

**A MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF LA CAÑADA FLINTRIDGE,
HELD NOVEMBER 26, 2002**

CALL TO ORDER:

Vice-Chair Engler called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

ROLL:

Present were Commissioners Gelhaar and Mehranian. Also present were Deputy City Attorney Steres, Senior Planner Buss, Assistant Planner Gjolme and Planning Aide Shimazu. Chairman Levine, Commissioner Brown and Director Stanley were absent.

**COMMENTS FROM
THE PUBLIC:**

Greg Peters, Director of Real Estate for Vons Markets, (property owner of the La Cañada Plaza), addressed the Commission regarding the impending renovation of the shopping center and specifically, condition #19 of CUP 351. The Condition requires that public access be provided to the Center's interior from the rear and front entrances of TJ Maxx. Mr. Peters reported that the leases with TJ Maxx, Calvary Chapel and Hallmark do not include that proviso and each of those tenants oppose public access from the rear parking lot for security reasons. Mr. Peters added that the remaining conditions are acceptable. He offered to create an employee parking area at the rear for all employees of the Center and requested reconsideration of condition 19.

Commissioner Gelhaar stated his understanding that the Planning commission was interested in access from any of those points.

Assistant City Attorney Steres stated that would be a positive message for the applicant; among other options, restricting all employee parking to the rear lot is a possible solution.

M/S/C Gelhaar/Mehranian to reconsider the condition as requested at their December 10th meeting. Unanimous.

**CONSENT CALENDAR:
Resolution denying CUP
339; La Bruna;
615 Berkshire Ave.:**

Attorney Steres counseled Commissioner Mehranian to abstain from voting, since she was absent when this matter was deliberated.

Commissioner Gelhaar's motion to adopt the resolution died for lack of a second.

Attorney Steres advised that the resolution would be included on the next agenda for action.

PUBLIC HEARING:

**Amendments to:
CONDITIONAL USE
PERMIT 274;
VARIANCE 98-18;
4459 ST. FRANCIS
PLACE:**

Senior Planner Buss recalled that the Commission's earlier approval allowed conversion of a detached garage to an ALQ with substandard setbacks in the R-1-7,500 Zone. The Commission concluded that the ALQ's impact was minimal and supported maintaining the historical significance of the Craftsman designed home built in 1917. An imposed condition requires that any substantial alteration or addition to the main dwelling be reviewed by the Planning Commission.

At this time, the applicant is requesting to extend a bedroom wall on the main house, which would increase the floor area by 36 sf and would not affect the roofline. Total floor and roofed area would remain well under the allowance for the lot. Staff's recommendation was that the Commission find that the project does not constitute a substantial alteration or addition to the main structure and that the original findings and conditions remain in effect.

Applicant and property owner, Howard Green, stated that the project would allow more effective use of the room and would preserve the historic design.

Vice Chair opened the public hearing. Public comments were not offered and the public hearing was closed.

Commissioners Gelhaar and Mehranian concurred with Staff's finding. Commissioner Engler noted that in May 1999, Staff's recommendation was to deny the request.

M/S/C Gelhaar/ Mehranian to approve the requested amendments. Dissenting: Engler.

**TENTATIVE PARCEL
MAP 26322; NICHOLAS;
5124 ANGELES CREST
HIGHWAY:**

Senior Planner Buss reported the applicants' request to divide two lots, totaling 71,598-sf into three parcels in the R-1-20,000 Zone. Both parcels are currently developed with single-family residences.

Proposed parcel sizes are:

1. 25,877-sf with 116.82 ft of frontage and a depth of 204 ft.;
2. 22,496-sf with a 81.48 ft frontage and a depth of 280 ft
3. 23,125 sf with a 82.60 ft frontage and a depth of 280 ft.

The project site is located on the east side of Angeles Crest Highway, approximately 270 ft north of its intersection with Olive Lane. Staff determined that the project would not result in significant environmental impacts and prepared a Negative Declaration as required under CEQA. All street dedications along Angeles Crest are complete and the residences will be connected to sewers. New construction would take place on the two southerly parcels; the existing house on the most northerly parcel would remain.

Staff considered the request as straightforward; the new parcels would be consistent in shape and topography with those in the neighborhood and the proposed density conforms with the General Plan's designation of Very Low Density Residential. The site is served by sewers and utilities would be placed underground. Staff concluded that the request was appropriate and recommended approval as conditioned.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Mehranian, Senior Planner Buss advised that as proposed, trees are not impacted. If any problem should arise, there is ample room on all the parcels to allow adjustments.

Co-applicant David Nicholas, advised that he intended to develop two of the properties; the house on the most northerly parcel would be maintained.

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

Commissioner Mehranian advised that her issues of sufficient street frontage and trees were resolved. She did not have any objections.

Commissioner Gelhaar requested that on site construction parking be added to the conditions.

Vice Chair Engler encouraged the applicant to develop the two lot to meet Code.

M/S/C Gelhaar/Mehranian to approve Tentative Parcel Map 26322 with added conditions as discussed. Unanimous.

**PUBLIC MEETING:
FLOOR AREA REVIEW
02-18 STARNES;
4449 GOULD AVE.:**

Assistant Planner Gjolme reported the applicants' request to allow a 540-sf, first-floor addition to their two-story home that would exceed the maximum floor area allowed for the subject lot. The addition is proposed at the rear of the home and would not be visible from the street.

The project site is located on the west side of Gould between Foothill and Georgian in the R-1-20,000 Zone.

The expansion would yield a total floor area of 7,172-sf, or 622-sf over what is allowed for the 24,000-sf property. Review is also required for lots with less than 80 ft of street frontage when development exceeds 4,500 sf. --- the subject parcel has 75 ft of frontage.

Staff noted that if the project and existing residence were considered exclusively, floor area would meet Code. It could be argued that the detached accessory structures, located well to the rear of the property, and which have no visual or massing issues, generate the excess floor area. Assistant Planner Gjolme reminded the Commissioners that hardship or need are not required to approve a Floor Area Modification - only lack of intrusiveness and reasonable compatibility must

be demonstrated. Staff recommended positive findings and project approval with conditions which include a protective barrier for the large oak tree located within 15 feet of the proposed addition.

Commissioner Mehranian commented that the proposed square footage was not included in the comparison chart.

Assistant Planner Gjolme advised that it was, but that accessory structures were not included. This follows the same course as the Assessor's information. If the accessory structures for the project site were included, the "size" of the other homes would increase in size as well.

Project architect, Franco Noravian, advised that the project would not reach the drip line of the referenced oak tree and that the tree leans in the opposite direction. He explained that the single-story addition would be screened by existing mature landscaping and that the same design and materials would be maintained.

Commissioner Gelhaar confirmed that the existing balcony would be transformed into a solid wall.

Vice Chair Engler commented that he preferred the overall size remain as is.

Commissioner Gelhaar made a motion to approve Floor Area Review 02-18 with added conditions requiring that the landscaping be maintained and that construction vehicles park on site.

There was no second.

Assistant Planner Gjolme suggested a continuance before a full Commission.

Vice Chair Engler preferred to vote on the matter and made a motion to deny the request.

2 Ayes; Dissenting: Gelhaar.

Attorney Steres requested Staff to prepare a resolution of denial for the next meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS:

December meetings of the Planning Commission:

Following a brief discussion, the Commissioners agreed to conduct only one meeting in the month of December.

Requirements for Story Poles:

Vice Chair Engler confirmed that Commissioner Gelhaar's request applied only to hillside projects.

Senior Planner Buss reported that there is a requirement for story poles on the hillside applications - what was lacking was an implementation process.

Responding to a question from the Vice Chairman, Senior Planner Buss explained that "Director's flexibility" means material and whether to allow a substitution.

Commissioner Mehranian stated she would always want story poles on new homes. Out of concern for more submittal materials, she inquired if it was possible to require story poles on a case-by-case basis.

Vice Chairman Engler felt that a blanket requirement would allow the Commission to consider impacts "up front" and might lessen the need for continuances.

Commissioner Gelhaar stated that they are always feasible and do not necessarily need to be installed in the ground --- they could be placed on a rooftop. He felt that story poles should apply to all hillside projects and that the requirements must include a timeframe for their installation and removal.

ADJOURNMENT:

M/S/C Gelhaar/Mehranian to adjourn at 6:55 p.m.
Unanimous.

Secretary to the Planning Commission.