

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

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Torrance Planning Commission convened in a regular session at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 21, 2012 in City Council Chambers at Torrance City Hall.

**2. SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Rizzo.

**3. ROLL CALL/ MOTIONS FOR EXCUSED ABSENCE**

Present: Commissioners D'Anjou, Polcari, Rizzo, Uchima, Weideman and Chairperson Skoll.

Absent: Commissioner Gibson.

Also Present: Planning Manager Lodan, Planning Assistant Yumul, Associate Civil Engineer Symons, Plans Examiner Noh, Sr. Fire Prevention Officer Kazandjian, and Assistant City Attorney Sullivan.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Rizzo moved to grant Commissioner Gibson an excused absence from this meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Polcari and passed by unanimous voice vote.

**4. POSTING OF THE AGENDA**

Planning Manager Lodan reported that the agenda was posted on the Public Notice Board at 3031 Torrance Boulevard on Friday, March 16, 2012.

**5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – None.**

**6. REQUESTS FOR POSTPONEMENTS – None.**

**7. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #1 – None.**

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

**8. TIME EXTENSIONS – None.**

**9. SIGN HEARINGS – None.**

**10. CONTINUED HEARINGS – None.**

**11. WAIVERS – None.**

**12. FORMAL HEARINGS**

**12A. CUP12-00003, TTM071833: ANASTASI DEVELOPMENT CO. (CARMEN VALDIVIA)**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Conditional Use Permit to allow the construction of a ten-unit condominium project in conjunction with a Tentative Tract Map for condominium purposes on property located in the R-3 Zone at 20619 Amie Avenue.

**Recommendation:** Approval.

Planning Assistant Yumul introduced the request and noted supplemental material available at the meeting consisting of revised Code Requirements, revised Conditions of Approval and correspondence received after the agenda item was completed.

Elizabeth Srour, representing Anastasi Development Co., voiced her agreement with the recommended Conditions of Approval as revised. She briefly described the proposed ten-unit condominium project, pointing out that it meets or exceeds all requirements and the relatively small 1100 square-foot units will provide much needed entry-level housing. She voiced her opinion that the proposed project would be an attractive addition to this street, noting that the existing home on this site was built in 1949 and does not comply with current building codes.

In response to Commissioner Weideman's inquiry, Planning Manager Lodan confirmed that all 10 units are two-bedroom units, therefore, 2 parking spaces are required for each unit plus 2 guest parking spaces and the project complies with these requirements.

Neil Palmer, Anastasi Development Co., stated that understands that parking is a concern in this area, however, it has been his experience that projects with this much on-site parking rarely create problems for the neighborhood.

Chairperson Skoll noted that the plans indicate that each garage includes room for storage and Mr. Palmer advised that the garages are wider and deeper than standard garages.

Commissioner Uchima asked if someone could park in front of the garages without blocking the driveway and Ms. Srour confirmed that a vehicle could be parked parallel in front of the garage without obstructing the driveway. She noted that this is something that would not be done on a regular basis, and should only be done with the consent and cooperation of the other homeowners.

In response to Chairperson Skoll's inquiry, Ms. Srour advised that homeowners typically hire a professional management company to manage a condominium complex, but a project of this size would not have an on-site manager.

Chairperson Skoll invited public comment.

Minchun Liu, 20611 Amie Avenue, voiced his opposition to the proposed project. He stated that if it is approved, he would like to know the construction schedule and was concerned that the demolition could affect his property. He questioned whether the large tree in the front yard would be retained. He expressed an interest in reviewing the plans, and a copy was provided by staff.

Associate Civil Engineer Symons advised that the large tree in front of the property is a City tree; that staff has recommended that it be removed because it is in decline and will soon start damaging the sidewalk; and that this type of tree is sensitive to root cutting so it is unlikely that it would survive the construction process.

Assistant City Attorney Sullivan reported that the permitted hours of construction are Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Saturday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., with no construction allowed on Sundays and holidays.

Commissioner Weideman noted that the City has regulations that govern the demolition and construction process, which include provisions for dust control.

Ms. Srour offered her assurance that the developer would inform neighbors about the construction schedule and comply with all rules and regulations governing the demolition/construction process. She reported that an effort was made to minimize the impact on the condominium complex where Mr. Liu lives by orienting the main living areas of the units toward the driveway on the south side of the property and noted that a 6-foot high wall will be constructed along the property line to provide a buffer.

Commissioner Weideman encouraged Mr. Palmer to discuss the construction process with neighbors in order to alleviate their concerns.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Uchima moved to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Rizzo and passed by unanimous voice vote.

Commissioner Weideman voiced his opinion that the proposed condominium project would be an improvement for the neighborhood, noting that the existing home on this site is dwarfed by the surrounding apartment/condominium complexes. Acknowledging that parking is an issue in this area as evidenced by the petition submitted by residents, he pointed out that the project complies with the City's parking requirements.

Voicing support for the project, Commissioner Rizzo noted his agreement with Commissioner Weideman's remarks. He related his experience that parking has always been a problem in this area, which is often the case wherever there are multi-unit developments.

Chairperson Skoll also expressed support for the project, noting that it's clear from the letters of opposition that some of the neighbors did not know that two parking spaces were provided for each unit.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Uchima moved to approve CUP12-00003 and TTM071833, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner D'Anjou and passed by a 5-1 roll call vote, with Commissioner Polcari dissenting (absent Commissioner Gibson).

Planning Assistant Yumul read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution Nos. 12-016 and 12-017.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Uchima moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution Nos. 12-016 and 12-017. The motion was seconded by Commissioner D'Anjou and passed by a 5-1 roll call vote, with Commissioner Polcari dissenting (absent Commissioner Gibson).

**12B. CUP12-00004, DVP12-00002: E. AVICO INC. (SCOTT SUSSMAN)**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Conditional Use Permit and Development Permit to allow the reconstruction and operation of an automobile dealership on property located in the H-NT Zone at 18315 Hawthorne Boulevard.

**Recommendation:** Approval.

Planning Associate Yumul introduced the request.

Commissioner Rizzo noted that the address on the existing building does not match the address listed in the staff report, which could create a problem when using the City's CAD system, and Planning Manager Lodan agreed to make sure that the address listed in City records corresponds with the address on the site.

Babak Bardi, project manager, voiced his agreement with the conditions of approval with the exception of Condition No. 21, which requires the preparation of a noise report and a noise attenuation plan by a professional acoustical consultant. He explained that the project is an upgrade of an existing dealership, which includes the replacement of a modular building with a standard building and the addition of a landscaped buffer, therefore the noise situation would only be improved. He stated that the applicant would also prefer not to replace the public sidewalk adjacent to the project as required by the Engineering Department.

Planning Manager Lodan recommended that Condition No. 21 be retained, explaining that when a new building is constructed, the applicant is required to demonstrate that it complies with the City's noise standards.

Associate Civil Engineer Symons advised that the replacement of the sidewalk is a Code requirement, which is not subject to modification by the Planning Commission.

Responding to questions from the Commission, Mr. Bardi stated that DriveTime is a nationwide company based in Phoenix, Arizona that sells used autos and the company hopes to increase sales by upgrading its dealerships. He reported that the new building will be approximately 2000 square feet smaller than the existing modular building on this site.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Polcari moved to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Uchima and passed by unanimous voice vote.

Chairperson Skoll expressed support for the project, relating his belief that it will be a big improvement for this site.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Polcari moved to approve CUP12-00004 and DVP12-00002, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Weideman and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

Planning Assistant Yumul read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution Nos. 12-018 and 12-019.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Uchima moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution Nos. 12-018 and 12-019. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Weideman and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

13. **RESOLUTIONS** – None.
14. **PUBLIC WORKSHOP ITEMS** – None.
15. **MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS** – None.
16. **REVIEW OF CITY COUNCIL ACTION ON PLANNING MATTERS** – None.
17. **LIST OF TENTATIVE PLANNING COMMISSION CASES**

Planning Manager Lodan reviewed the agenda for the April 4, 2012 Planning Commission meeting.

18. **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #2**

**18A.** Planning Manager Lodan offered a reminder that the dinner for former Commissioner Harvey Horwich will be held on Thursday, April 19, at The Depot.

**18B.** In response to Chairperson Skoll's inquiry, Planning Manager Lodan confirmed that commissioners could accept the invitation to attend an open house at an engineering firm in Torrance. He related his understanding that the firm would like to showcase its building due to the emphasis on green technology.

**18C.** Chairperson Skoll reported that he attended an ExxonMobil Community Advisory Panel meeting just prior to this meeting, which included an interesting presentation on the outlook for energy with a view to the year 2040. He noted that the world's population is projected to grow 25% from 2010 to 2040 reaching nearly 9 billion people.

**18D.** Chairperson Skoll stated that he was surprised by a recent article in the *Daily Breeze* regarding the K-Mart property on Hawthorne Boulevard and suggested that it would be helpful if Commissioners could be briefed on projects like this before the story breaks in the newspaper.

Assistant City Attorney Sullivan noted that there is often not a lot of time before a story breaks in the newspaper and even City Council members have been caught off guard.

Planning Manager Lodan explained that staff attempts to keep Commissioners informed by providing the weekly report on items that have been proved administratively along with oral updates at Planning Commission meetings. He expressed his willingness to share information whenever possible.

**19. ADJOURNMENT**

At 8:20 p.m., the meeting was adjourned to Wednesday, April 4, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.

Approved as Submitted May 2, 2012 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
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