

February 18, 2004

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF
THE TORRANCE PLANNING COMMISSION**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Torrance Planning Commission convened in a regular session at 7:05 p.m. on Wednesday, February 18, 2004, in City Council Chambers at Torrance City Hall.

2. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Uchima.

3. ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Botello, Faulk, Horwich, Muratsuchi, Uchima and Chairperson Drevno.

Absent: Commissioner LaBouff.

Also Present: Planning Manager Isomoto, Planning Assistant Santana, Deputy City Attorney Sullivan, Fire Marshal Carter, Associate Civil Engineer Symons and Building Regulations Administrator Segovia.

Planning Manager Isomoto relayed Commissioner LaBouff's request for an excused absence from this meeting.

MOTION: Commissioner Horwich, seconded by Commissioner Faulk, moved to grant Commissioner LaBouff an excused absence; voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

4. POSTING OF THE AGENDA

MOTION: Commissioner Uchima, seconded by Commissioner Muratsuchi, moved to accept and file the report of the secretary on the posting of the agenda for this meeting; voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Botello noted a scrivener's error in the December 3, 2003 minutes.

MOTION: Commissioner Uchima moved for the approval of the December 3, 2003 Planning Commission minutes as corrected. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Horwich and passed by unanimous roll call vote, with Commissioner Muratsuchi abstaining.

MOTION: Commissioner Uchima moved for the approval of the December 17, 2003 Planning Commission minutes as submitted. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Muratsuchi and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

MOTION: Commissioner Muratsuchi moved for the approval of the January 7, 2004 Planning Commission minutes as submitted. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Uchima and passed by unanimous roll call vote, with Commissioner Botello abstaining.

MOTION: Commissioner Muratsuchi moved for the approval of the January 21, 2004 Planning Commission minutes as submitted. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Uchima and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

6. REQUESTS FOR POSTPONEMENTS

Planning Manager Isomoto relayed the applicant's request to continue Item 7B, PRE03-00017: Bruno Bondanelli (Eugene Allen), to March 3, 2004.

MOTION: Commissioner Muratsuchi, seconded by Commissioner Botello, moved to continue Item 7B to March 3, 2004; voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

Planning Manager Isomoto announced that the hearing would not be re-advertised because it was continued to a date certain.

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Chairperson Drevno explained the policies and procedures of the Planning Commission, including the right to appeal decisions to the City Council.

7. CONTINUED HEARINGS

7A. CUP03-00038: ROLLING HILLS PLAZA (SHANE LAMB)

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Conditional Use Permit to allow the operation of a valet service for an existing shopping center on property located in the PD Zone at 25375 Crenshaw Boulevard.

Recommendation

Approval.

Planning Assistant Santana introduced the request and noted supplemental material available at the meeting.

Shane Lamb, applicant voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval. He submitted information regarding the proposed validation system, explaining that the \$5 charge for the valet service would be reduced by \$2 for patrons who attend a movie and dine at one of the restaurants in Rolling Hills Plaza. He noted that, additionally, restaurants would be provided with coupons for \$1 off valet parking to give to their customers and the results would be tracked for 45 days to see if their participation in the validation program would be worthwhile. He discussed the revised

layout for the valet operation, noting that the number of prime parking spaces involved has been reduced from 32 to 19, none of which are handicapped parking.

Commissioner Botello expressed concerns that access to handicapped parking spaces could be hindered.

Mr. Lamb stated that appropriate signage is critical and explained that he planned to work with staff to devise new signs that will make it clear that valet service is free to anyone with a handicapped placard and that they may use any space in the valet area.

In response to Commissioner Botello's inquiry, Mr. Lamb indicated that he had no objection to a condition prohibiting the valet service from charging handicapped customers.

Commissioner Horwich related his understanding that Mr. Lamb has been operating for two years at this location without a business license. Mr. Lamb explained that he has a City of Torrance Business License for his valet service at the Macaroni Grill In Rolling Hills Plaza but was not aware that he needed a separate one for the valet service near the theaters.

Commissioner Horwich reported that he visited the site on several occasions and never failed to find a parking space in the parking structure near the theaters. He stated that he thought the only reason to continue the valet service would be for those who need handicapped parking, however, the same thing could be accomplished by setting aside an entire row of parking for this use close to the theater.

Mr. Lamb stated that he has a substantial number of patrons who simply prefer the convenience of valet parking. He maintained that the existing handicapped parking is sufficient except for peak times when the valet service operates and since he often has 40 to 55 handicapped vehicles on hand, adding another 15 spaces would still not meet the demand.

Commissioner Horwich voiced his opinion that approving this request would be an admission that the parking ratio was incorrect and the City failed to require adequate parking.

At Commissioner Muratsuchi's request, Planning Manager Isomoto provided clarification regarding the parking requirements at the center and stated that she did not believe parking was inadequate, however, available parking is not always convenient to the theaters.

Commissioner Muratsuchi questioned whether the valet service could operate with only 10 spots in front of the theaters instead of 19. Mr. Lamb explained that Transportation Planner Semaan reviewed the layout and would not endorse the plan unless it utilized the entire aisle because of safety issues.

In response to Commissioner Botello's inquiry, Mr. Lamb reported that his operation has no financial relationship with Rolling Hills Plaza. He explained that he was allowed to institute his service because AMC Theaters was pressuring management to solve the parking problem and he offered a viable solution.

Commissioner Botello voiced his objection to the fact that the center's landlord, while admitting that there is a parking problem and benefiting from the large customer base generated by the theaters, has played no role in the solution. He noted that the center was not designed for valet parking and 19 prime parking spaces were being lost in the process of trying to make it work and maintained that City residents should not have to pay for the center's over-development.

Commissioner Faulk related his experience that parking is no longer a problem since the parking structures were built, but stated that he believed the valet service was meeting a demand because clearly people are using it.

Mr. Lamb estimated that 10 to 20% of his customers are families with young children who chose to use the valet service as a matter of safety and convenience.

Commissioner Muratsuchi conceded that Commissioner Horwich and Commissioner Botello had raised valid concerns about the impact of paid parking on the quality of life in Torrance, but agreed with Commissioner Faulk that the valet service was meeting a demand, especially for handicapped patrons, and deserved a narrow exception.

Michael Reid, 730 West M Street, Wilmington, a disabled employee of AMC Theaters, voiced support for the valet service, reporting that he had trouble finding a handicapped parking space before the valet service was in place and Mr. Lamb has always parked his vehicle free of charge.

MOTION: Commissioner Faulk, seconded by Commissioner Uchima, moved to close the public hearing; voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

Commissioner Botello reiterated his opposition to approving the valet service without any participation by the landlord.

Commissioner Faulk stated that he suspected the Commission was overcomplicating this issue when the application was first brought forward, however, a number of valid concerns were raised and adjustments to the operation were made. He indicated that he would support the CUP with an added condition requiring signage that makes it clear that handicapped parking is free, noting that the valet service provides far more handicapped parking than presently exists on the site. He pointed out that the only complaint about the service (per supplemental material) was really a misunderstanding regarding access to handicapped parking spaces.

Indicating that he would not support the valet service, Commissioner Horwich stated that he believed it was a quality of life issue and reiterated his position that the problem could be solved by designating more spaces for handicapped parking.

Chairperson Drevno voiced support for approval of the valet service.

MOTION: Commissioner Muratsuchi moved for the approval of CUP03-00038 as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff, adding a condition requiring signage indicating that there is no charge for those with handicapped placards. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Uchima and passed by a 5-1 roll call vote, with Commissioner Botello dissenting (absent Commissioner LaBouff).

Noting that Condition No. 19 requires that the design and placement of informational and directional signs be approved by the Environmental Division of the Building and Safety Department, Planning Manager Isomoto stated that Planning staff would relay the Commission's direction to include language which makes it clear that there is no charge to those with handicapped placards.

Commissioner Horwich wished to correct his vote.

MOTION: Commissioner Faulk, seconded by Commissioner Muratsuchi, moved to reconsider the motion; the motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

MOTION: Commissioner Muratsuchi moved for the approval of CUP03-00038 as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Uchima and passed by a 4-2 roll call vote, with Commissioners Botello and Horwich dissenting (absent Commissioner LaBouff).

Commissioner Faulk requested that staff investigate another valet service operating in Torrance without a Conditional Use Permit for the sake of consistency.

Commissioner Horwich stated that he believed Mr. Lamb was a sincere, hardworking individual and that he did not want to imply that he was not providing a legitimate service.

Planning Assistant Santana read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 03-151.

MOTION: Commissioner Muratsuchi moved for the adoption of Resolution No. 03-151. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Uchima and passed by a 4-2 roll call vote, with Commissioners Botello and Horwich dissenting (absent Commissioner LaBouff).

7B. PRE03-00017: BRUNO BONDANELLI (EUGENE ALLEN)

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Precise Plan of Development to allow the construction of first and second-story additions to an existing single-family residence including the incorporation of a Waiver to allow the retention of an existing side yard setback on property located in the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 131 Camino de las Colinas.

Continued to March 3, 2004.

7C. PRE03-00034: SCOTT PROBST (MILES PRITZKAT)

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Precise Plan of Development to allow the construction of first and second-floor additions to an existing two-story, single-family residence on property located in the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 417 Avenida de Jose.

Recommendation

Approval.

Planning Assistant Santana introduced the request and noted supplemental material available at the meeting consisting of a letter with an attached drawing from Miles Pritzkat outlining the agreement reached between Scott Probst (applicant) and Mr. and Mrs. Leach, 322 Calle de Arboles.

Miles Pritzkat, project architect, reported that the applicant agreed to bevel a corner of the second story to accommodate the Leaches' view and voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval.

Commissioner Botello questioned whether the silhouette was adjusted to reflect the change. Mr. Pritzkat reported that a pole was positioned to show the leading edge of the bevel.

Commissioner Botello indicated that he did not favor taking away someone's view for a storage room.

Scott Probst, 417 Avenida de Jose, applicant, explained that the upstairs will have to be reconfigured due to the bevel and most of the room currently labeled "storage" will be taken up by the simulator, which requires a large rectangular area. He noted that he also agreed to the removal of trees affecting the Leaches' view.

David Leach, 322 Calle de Arboles, stated that he and Mr. Probst reached a compromise that restores 50% of the view that would have been blocked by the addition and that Mr. Probst and his neighbor to the south agreed to apply for permits to remove mature City trees and replace them with smaller approved trees to enhance his view. He indicated that he was in agreement with the revised plans and thanked Commissioners for their assistance.

In response to Commissioner Fauk's inquiry, Planning Manager Isomoto confirmed that adequate information was provided to ensure that the project conforms to the bevel shown on the drawing.

Responding to questions from the Commission, Planning Manager Isomoto provided clarification regarding the process for removing City trees, and Deputy City Attorney Sullivan advised that it was not within the Commission's purview to require the removal of City trees as a condition of approval.

Commissioner Botello expressed his preference to continue this hearing until the permits for removing the City trees have been approved.

Mr. Leach reported that Mr. Probst and his neighbor already discussed the tree removal with the Public Works Department and were told that it would not be a problem.

MOTION: Commissioner Uchima, seconded by Commissioner Muratsuchi, moved to close the public hearing; voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

Commissioner Uchima voiced support for the revised project and expressed confidence that the City trees would be removed in accordance with the agreement.

MOTION: Commissioner Uchima moved for the approval of PRE03-00034, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Muratsuchi, and discussion briefly continued.

Commissioner Botello offered the following substitute motion:

MOTION: Commissioner Botello moved to continue the hearing on PRE03-00034 to March 3, 2004. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Faulk and passed by a 4-2 roll call vote, with Commissioner Uchima and Chairperson Drevno dissenting (absent Commissioner LaBouff).

Planning Manager Isomoto announced that the hearing would not be re-advertised as it was continued to a date certain.

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The Commission recessed from 8:35 p.m. to 8:45 p.m.

8. **WAIVERS**

None.

9. **FORMAL HEARINGS**

9A. **CUP03-00051: UNITY CHURCH OF SOUTH BAY (WILLIAM MARINO)**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Conditional Use Permit to allow the establishment of a church in an existing tenant space on property located in the M-1 PP Zone at 2545 237th Street, Suites A and B.

Recommendation

Approval.

Planning Assistant Santana introduced the request.

William Marino, representing Unity Church of South Bay, voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval.

MOTION: Commissioner Botello, seconded by Commissioner Faulk, moved to close the public hearing; voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

MOTION: Commissioner Botello moved for the approval of CUP03-0051, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Faulk and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner LaBouff).

Commissioner Horwich commented that while he voted in favor of the Conditional Use Permit, he could foresee a potential conflict should a business, such as a noisy print shop, decide to operate on a Sunday when church services are being held.

Planning Assistant Santana read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 04-013.

MOTION: Commissioner Faulk moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution No. 04-013. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Horwich and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner LaBouff).

9B. PRE03-00031: DARNELL O'DOWD

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Precise Plan of Development to allow the construction of a new two-story, single-family residence on property located in the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 5112 Zakon Road.

Recommendation

Approval.

Planning Assistant Santana introduced the request.

Janell O'Dowd, 5112 Zakon Road, voiced her agreement with the recommended conditions of approval. She noted that she obtained the approval of 32 neighbors and that no one has expressed any objections to the project.

MOTION: Commissioner Muratsuchi, seconded by Commissioner Horwich, moved to close the public hearing; voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

MOTION: Commissioner Muratsuchi moved for the approval of PRE03-00031, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Horwich and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner LaBouff).

Commenting on his vote, Commissioner Botello explained that he supported the project despite a Floor Area Ratio in excess of .50 because of the steeply sloping lot with no usable backyard.

Planning Assistant Santana read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 04-014.

MOTION: Commissioner Muratsuchi moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution No. 04-014. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Uchima and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner LaBouff).

9D. CUP03-00048: YOSHINOYA WEST, INC. (FREDY ANAYA)

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Conditional Use Permit to allow the establishment of a fast food restaurant in an existing tenant space on property located in the Hawthorne Boulevard Corridor Specific Zone Meadow Park Sub-District (HBCSP-MP) at 3822 Lomita Boulevard.

Recommendation

Approval.

Planning Assistant Santana introduced the request.

Paul Comer, project manager representing Yoshinoya West, voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval.

Responding to questions from the Commission, Mr. Comer provided clarification regarding the number of parking spaces provided and indicated that the restaurant's hours of operation would be 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

MOTION: Commissioner Uchima, seconded by Commissioner Muratsuchi, moved to close the public hearing; voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

MOTION: Commissioner Uchima moved for the approval of CUP03-00048, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Muratsuchi and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner LaBouff).

Planning Assistant Santana read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 04-015.

MOTION: Commissioner Uchima moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution No. 04-015. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Faulk and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner LaBouff).

9D. CUP03-00050, DIV03-00020: WILL BASILIO (CLARA CUPERY)

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Conditional Use Permit to allow the construction of a two-unit condominium development and a Division of Lot for condominium purposes on property located in the R-3 Zone at 1215 Portola Avenue.

Recommendation

Approval.

Planning Assistant Santana introduced the request

Clara Cupery, 1215 Portola, applicant, reported that she bought the subject property 17 years ago with the intention of developing it at a later date for her retirement. She stated that there is nothing unique or original about the existing duplex on the site and its small size is totally inadequate by today's standards. She explained that some old homes, like some old cars, are classic and worth preserving, however, that is not the case with this structure. She indicated that she plans to occupy one of the units and sell the other one to her son. Submitting photographs to illustrate, she noted the site's proximity to an apartment building and commercial operations. She requested approval of the project as submitted.

Will Basilio, project architect, referring to a letter from Don Barnard, President of Save Historic Old Torrance, stated that he believed the proposed project was more compatible with the neighborhood than the box-like structure that would result if the existing structure were expanded as Mr. Barnard has proposed.

In response to Commissioner Muratsuchi's inquiry, Ms. Cupery explained that she wanted her son to have title his portion of the property so he would not be inconvenienced should she have to go into a nursing home.

Commissioner Muratsuchi noted that a significant number of neighbors believe this area has a history and character that they would like to promote, and questioned whether Ms. Cupery would be amendable to modifying the exterior in order to gain approval.

Ms. Cupery stated that the wood siding suggested by one of the neighbors is very expensive and prone to termite damage. Noting the variety of architectural styles on this block, she voiced objections to allowing someone else to decide what her home will look like.

Anthony Self, 2256 Torrance Boulevard, expressed support for the project, stating that he believed it would enhance property values in the neighborhood.

Christopher Wren, 634 Sartori Avenue, maintained that the proposed two-story Mediterranean-style units were out of character with the neighborhood and indicated that he was opposed to the demolition of any old homes in downtown Torrance.

Brenda Kulp, 1221 Portola Avenue, stated that she bought in old Torrance because of her affection for old homes and expressed concerns that the charm and character of the area was being lost as old homes are being replaced with condominiums. She noted that she offered to buy the subject property in order to preserve it and maintained that the existing Spanish-style bungalow could be expanded without drastically changing its appearance. She pointed out that the California Heights area of Long Beach, which has done an excellent job of preserving older homes, was recently named by *Sunset* magazine as one of the best places to live and voiced support for designating the downtown area as a historical district.

Judy Weber, 716 Border Avenue, referred to an article in the *Los Angeles Times*, dated August 31, 2003, which discusses the charm and character of historical old Torrance and mentions the 1920's mission revivals interspersed with Craftsman bungalows. She stated that she does not want everything to be the same, but wants to preserve the 1920's dwellings built at the inception of the City, noting that the existing structure on the subject property was built in 1924. She expressed concerns about the project's FAR of .61.

Planning Manager Isomoto explained that the FAR of is under the maximum of .65 allowed by Code.

David Geulff, 1226 Portola Avenue, stated that his home was built in 1928; that he was able to remodel it while retaining its original design as have others have done in the neighborhood; and that he would hate to see old Torrance turn into another Redondo Beach.

Tom Paige, 1605 Cota Avenue, urged that the character of old Torrance be preserved; maintained that the proposed project was out of character with the neighborhood; and expressed concerns about the domino effect of allowing condominiums on this property. He took issue with the statement in the staff report that the condominiums would count toward the City's share of the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) because the two condominium units would replace a duplex.

Bonnie Mae Barnard, 2028 Gramercy Avenue, representing Save Historic Old Torrance (SHOT), voiced objections to subdividing the property, stating that applicants in the past have claimed that they were developing the property for family members when in reality they had no intention of living on the property. She reported that the subject property is within the original boundaries of the City; maintained that the area was likely to be designated a historic district in the future; and urged that the project be rejected and the applicant be required to design something that is consistent with the neighborhood. She requested a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review because the project would impact a historic area.

Don Barnard, 2028 Gramercy Avenue, representing SHOT, stated that his organization is trying to preserve the City's roots and expressed concerns that allowing lots to be split for condominium development would cause old Torrance to lose its identity. He noted that the downtown area has attracted film crews because of its distinctive charm and urged that the applicant be required to redesign the project so that it blends with the neighborhood.

Commissioner Faulk agreed that there are historical structures in the area that merit preservation, but noted that there have been nicely designed and well-landscaped condominium projects approved in downtown Torrance, which have enhanced property values. He questioned whether SHOT has expressed a preference regarding rental units versus owner-occupied units.

Mr. Barnard indicated that this topic has not been discussed and related his experience that condominiums have a higher rate of turnover than single-family homes.

Mary Ann Reis, 1333 Engracia Avenue, requested that the Commission refuse to split the lot, maintaining that the front house could easily be restored and a second unit added on to the back and the result would be lovely.

Planning Manager Isomoto clarified that a Division of Lot for condominium purposes is a division of airspace to allow separate ownership of each unit but it does not physically divide the lot.

Christine Schmitz, 1219 Portola Avenue, voiced her opinion that restoring the front house and adding on to the back would be a win-win solution.

Ms. Cupery stated that it would cost her more to remodel the existing structure than to tear it down and build a better house; that she did not think it was desirable to have the required two-car garage for the front unit underneath the back unit; and that she prefers the look of having two separate residences. She noted that the subject lot is zoned R-3 which means that three apartment units could be built on this site and suggested that owner-occupied residences make for a better neighborhood.

Referring to the proposed stucco exterior, Mr. Basilio noted that there are some very nice homes in the area with stucco exteriors and contended that it would be unfair to require that any remodeling or rebuilding in this neighborhood include a Craftsman-style exterior. He related his experience that owner-occupiers usually do a better job of maintaining residences than renters and suggested that large complexes of attached condominiums have a greater turnover than two-unit detached condominiums, which function as single-family homes.

MOTION: Commissioner Botello, seconded by Commissioner Faulk, moved to close the public hearing; voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

In response to Commissioner Botello's inquiry, Planning Manager Isomoto confirmed that the applicant could remodel and add on to the back without the approval of the Commission, but noted that the lot is not wide enough to accommodate the four required garage spaces across the back.

Commissioner Horwich stated that he was impressed with the passion demonstrated by those who would like to preserve the neighborhood, however, the designation of a historical district has not happened and may never happen. He stated that he was disturbed by what seems to be a prejudice against condominiums; noted that the division of airspace does not physically alter the lot; and indicated that he thought the proponent had a valid reason for wanting separate ownership. He voiced his opinion that condominiums do not detract from the residential atmosphere of a neighborhood and suggested that it is not unusual for there to be a greater turnover in condominiums because they are often the first step in home ownership.

Commissioner Botello noted that the Commission, in the past, has required that projects be modified to make them more compatible with the neighborhood and contended that the applicant should be required to do so in this case.

Commissioner Muratsuchi commented on recent trips to Italy and Washington, D.C., where he observed neighborhoods with distinctive architecture, which defines them and makes them very appealing. Noting that this does not happen by accident, he expressed his opinion that residents should have a voice in the preservation of their neighborhood. Indicating that he would not support the project, he stated that it was a very difficult decision because this neighborhood is at the point where it could go either way – stucco condominiums or Craftsman-style homes – but he believed there was something unique and special about old Torrance that is worth preserving.

Commissioner Faulk expressed his preference that the applicant be allowed an opportunity to design something more in character with the neighborhood and requested more detailed drawings than the ones provided. He indicated that he was not opposed to condominiums and that he believed the project's design should be decided by the property owner and not by committee.

The public hearing was re-opened and Mr. Basilio agreed to continue the hearing to March 3, 2004.

Commissioner Botello suggested that the applicant discuss the revisions with neighbors. Commissioner Horwich, echoed by Chairperson Drevno, indicated that he did not favor allowing neighbors to design the project.

MOTION: Commissioner Horwich moved to continue the hearing to March 3, 2004. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Faulk and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Planning Manager Isomoto announced that the hearing would not be re-advertised because it was continued to a date certain.

Commissioner Uchima thanked everyone who spoke, indicating that he thought both sides had presented compelling arguments. He noted that the project borders residential and commercial uses and voiced his opinion that the two-story condominium project was appropriate for this site, although some architectural elements could be added to make it more compatible with the residential neighborhood. He expressed reservations about denying the application in the absence of any direction from the City Council declaring that this is a historic district and requiring the preservation of existing structures.

10. RESOLUTIONS

None.

11. PUBLIC WORKSHOP ITEMS

None.

12. MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

None.

13. REVIEW OF CITY COUNCIL ACTION ON PLANNING MATTERS

Planning Manager Isomoto reviewed recent City Council action on Planning matters, noting that the Jack-in-the-Box on Redondo Beach Boulevard was approved with a condition requiring an additional barrier between the restaurant and the apartment building to the east.

14. LIST OF TENTATIVE PLANNING COMMISSION CASES

Planning Manager Isomoto reviewed the agenda for the Planning Commission meeting of March 3, 2004.

15. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

15A. In response to Commissioner Botello's inquiry, Planning Manager Isomoto provided clarification regarding the administrative approval to allow Villa Hermosa to display merchandise in front of its temporary location for Valentine's Day.

15B. Commissioner Horwich noted that he and other Commissioners received correspondence from someone who is upset about the remodeling underway at Hull Middle School and suggested that staff inform him that the City has no control over this project.

In response to Commissioner Muratsuchi's inquiry, Deputy City Attorney Sullivan explained that schools are exempt from local zoning and the State Architect's Office has authority over such projects.

15C. Commissioner Muratsuchi requested that the Commission be provided with information regarding the impact on schools when large condominium projects are brought forward.

Planning Manager Isomoto advised that the school district was in the process of preparing a report that will provide more detailed information.

15D. Commissioner Uchima welcomed Planning Manager Isomoto back after her recent surgery.

15E. At Commissioner Uchima's request, Planning Manager Isomoto updated the Commission on residents' efforts to establish a historical district in the downtown area. She noted that the City Council has asked staff to look into the Mills Act to determine what benefits it could offer residents.

Chairperson Drevno commented on the almost evangelical zeal of proponents of the historical district, reminiscent of when the Hillside Overlay Ordinance was passed.

16. ADJOURNMENT

At 10:48 p.m., the meeting was adjourned to March 3, 2004 at 7:00 p.m.

Approved as Written March 17, 2004 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
