

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION  
OF THE CITY OF LA CANADA FLINTRIDGE  
HELD ON October 12, 2010**

- I. CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Cahill called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
- II. ROLL:** Vice Chair Curtis, Commissioners Davitt and Der Sarkissian, Planning Intern Chaffee, Assistant Planner Parinas, Planner Clarke, Director Stanley, and Deputy City Attorney Guerra were present. Chairman Cahill and Commissioner Jain were absent.
- III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** – Commissioner Davitt led the flag salute.
- VI. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC-** No comments were offered.
- V. REORDERING OF THE AGENDA**
- VI. CONSENT CALENDAR**
- A. Minutes: April 27, 2010** – Continued to the next meeting so that Chairman Cahill may review the minutes.
- B. Hillside Development Permit 10-07/Second-Floor Review 10-09/Setback Modification 10-09; Gustafson; 334 St. Katherine Drive:** A Resolution of Approval to allow construction of a new two-story 6,200 sq. ft. residence and related site work, inclusive of an extended driveway and partially subterranean garage. (Planner Gjolme)

M/S/C Davitt/Der Sarkissian to continue to a date uncertain, 3-0.

- VII. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS:** There were no continued public hearing items.

**VIII. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

- A. Second Floor Review 10-23, Hillside Development Permit 10-37, Variance 10-03 & Modification 10-19; Wildermuth; 5314 Ivafern Lane:** A request to allow construction of a new 5,529 sq. ft. two-story house (including a 473 sq. ft. garage) on a 24,290 sq. ft. hillside parcel with a side yard setback encroachment and an angle-plane encroachment. Staff is recommending that the Planning Commission approve a Categorical Exemption for this project. (Planner Clarke)

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

Vice Chair Curtis asked if the roof height on the story poles is accurately represented.

Planner Clarke stated that the actual proposal is lower than what is on the site; the story poles are two feet taller than what the plans show.

Vice Chair Curtis stated that he is not overly concerned that the story poles are not accurate since it is more extreme than the proposal; neighbors will be more likely to attend the meeting.

Commissioner Der Sarkissian clarified that the five-foot setback is on the west side (right hand side).

Vice Chair Curtis opened the public hearing.

Applicant Steven Wyland of Comprised Structures stated that the tax roll indicated that the previous house was 5,600 square feet; the proposed house is 5361 square feet. The proposed house looks a lot nicer than the previous fire damaged house. He presented the color and material board to the Commission.

Oren Lynn, 5320 Ivafern Lane, expressed strong support for the project. The proposed house looks identical to the previously fire damaged house. There are no windows facing the side.

Vice Chair Curtis closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Der Sarkissian stated that he was initially concerned with the proposed 5-foot setback, but upon visiting the site, he concluded that the house can not be relocated. He stated that he thinks the house is too big for the building pad, but as long as there aren't any neighbors that are opposed to the project he is in support of the project.

Commissioner Davitt agrees with Commissioner Der Sarkissian. He stated that reducing the size of the house to the slope factor guideline would not have any beneficial effect. Since the project is a rebuild of a fire damaged house, he can support the project.

Vice Chair Curtis stated that he approached the project from a standpoint of whether or not he can make the findings. He can make the findings because of the nature of the lot. The lot gets narrower as it approaches the street. Given the angles of the lot and the design of the project, he can support the setback modification. The house is well designed and consistent with the neighborhood.

Vice Chair Curtis clarified that the variance has been removed.

M/S/C Der Sarkissian/Davitt to approve Second Floor Review 10-23, Hillside Development Permit 10-37, and, Modification 10-19, 3-0.

- B. Conditional Use Permit 457/Variance 10-05; La Canada Flintridge Country Club; 5500 Godbey Drive:** A request to allow construction of an enclosed practice facility (driving range) adjacent to the 10<sup>th</sup> fairway. A synthetic chipping green is also proposed. A Variance is also requested since the maximum height of the enclosed range would be 30 feet, above the 15-foot limit for accessory structures. The project was previously approved by the Planning Commission on September 23, 2008, but has since expired. Thus, approval for the identical project is requested at this time. Staff is recommending that the Planning Commission approve a Categorical Exemption for this project. (Planner Gjolme)

Director Stanley presented the project in accordance to the staff report.

Vice Chairman Curtis clarified that the new Resolution and Condition of Approval is written exactly how the previously approved Resolution was written.

Applicant Bob Dreyfus, general manager of the La Canada Country Club, stated that the proposed project is exactly the same project that was previously approved. The Country Club couldn't start work fast enough because of issues regarding financing.

Commissioner Der Sarkissian stated that he visited the site and has no problems with the proposal. He is in support of the project.

Commissioner Davitt stated that the proposal is a good project and would be a great addition to the community. He is in support of the project.

Vice Chair Curtis stated that the previous approval was a process that went through the community and it was accepted by the community. He can support the project.

M/S/C Davitt/Der Sarkissian to approve Conditional Use Permit 457 and Variance 10-05, 3-0.

## **IX. OTHER BUSINESS**

- A. Appeal of Tree Removal (TR) 10-30; Shah; 5188 Princess Anne Road:** An appeal of the condition of approval that required on-site replacement of trees to value \$7,200.

Director Stanley introduced Planning Intern Chaffee.

Planning Intern Tom Chaffee presented the proposal in accordance to the staff report.

Director Stanley clarified that the issue at hand is the deposit. The Planning Commission initially reviewed the case and one of the conditions of approval was to require a 2 year deposit. The deposit was returned because the tree lived for two years but died a year later.

Property Owner Rajesh Shah stated that Tree #6 survived for 6 years. He tried to save the tree and never wanted to remove the tree. The Fire Department required the driveway to be widened to allow a turn-around for their trucks/engines.

Commissioner Davitt asked if the house was approved by the Planning Commission.

Director Stanley verified that the house was built prior to the 2006 R-1 Zoning Code change.

Vice Chair Curtis asked how many replacement trees were initially planted?

Planning Intern Chaffee clarified that one additional oak tree was planted on site and the property owner wanted an existing tree to be designated as a replacement.

Vice Chair Curtis closed the public hearing.

Vice Chair Curtis stated that the Fire Department driveway requirement was considered during the original review, there was a condition of approval that required the property owner to submit a two year deposit that stated that the deposit will be returned after two years. The applicant met the condition and got his money back. He supports the appeal in favor of the applicant.

Commissioner Der Sarkissian stated that it is obvious that the planter around the tree killed the tree. It was just a matter of time that the tree was doomed from the time the driveway was built. The problem was that they chose to keep the tree. The property owner betted on and got their money back. The tree dictated the location of the house. He does not agree with the valuation of the tree. The dead tree should not be valued at \$7,200. He would like to lower the fee to \$2,000.

Commissioner Davitt agrees with Commissioner Der Sarkissian that it is evident that the tree died because of the planter. He stated that what has occurred in the past is done. This is a new tree removal permit application. He would like to uphold the Director's decision and if acceptable he would propose to obtain an arborist report.

City Attorney Guerra stated that he agrees with Commissioner Davitt that what has occurred in the past is done; both the City and Property Owner met their end of the bargain. The tree died, this is a new tree removal permit.

Mr. Shah stated that he would rather donate money to the tree fund rather than plant replacement trees. He asked the Commission for a lower fee.

M/S/C Davitt/Der Sarkissian to uphold the Director's decision with a revised condition that the applicant pay \$2,000 to the tree fund, 3-0.

**X. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS**

Commissioner Der Sarkissian stated that he would like to have a study session on tree valuation.

Director Stanley stated that staff is working on revising the Tree Ordinance and the tree valuation will be included in the discussion. The City Council is in the process of holding a study session regarding trees. There is a possibility that the Ordinance will also cover City trees as well as private trees.

Vice Chair Curtis pointed out that there are a number of temporary realtor signs in the City that are up permanently.

**XI. COMMENTS FROM THE DIRECTOR**

Director Stanley informed the Planning Commission that the appeal on Dr. Merritt's project will be reviewed by the City Council on Monday, October 18, 2010.

**XII. ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting was adjourned at 7:34 p.m.