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TORRANCE PLANNING COMMISSION – DECEMBER 3, 2014

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At 7:50 p.m., the meeting was adjourned to Wednesday, December 17, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

**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, December 3, 2014 in City Council Chambers at Torrance City Hall.

2. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Skoll.

3. ROLL CALL/ MOTIONS FOR EXCUSED ABSENCE

Present: Commissioners D'anjou, Gibson, Herring, Skoll, Tsao and
Chairperson Polcari.

Absent: Commissioners Watson (excused).

Also Present: Sr. Planning Associate Santana, Planning Assistant Lang,
Associate Civil Engineer Symons, Deputy City Attorney Thompson-Bell.

4. POSTING OF THE AGENDA

Sr. Planning Associate Santana reported that the agenda was posted on the Public Notice Board at 3031 Torrance Boulevard on Wednesday, November 26, 2014.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Commissioner Gibson moved for the approval of the November 5, 2014 minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Herring and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Watson).

6. REQUESTS FOR POSTPONEMENTS – None.

7. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #1 – None.

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Chairperson Polcari 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. PRE14-00008: JEFF LYON (ANDY MAGEE)

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Precise Plan of Development to allow first and second-story additions to an existing one-story, single-family residence on property located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 659 Calle Miramar. This project is Categorically Exempt from CEQA per Guidelines Section 15301 – Existing Facilities.

Recommendation: Approval.

Planning Assistant Lang introduced the request.

Jeff Lyon, project architect, voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval and briefly described the proposed project. He explained that the new roofline will be only about a foot higher than the existing roofline because the main level will be in line with the existing one-story home and new second level will be below grade. He reported that the property owners shared the plans with neighbors and have received no negative comments.

Chairperson Polcari asked about the timeline for the project, and Mr. Lyon reported that he hopes to submit the working plans to the Building and Safety Department before Christmas.

MOTION: Commissioner Gibson moved to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner D'anjou and passed by unanimous voice vote (absent Commissioner Watson).

MOTION: Commissioner Skoll moved for the approval of PRE14-00008, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner D'anjou and passed by unanimous vote (absent Commissioner Watson).

Planning Assistant Lang read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 14-067.

MOTION: Commissioner Skoll moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution No. 14-067. The motion was seconded by Commissioner D'anjou and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Watson).

12B. MOD14-00011: HELEN LEE (PROVIDENCE LITTLE COMPANY OF MARY)

Considered later in the meeting, see pages 4-5.

12C. CUP14-00025: THE ENSBURY GROUP (F&M HILL PACIFIC COAST, LLC)

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Conditional Use Permit to allow the re-purposing of the existing motel site into an assisted senior living facility on property in the C-2 Zone at 2455 Pacific Coast Highway. This project is Categorically Exempt from CEQA per Guidelines Section 15301 – Existing Facilities.

Recommendation: Approval.

Planning Assistant Lang introduced the request and noted supplemental material consisting of revisions to the conditions of approval from the Engineering Division.

Martin Ensbury, representing The Ensbury Group, reported the he was proposing to re-purpose an existing motel for use as an assisted living facility, noting that he was currently working on obtaining an operating partner and will be ready to break ground in January.

Commissioner Gibson expressed concerns that this change in uses could lead to an increase in traffic.

Mr. Ensbury explained that the average age of residents in assisted living facilities is around 83 years old and the majority no longer drive.

Commissioner Gibson clarified that she was more concerned about traffic from people visiting residents.

Mr. Ensbury stated that the existing 66-room motel has approximately 66 people going in and out of the site on a daily basis while he would expect there would be only a handful of guests visiting residents of the proposed senior living facility on any given day, therefore the traffic generated should be substantially less.

Responding to questions from the Commission, Mr. Ensbury reported that there will be two levels of care, assisted living and memory care, and full dining service will be provided for both. He indicated that he has had considerable experience in re-purposing buildings, as well as renovating and building shopping centers. He confirmed that there will be adequate access for ambulance service and the fire department and that the rooms will be reconfigured to allow for wheelchair access. He noted that the renovations will be significant, with a budget of approximately \$3 million, and related his belief that this is an ideal location for this type of facility because residents will be able to walk to nearby stores, restaurants and movie theaters.

Commissioner Gibson questioned whether the building will be tested for asbestos and other hazardous substances, and Sr. Planning Associate Santana confirmed that this will be addressed during the plan check process.

Commissioner Gibson related her understanding that hot plates and other cooking units are banned in this type of room. Sr. Planning Associate Santana advised that a microwave, coffee pot and small refrigerator would be allowed, but not full cooking amenities.

Mr. Ensbury reported that a small refrigerator is the only thing planned for the rooms.

Commissioner Skoll asked about the operator, and Mr. Ensbury reported that they are negotiating with two potential operators, Sunrise, which is part of the largest chain of assisted living facilities in the country, and another group that is equally qualified, which he prefers not to name, and he hopes to reach an agreement by the end of the year. He noted that this type of facility is heavily regulated and they will not receive a permit to operate unless the facility complies with all requirements and a qualified operator is in place.

Referring to the supplemental material, Commissioner D'anjou asked about the reason for the deletion of conditions.

Associate Civil Engineer Symons advised that the conditions were included because the applicant had not decided whether water service would be provided by Torrance or the City of Lomita and they were no longer necessary now that the decision has been made.

Duane Klein, 2457 256th Street, stated that he and other neighbors are very much in favor of this project because the existing motel has been problematic and they are pleased to see a more community friendly use and feel this is a great place for a senior facility. He noted that his next door neighbor, whose property backs up to the site, is particularly supportive because he's had a number of issues with the motel, including having drug paraphernalia

thrown over the wall into his yard and most recently a fire that came very close to compromising his property.

Jonathan Baye, project architect, voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval, noting that he concurs with staff's recommendation that exterior elevations be revised to incorporate a more contemporary design (Condition No. 7). He commended City staff for being very cooperative and professional.

MOTION: Commissioner Tsao moved to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Herring and passed by unanimous voice vote (absent Commissioner Watson).

MOTION: Commissioner D'anjou moved for the approval of CUP14-00025, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Skoll and passed by unanimous vote (absent Commissioner Watson).

Planning Assistant Lang read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 14-069.

MOTION: Commissioner D'anjou moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution No. 14-067. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Herring and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Watson).

Agenda Item 12B was considered out of order at this time.

12B. MOD14-00011: HELEN LEE (PROVIDENCE LITTLE COMPANY OF MARY)

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Modification of a previously approved Conditional Use Permit (CUP94-00005) to allow the operation of a weekly farmers market in the parking lot of the existing hospital campus on property located in the HMD Zone at 4101 Torrance Boulevard. This project is Categorically Exempt from CEQA per Guidelines Section 15301 – Existing Facilities.

Recommendation: Approval.

Planning Assistant Lang introduced the request.

Commissioner Gibson disclosed that she serves on a committee at Little Company of Mary Hospital, but that will not impact her decision on this project.

Helen Lee, representing Providence Little Company of Mary, reported that she runs a farmers market at Children's Hospital of Los Angeles for patients and staff, which is very successful, and she was approached by Little Company of Mary to do the same thing at their hospital, with the exception that it would also be open to the public. She noted that the farmers market has been operating for the past few months on a temporary permit and it's been well-received and provides a nice break from the hospital routine for doctors, nurses and patients.

Chairperson Polcari, echoed by Commissioner Skoll, commented positively on the proposed farmers market.

MOTION: Commissioner D'anjou moved to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Herring and passed by unanimous voice vote (absent Commissioner Watson).

Commissioner Herring reported that he has attended farmers markets at VA hospitals in West Los Angeles and Long Beach and believes they are beneficial for patients, staff and the community, therefore he wholeheartedly supports this proposal.

MOTION: Commissioner Herring moved for the approval of MOD14-00011, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tsao and passed by unanimous vote (absent Commissioner Watson).

Planning Assistant Lang read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 14-068.

MOTION: Commissioner Herring moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution No. 14-068. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tsao and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Watson).

13. RESOLUTIONS

13A. MOD14-00009, DVP14-00001, WAV14-00004: ASI DEVELOPMENT (7-ELEVEN #37117)

Planning Commission adoption of resolutions reflecting their decision to deny a Modification of previously approved entitlements (CUP70-1 and PP70-1) and a Development Permit to allow the redevelopment of the existing service station site and to allow the retail sale of beer and wine for off-site consumption, in conjunction with a Waiver of the street setback requirement, on property located in the H-DA2 Zone at 3401 Torrance Boulevard. The project is Categorically Exempt from CEQA per Guidelines Section 15332 – In-Fill Development and 15305 – Minor Alterations.

Planning Assistant Lang read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution Nos. 14-063, 14-064 and 14-065.

MOTION: Commissioner D’anjou moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution Nos. 14-063, 14-064 and 14-064. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tsao and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Watson).

13B. CUP14-00021: AMERICAN MULTI-CINEMA INC. “AMC” (DEL AMO FASHION CENTER OPERATING CO., LLC)

Planning Commission adoption of a resolution reflecting their decision to deny a Conditional Use Permit to allow on-site service and consumption of alcohol in conjunction with an existing movie theater on property located in the H-DA1 Zone at 3525 Carson Street. This project is Categorically Exempt from CEQA per Guidelines Section 15301.

Planning Assistant Lang read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 14-066.

MOTION: Commissioner Herring moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution No. 14-066. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tsao and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Watson).

14. PUBLIC WORKSHOP ITEMS – None.

15A. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR WEEKLY SUMMARY REPORTS

Sr. Planning Associate Santana noted that Community Development Director Weekly Summary Reports for November 13 and November 21, 2014 were distributed to the Commission.

16. REVIEW OF CITY COUNCIL ACTION ON PLANNING MATTERS – None.

17. LIST OF TENTATIVE PLANNING COMMISSION CASES

Sr. Planning Associate Santana reviewed the agenda for the December 17, 2014 Planning Commission meeting

18. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #2

18A. Commissioner Gibson requested an excused absence for the December 17 Planning Commission meeting.

Commissioner Skoll, seconded by Commissioner D'anjou, so moved and voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

18B. Commissioner Skoll related his understanding that the Commission's decision to deny the 7-Eleven project has been appealed and noted that he was looking forward to the hearing on the Torrance Regional Transit Center in January.

18C. Commissioner Skoll reported that he had his final meeting as a member of the ExxonMobil Community Advisory Panel earlier this evening and he has enjoyed serving on the panel for the past four years. He related his belief that having the refinery benefits Torrance because the company does a lot of good for the community, especially for local youths.

18D. Referring to Agenda Item 12C, Commissioner Tsao commented on the need for more senior living facilities in Torrance due to the aging population.

18E. Commissioner Tsao, echoed by Commissioner Herring, extended holiday greetings.

19. ADJOURNMENT

At 7:50 p.m., the meeting was adjourned to Wednesday, December 17, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

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Approved as submitted January 21, 2015 s/ Rebecca Poirier, City Clerk
