing was closed.

Commissioner Mehranian acknowledged the variances granted to other businesses as well as the applicants' contributions to the community. While she did not want to deny the request, she wanted the applicant to come up with some sort of a shared parking plan; without that, she would not see herself supporting the request as it would impact the adjacent residential areas.

Commissioner Davitt commented that clearly, this Center is impacted and most likely, every property along Foothill has a parking deficiency. He was wrestling with the required Findings for this situation, and viewed the applicant's suggestion to limit the use of the expanded area until 5:00 p.m. as a helpful compromise. He believed that the applicant needs to make efforts to relieve some of the parking conditions that exist - if they could find 7 more spaces for the employees off-site, other than the surrounding neighborhoods, he could support the request.

Commissioner Gelhaar commented that this restaurant is a very successful business. The condition offered by the applicant made it possible for him to make all the required Findings. He suggested that Mr. Andraos approach the Public Works/Traffic Commission again and petition reinstallation of restricted parking on his street.

Commissioner Hill concurred, but was not convinced that the condition to restrict the expanded area's opening hour was needed. He suspected the cars would still be there, the only difference would be that the car owners would have seating. He also doubted that what was being requested would change the street parking situation, as only 4 tables would be added. He was prepared to make the Findings with added conditions as suggested.

Chairman Cahill commented that Commissioners Gelhaar and Hill supported approval with a condition prohibiting the extended area from opening until 5:00 p.m. Commissioners Davitt and Mehranian agree, but also want some sort of parking plan for the employees.

Commissioner Davitt added that he could support the request if he had assurance that the employees would park off site, other than in the adjacent residential neighborhood.

Chairman Cahill concurred.

M/S/C Mehranian/Davitt to approve Variance 07-05 with two added conditions as discussed. Unanimous.

Director Stanley advised that Staff would present a resolution for approval on October 9th. Anyone wishing to appeal would have 15 days from October 9th.

C. Hillside Development Permit 04-74; Building Depth Review 05-08 (amendment); Melby; 1073 Oxford Way:

Commissioner Mehranian was recused from the hearing, as she resides within 500 ft of the subject site.

Senior Planner Buss related the applicants' request to modify a condition and allow extension of the project's approval for an additional 24 months. Prolonged review by County's Health Department and plan check, permit issuance could not be completed within the standard one-year timeframe, nor within a second year, granted by the Director. The project has not vested and absent the Commission extending the approval, the applicants would have to re-file for additional entitlements, due to Code changes adopted after their original approval.

The project consists of a 5,522-sf, two-story residence on a 21,120-sf hillside lot. Staff concluded that the request was reasonable and that requiring them to re-file would be burdensome, since the parameters of the project have not changed.

Chairman Cahill confirmed that no one in the audience had comments on this request and that none of the Commissioners were inclined to deny the request.

M/S/C Gelhaar/Davitt granting project approval for an additional 24 months. Unanimous.

Commissioner Mehranian returned to the Chambers and to the Commissioners' table.

D. Modification 07-44; Burks; 890 Flintridge Avenue:

Assistant Planner Parinas reviewed the history of this project, which began as a Director's review for a front yard fence. The request was denied and the applicant's subsequent appeal to the Commission was continued due to a 2-2 split vote. An identical situation occurred later in June, with direction given to the applicant to apply for a Modification.

The request now before the Commission is to allow a 6-ft-high wrought iron fence with a brick base and brick pilasters, to be constructed 3 ft behind and parallel to an existing outward-facing retaining wall. It would range in height from 3-4 ft; the combination wall/fence would reach 9-10 ft in height within the front setback.

The subject site is located on the south side of Flintridge Avenue and west of Woodleigh Lane, in the R-1-40,000 Zone.

Similar fences and walls in the neighborhood and a photo simulation of the project were shown on Power Point.

Immediately adjacent to the subject site, is 860 Flintridge Avenue, which has an over-height, legal, non-conforming fence, similar to what is proposed. It is similar in configuration to the subject site as both step up from the street.

The applicant reports that the fence is required for security, as trespassers have entered his premises by climbing over the existing three-foot-high retaining wall. He relates that he cannot remove the retaining wall to form a slope and built a higher wall, as it would affect the roots of nearby oaks. Further, suggestions to add wrought iron atop the wall would not prevent trespassers from accessing is property.

The General Plan designates the area as Estate Residential and numerous homes in the neighborhood accommodate similar fences and walls. Additionally, the project would provide the privacy and security desired by the applicant. Staff recommended approval with conditions, including a requirement that landscaping similar to that of 860 Flintridge Avenue, be installed.

Commissioner Gelhaar confirmed that there is approximately 10 ft between the curb and the existing retaining wall.

Chairman Cahill opened the public hearing.

Applicant Chris Burks, advised that the fence would appear to be staggered, rather than at a single height and the gates would provide needed security. He has gone to great lengths to find used California brick and he has met with Valley Crest Trees to bring in more native plants and more oaks. He was also donating a large oak to be installed in the public right-of-way. He concluded his presentation by stating that he previously demonstrated why he needs the requested fence.

Commissioner Gelhaar stated he wanted assurance that the landscape plan complies with the draft conditions.

Mr. Burks commented that he would prefer the wall to remain visible, as it is historic. Landscaping would be installed within the 3-4-ft setback between the wrought iron fence and the proposed pilasters. He looked forward to the privacy that the project would afford him and the fact that the fence would be visible.

Director Stanley related that Staff intended the landscape screening to soften the effect of the new retaining wall and the fence.

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

Commissioner Hill stated that he could support the request, but would like to strike condition 12, as he did not want to micro-manage the color of the wrought iron fence. (condition 12 called for the fence to be earth tone in color).

Commissioner Gelhaar noted that he voted against the prior request; however, he could approve this request as condition. It was his desire that the landscaping would not obscure Mr. Burks' home.

Commissioner Davitt recalled that he had opposed the former request on two occasions, but he could support this one.

Commissioner Mehranian agreed that the wall should not be covered.

Chairman Cahill confirmed that all Commissioners could approve an earth-toned wrought iron fence.

M/S/C Davitt/Gelhaar to approve Modification 07-44 as conditioned.
Unanimous.

E. Second-Floor Review 07-35; Frame; 4404 Beulah Drive:

Planner Clarke recalled that the Commission had granted the applicant's request for reconsideration, which set aside adoption of the Resolution denying the request. The Commission denied the request on July 24th after hearing testimony and concerns from the public about the mass and scale and loss of privacy.

A Power Point presentation showed the subject site's width of 50 ft and depth of 261 ft, which from the outset, presented design challenges. The revised plans show the mass visually reduced; the upper dormers were eliminated as was a covered patio in the rear and the roof pitch was lowered 4 inches. Additionally, attic area was converted into closet area. The roof of the street-facing two-car garage which sits in front of the house, was lowered, and is set back 30 ft, while the main house is set back 62 ft. The initial submittal compared with the revised project was also shown on Power Point.

Staff concluded that the massing was dramatically improved as seen from the street and recommended approval as conditioned.

A landscape plan was also distributed to the Commissioners.

Property owner and applicant Greg Frame, thanked the Commission for allowing reconsideration and reiterated how the visual bulk was reduced. Commissioner Gelhaar stated that he is always concerned with two-story homes looking down on neighboring properties. He recalled that a property owner on another project solved that issue by raising the windows' sill height; he felt that was important for the side elevations and would be a permanent solution. He also suggested sloping the garage roof similar to the house's revised roofline to reduce the mass.

Mr. Frame responded that the two windows alluded to are for the laundry room and a bathroom, which need light. He advised of having built similar homes on similar lots, without any neighbor issues.

Chairman Cahill opened the public hearing.

Greg Hinson, 4410 Beulah, who resides immediately north of the project site, thanked Mr. Frame for addressing some of his concerns. He appreciated Commissioner Gelhaar's idea for clerestory windows, given that Mr. Frame would be selling the house. He recognized the challenge presented by the lot configuration and asked if there was a seismic issue since the plans do not show the chimneys abutting the second floor.

Richard Hoskins, 4402 Beulah, lives on the south side of the project. He was concerned with the privacy aspect and asked that "the window situation be changed".

Further comments were not offered and the public hearing was closed.

Mr. Frame advised that both chimneys would tie into the sides and be attached to the upper story. Addressing the side windows, he was unsure how tinting or opaque windows would appear from the neighbors' homes, but he was willing to explore raising them. He pointed out that bedrooms are located on both sides of the home and the Fire Department requires ingress/egress.

Chairman Cahill requested comments from the Commissioners.

Commissioner Gelhaar stated he was pleased that the applicant had contacted the neighbors. He requested conditions be added requiring the windows on the north and south sides to be raised, that compliance the submitted landscape plan be included as a condition and that the garage roof be changed to a hip roof.

Commissioner Davitt recalled that he was not present for the original hearing, but the strides taken by the applicant to address the Commission's concerns are obvious. He felt that the house was well designed, despite the design challenges and he stated it was a good idea to change-out the garage roof to a hip roof to reduce the bulk from the street and to raise the windowsill height. Commissioner Mehranian stated that her issues with massing were resolved. She agreed with raising the sill height, making the landscape plan subject to the Director's review and approval and maintaining the garage's hip roof.

Commissioner Hill applauded the revisions, but stated that he could not support the project. He referenced the Land Use Element policy of the General Plan regarding consistency and stated "nothing on the street looks like this".

He stated that new homes should be a consistent style with other homes in the neighborhood and advised that he could not make Findings 2 and 4 of the Residential Design Guidelines.

Chairman Cahill commented that he generally approves two-story homes, but he found this project inappropriate for this lot. It appeared to him that the house was shoe-horned in and that it would tower over the two adjacent single-story homes. He stated "some lots don't lend themselves to a two-story home" and added that he could not make the required Findings.

M/S/C Gelhaar/Davitt to approve Second Floor Review 07-35 with 3 added conditions: a landscape plan shall be subject to review and approval of the Director, that the garage include a hip roof and that all windowsills on the north and south sides be raised. 3 Ayes; Hill and Cahill dissenting.

Chairman Cahill called for a 5 minute recess.

F. Second Floor review 07-36; LeFebvre; 1925 Tondolea Lane:

Chairman Cahill was recused from the hearing, as he resides within 500 ft of the project.

Assistant Planner Parinas described the applicants' proposal to demolish a single-story home and a detached garage and replace it with a 4,439-sf, two-story home (including a 556-sf attached garage). A 1,962-sf basement is also proposed, but is not included in floor area calculations. FAR standards allow a house of 4,455-sf on this lot.

The 13,720-sf project site is located on the north side of Tondolea Lane between Alcorn Drive and Lone Pine Lane, in the R-1-10,000 Zone. It is larger than the 9,813-sf neighborhood average.

The pool in the rear yard is code compliant; however, the pool equipment needs to be relocated out of the setbacks; the draft conditions address that. Excavation for the basement will require approximately 590 cubic yards of export, which amounts to 50-60 truck trips.

The project provides generous setbacks, including a 33 1/2-ft front setback and a 62'-9" rear setback. The French Country design, with a hip roof, colors and material are consistent with the chosen design and with the City's Residential Design Guidelines. Privacy impacts to the neighbors are minimized, as there are no windows on the west side elevation and a single, clerestory window on the east elevation. A Power Point presentation showed that approximately half of the homes in the neighborhood are two-story and the story poles reflect that the second floor is barely visible from the east due to existing mature landscaping.

Staff concluded that the project is consistent with the Residential Design Guidelines, and recommended positive findings and project approval.

Project designer Dave De Angelis, related that he and his clients initially planned on Spanish architecture; however, since there are quite a few of Spanish, as well as Craftsman and Cape Code in the neighborhood, they thought it would be nice to do something different and that would fit in with the neighborhood and the trees. A French Country design was decided upon, using stone and wrought iron. A majority of the second-floor roof is clipped and the plate height for the bedrooms start at 7 ft. The first-floor on the west side is setback more than 30 ft. Varying rooflines reduce the bulk and provide character and charm. The driveway would remain where located and the two large trees in front are an asset.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Davitt, Mr. De Angelis explained that the second-floor balcony is only 18" deep ---not big enough to accommodate a chair, but enough that his clients could see their pool. He displayed a color rendering of the project.

Director Stanley noted that the property to the rear is at a higher elevation.

Vice Chair Gelhaar opened the public hearing. Comments were not offered, and the public hearing was closed.

Commissioner Davitt stated that the house was well designed, met all requirement and there were no issues with setbacks; a good scenario. Seven homes on the char have a greater floor area ratio than the project. He stated that the design is appropriate for the lot and neighborhood, and that he could support the request.

The Commissioners concurred.

Commissioner Gelhaar suggested eliminating condition 16 as it is redundant with the wording of condition 17 and modifying condition 20 requiring removal of the non-permitted, covered patio area prior to final occupancy.

Mr. De Angelis questioned condition 11, requiring construction/contractor parking to be on-site, due to potential damage to the large deodars.

M/S/C Davitt/Mehranian to approve Second-Floor Review 07-36 with conditions modified as discussed. 3 Ayes.

Chairman Cahill returned to the room and to the Commissioners' table.

G. Modification 07-39; Kim; 1125 Descanso Drive:

Planner Gjolme advised that the applicant had withdrawn his request and would be relocating the over-height structure outside of the front setback.

H. Second-Floor Review 07-39; Modification 07-41; Ancu; 1718 Bonita Vista Drive:

Commissioner Hill was recused, as he resides within 500 ft of the project site.

Planner Clarke reported the applicants' proposal to construct a two-story home, garage and to maintain 820-sf of accessory structures. The requested floor/roofed area amounts to 8,805-sf. The applicant proposes to remove the roof of the existing home, which necessitates code-compliant setbacks. The Modification seeks to retain the legal, non-conforming side and front setbacks, though the footprint of the existing home would not change.

The 39,872-sf project site is located on the south side of Bonita Vista Drive, west of Alta Canyada Road. The street is lined with deodars and mature landscaping. The lot is generally rectangular in shape and slopes down from the street; there is a change in elevation from the front to the rear property line of approximately 25 ft. There is a mixture of one and two-story homes in the neighborhood.

The existing 4,050-sf, single-story home would be expanded by 1,780-sf, while 1,300-sf of second-floor volume space with clerestory windows is proposed above the living and family rooms. A new, 525-sf covered patio at the rear of the property and a 1,488-sf basement are also proposed.

Planner Clarke advised that the proposed FAR of 18% is larger than the neighborhood average of 11%; however the subject site is larger than the neighborhood average of 23,702-sf. The required front setback for this lot is 42'-4", whereas the applicant is requesting to maintain the existing 34' front setback. The applicant further proposes to maintain non-conforming 10'-2" east side yard setbacks for the first and second floors and a 9'-3" west side setback for the first floor. A Power Point presentation showed the development in the neighborhood

Planner Clarke noted that the second-story volume space is not habitable and at a maximum height of 22 ft, it would be 72 ft from the front property line and 25' and 50' from the east and west property lines. The low profile of the house and its distance from the street minimizes its visibility. The existing encroachments would not be expanded and are justified, as the lot splays inward as it extends to the rear. The mature landscaping and deodars assure that public views would not change.

Staff recommended positive findings and project approval.

Commissioner Gelhaar confirmed that approximately 150 truck loads of export would be needed to create the basement. He asked that a haul route plan be included in the conditions.

Project architect Craig Stoddard, was present to respond to any questions.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Mehranian, Mr. Stoddard advised that at an 8 ft plate height, adding an extra 2 ft would not effect the bulk and doesn't change the feel of the design.

Commissioner Davitt commented that the project is a large house on a large lot. Given that 1,300-sf represents volume space, he support the Finding to approve the Second Floor Review request and could also make the Findings for the Modification; the encroachments would not be detrimental to the neighborhood and he understood the value of the additional 2 ft.

The Commissioners concurred that the house fits the "gorgeous" property.

M/S/C Mehranian/Gelhaar to approve Second Floor Review 07-39 and Modification 07-41 with an added condition to require a haul route. 4 Ayes.

Commissioner Hill returned to the room and to the Commissioners' table.

I. Second Floor Review 07-43; Zieman; 1030 Vista Del Valle Road:

Planner Clarke reported the applicants' request to demolish a single-story home and replace it with a 4,778-sf, two-story residence and a 576-sf attached garage. A 1,200-sf basement is also proposed, which will require 350-400 cubic yards of export, which translates to 40 truck trips.

The front of the project would be approximately 4-ft below street elevation and 7-ft below the level of homes across the street.

The rectangular parcel is 15,141-sf in area and located on the south side of Vista Del Valle Road, between Haskell Street and Vista Miguel Drive, in the R-15,000-Zone.

The design is traditional shingle style with a stone veneer base. A variety of planes and materials are proposed and ample modulation is provided on all elevations. There are no windows on the second floor's side elevations and a 2-ft-wide balcony off the master bedroom at the center of the second floor would not impact anyone's privacy. A front yard setback of 46'-11" is depicted and the project complies with the floor area, setbacks, height and angle plane requirements. Homes and parcels in the neighborhood vary in size, number of

stories and FARs. The fact that the project would be 4-ft below street elevation significantly reduces the visual impact from the street.

Lastly, Staff received a letter from the property owners to the south, who share a 100-ft-long property line and whose only request was that the existing landscaping which serves as a buffer., be retained.

Staff recommended approval as conditioned.

Commissioner requested that a condition be added to assure that the pool equipment met Code.

Project designer Dave DeAngelis, reported his attempts to be sensitive to the neighbors and to preserve their views.

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

Commissioner Mehranian stated that the project was sensitively designed and that she did not have any issues.

Commissioner Hill confirmed that the applicants agreed to maintain the existing landscape screening, which buffers the common property line. He stated that he was prepared to make the required Findings and that the house fits in nicely with the neighborhood.

The Commissioners concurred.

M/S/C Davitt/Gelhaar to approve Second Floor review 07-43 with added conditions, regarding maintenance of the landscaping and location of the pool equipment. Unanimous.

J. Second-Floor Review 07-37; Floor Area Review 07-11; Hage; 4326 Commonwealth Avenue:

Planner Gjolme described the applicant's request to construct a 6,365-sf, two story residence on a 23,090-sf lot. Floor Area Review is triggered due to the lot's 75-ft of street frontage. Other properties on the east side of Commonwealth are smaller, including adjacent properties to the north and south. Nonetheless, large, two-story homes are common in the area.

The subject site is located on the east side of Commonwealth, between Georgian Road and Berkshire Avenue, in the R-1-20,000 Zone. It is 75 ft wide and 300-ft deep.

The project would be centrally sited on the pad and accommodate a concentrated, two-story Mediterranean style home, accented by second floor

recesses along the sides and colonnades to the front and rear. **colonnades or a couple of columns? And is this man from Glendale?** It is shown as 82 ft deep and a 135-ft rear setback would be provided. A side entry, two-car garage is provided.

The project would eliminate a forward-projecting, non-conforming wing, and would increase the existing 28-ft front setback to 76 ft. A two-car garage is proposed at the south side of the residence near the center of the house and a second, single garage, would be located at the southwest corner. Both would be accessed from an auto court.

An aerial photo of the site was displayed, which depicted the dense landscape screening on the side property lines. Nonetheless, new plantings are proposed, including banks of podocarpus flanking both sides of the residence. New lawn areas would be provided, including a grasscrete driveway. Additionally, a 6-ft-high decorative fence is proposed to be located within the front yard setback; the lower 3 ft would be solid block wall with the upper portion wrought iron and include 7 pilasters. The fence requires staff level review. Lastly, the draft conditions of approval require either removal of the chimney out of the setback or submittal of a Director's review application.

Two large oaks on the south side property line would be separated from the house beyond the Code requirement. This is a result of Staff working with the applicant to modify the structure and notching out areas to protect the trees. The City's consulting arborist fully supported the plan.

In conclusion, Staff recommended positive findings and project approval.

Designer Aroun Jain, reported of having worked with Staff on this project from the inception and that the trees dictated the structure's footprint.

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

Commissioner Hill complimented Mr. Jain on the design and he especially appreciated the side entry garage – it integrates well with the street setting.

The Commissioners agreed.

M/S/C Mehranian/Gelhaar to approve Second Floor review 07-37 and Floor Area Review 07-11 as conditioned. Unanimous.

K. Variance 07-10; City of La Cañada Flintridge; 1327 Foothill Boulevard: Director Stanley reported that the Departments of Public Works and Building and Safety are contemplating a minor forward expansion, towards Foothill

Boulevard. The patio area at the southeast corner of City Hall would be enclosed and the existing clock wall would be replaced with a pre-fab material with dual glazing. The parapet would extend beyond the balcony by approximately 5 ft.

Since the required front setback in the Public/Semi-Public Zone is 25 ft, a Variance is required to encroach into that setback and to provide a 5 ft front setback. He noted that a 25-ft front setback would be out of character with other development along Foothill Boulevard.

Jackson Dodd, Management Aide with the Public Works Department was present to respond to questions.

The Commissioners did not have questions.

Commissioner Gelhaar agreed with Staff's Findings and conditions.

M/S/C Gelhaar/Hill to approve Variance 07-10 as conditioned. Unanimous.

IX. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no new business to report.

X. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS

Chairman Cahill proposed that the agenda could proceed more quickly if projects that are presented with a recommendation for approval and for which there is no opposition or Commissioners' concerns, were approved by a motion without hearing a staff report.

Director Stanley agreed that the Commission could identify any number of suitable items and those could be considered under "Reordering of the Agenda".

Commissioner Gelhaar was uncomfortable with putting such items under "Reordering the Agenda". He observed that some citizens arrive late for this meeting and would not have been present to hear what items were approved under "Reordering". He agreed however, that the Commission could do without a verbal staff report in those cases.

Director Stanley commented that at times, the power point presentations provide more information than the staff reports.

Commissioner Mehranian liked the Power Point presentations and could do without the Staff report in some instances.

Commissioner Hill confirmed that regardless what occurred, there would be a staff report available.

Commissioner Gelhaar confirmed that all it would take for Staff to present a report, would be for any Commissioner to request it.

The Commissioners agreed to try the idea and see if it worked.

On another matter, Commissioner Gelhaar observed that in some cases, Staff has taken the position that a pool house or ALQ is not to be considered because it's not included in the County's floor area rolls. He stated that such structures have an impact on the overall mass on the property and he wanted that information included, as it is important to him.

Director Stanley commented that whenever floor area ratio is exceeded, it triggers the need for a Variance.

Commissioner Gelhaar stated that it has a definite impact on how he views a project ---- "part of the planning process should be the question, does the total footprint of all the structures occupy too much of the lot"?

X. COMMENTS FROM STAFF

XI. ADJOURNMENT

M/S/C Hill/Cahill to adjourn at 9:10 p.m. Unanimous.

Secretary to the Planning Commission