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TORRANCE PLANNING COMMISSION – DECEMBER 17, 2014

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At 7:50 p.m., the meeting was adjourned to Wednesday, January 7, 2015 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 17, 2014 in City Council Chambers at Torrance City Hall.

2. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Watson.

3. ROLL CALL/ MOTIONS FOR EXCUSED ABSENCE

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

Absent: Commissioners Gibson (excused) and Commissioner Skoll.

Also Present: Planning Manager Lodan, Planning Assistant Fernandez, Associate Civil Engineer Symons, Plans Examiner Noh, Assistant City Attorney Sullivan.

MOTION: Commissioner Herring moved to grant Commissioner Skoll an excused absence from this meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Watson 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 Thursday, December 11, 2014.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Commissioner D'anjou moved for the approval of the November 19, 2014 minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tsao and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioners Gibson and Skoll).

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. PRE14-00009: CARLA WOLTERS

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Precise Plan of Development to allow one-story additions to an existing one-story, single-family residence on property located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 5500 Beran Street. This project is Categorically Exempt from CEQA per Guidelines Section 15301 – Existing Facilities.

Recommendation: Approval.

Planning Assistant Fernandez introduced the request.

Carla Wolters and Henry Cornejo, 5500 Beran Street, applicants, voiced their agreement with the recommended conditions of approval. Mr. Cornejo briefly described the proposed project, explaining that they are adding approximately 1100 square feet, including a new master bedroom, bath and walk-in closet, expanding the garage to allow for more storage, remodeling the kitchen/family room area, and creating a new foyer. Ms. Wolters reported that they held an informal open house for neighbors to share the plans and all their comments were positive.

Chairperson Polcari asked about the timeline for the project, and Mr. Cornejo stated that they would like to break ground as soon as possible.

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

MOTION: Commissioner D'anjou moved for the approval of PRE14-00009, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tsao and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioners Gibson and Skoll).

Planning Assistant Fernandez read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 14-070.

MOTION: Commissioner D'anjou moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution No. 14-070. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tsao and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioners Gibson and Skoll).

12B. MOD14-00012, WAV14-00006: BREAD OF LIFE CHURCH

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Modification of a previously approved Conditional Use Permit (CUP00-00027) to allow the conversion of a portion of the parking lot into a playground and to allow a shared parking agreement, in conjunction with a Waiver to allow an over-height fence on property located in the M-2 Zone at 2780 Lomita Boulevard. This project is Categorically Exempt from CEQA per Guidelines Section 15301 – Existing Facilities.

Recommendation: Approval.

Planning Assistant Fernandez introduced the request.

Wing Lew, representing Bread of Life Church, 2780 Lomita Boulevard, provided background information about the church, noting that it operates Sunday school, preschool and after-school programs. He reported that the church would like to convert a portion of the parking lot into a play area for older children, which will include a half basketball court, tennis court and awana court, since the existing playground is geared for younger children and older children are not allowed to play there.

Chairperson Polcari disclosed that one of his co-workers attends the Bread of Life Church but that will not affect his decision on this project.

Commissioner Tsao disclosed that his wife is a member of the Bread of Life Church, but that will have no bearing on his decision.

Chairperson Polcari noted that the playground appears to be right next to Lomita Boulevard.

Mr. Lew stated that safety was a major consideration in the design of the project. He explained that there is an existing block wall on the north side of the property and a new 10-foot high chain link fence will be constructed to prevent balls from going into the street and additionally, the courts were oriented so that all the action will be east/west.

Commissioner Herring commended the church for the services it provides to the community, noting that he remembers it being built and has watched it grow.

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

Commissioner D'anjou pointed out that the staff report mentions that the fence needs to be constructed of wrought iron rather than chain link.

Planning Manager Lodan advised that the fencing material is a condition of the previous entitlement and all prior conditions must be complied with.

Mr. Lew indicated that changing to a wrought iron fence would not be a problem.

MOTION: Commissioner Herring moved for the approval of MOD14-00012 and WAV14-00006, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner D'anjou and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioners Gibson and Skoll).

Planning Assistant Fernandez read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution Nos. 14-071 and 14-072.

MOTION: Commissioner D'anjou moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution Nos. 14-071 and 14-072. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tsao and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioners Gibson and Skoll).

12C. DIV14-00013: MANNY RODRIGUEZ (3830 DEL AMO BOULEVARD LLC)

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Division of Lot to allow the subdivision of one parcel into two on property located in the ML (M1-PP) Zone at 3925

Spencer Street. This project is Categorically Exempt from CEQA per Guidelines Section 15315 – Minor Land Divisions.

Recommendation: Approval.

Planning Assistant Fernandez introduced the request.

Manny Rodriguez, representing the applicant, voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval. He explained that the Division of Lot is necessary for tax purposes because properties with mixed uses are sometimes over-valued by the tax assessor due to the lack of comparable properties. He emphasized that there will be no physical changes to the property and both parcels will remain under the same ownership.

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

MOTION: Commissioner Watson moved for the approval of DIV14-00013, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Herring and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioners Gibson and Skoll).

Planning Assistant Fernandez read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 14-073.

MOTION: Commissioner Watson moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution No. 14-073. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tsao and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioners Gibson and Skoll).

Agenda Items 12D and 12E were considered together.

12D. DIV14-00011: CONTINENTAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (CDC MADISON LOMITA, LLC/ SAM MENLO, TRUSTEE OF MENLO TRUST)

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Division of Lot to allow a lot line adjustment between two properties located in the HMD Zone at 3500 Lomita Boulevard and 23450 Madison Street. This project is Categorically Exempt from CEQA per Guidelines Section 15301 – Existing Facilities and Section 15305 – Minor Alterations in Land Use Limitations.

12E. DIV14-00012: CONTINENTAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (CONTINENTAL MADISON SKYPARK, LLC (TORRANCE HEALTH ASSOCIATION, INC.))

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Division of Lot to allow a lot line adjustment between two properties located in the HMD Zone at 23560 Madison Street and 3333 Skypark Drive. This project is Categorically Exempt from CEQA per Guidelines Section 15301 – Existing Facilities and Section 15305 – Minor Alterations in Land Use Limitations.

Recommendation: Approval.

Planning Assistant Fernandez introduced the request and noted supplemental material consisting of revised resolutions.

Toni Reina, representing Continental Development Corporation, voiced objections to some of the conditions contained in Resolution No 14-074. She explained that Condition No. 5 requires the elimination of two parking spaces to provide additional throating for the driveway of Parcel A, however, this driveway was only recently completed having been approved by the City and there was no mention of the need for additional throating. She maintained that the existing throating of approximately 15 feet was adequate and expressed concerns that eliminating two parking spaces is contrary to the goal of the Division of Lot, which is to provide more parking.

Planning Manager Lodan advised that staff felt compelled to include a condition requiring the throating to comply with current standards, but Commissioners can grant relief from the condition if they feel it's appropriate.

Ms. Reina also requested relief from Conditions 3, 4 and 6, which require improvements to the property at 23450 Madison Street. She explained that the owner of this property has agreed to reconfigure the lot line to maximize parking, but they are not planning on making any site improvements to the property itself.

Ellia Thompson, representing the Menlo Trust, owner of the property at 23450 Madison Street, stated that the property owner does not understand the requirement to re-slurry/restripe the parking lot because it's in fairly good shape and questioned whether a report was prepared that assessed the condition of the pavement. She noted that there is a nursing home on the property that is well maintained and ADA compliant, which means that pavement and sidewalks are free of cracks and defects that could pose a safety hazard. She emphasized that the property owner isn't gaining any benefit from this action, which simply straightens out the property line, and is only trying to be a good neighbor.

Planning Manager Lodan advised that the Planner who reviewed the property thought the parking lot may soon be in need of re-slurrying and that was why the condition was included, however, the condition could be revised adding the words "to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director," so the Community Development Director could grant relief if it is determined that the parking lot does not need to be re-slurried at this time.

A brief discussion ensued, and it was the consensus of the Commission to delete Conditions 5 and 6 and to modify Conditions 3 and 4 by adding the wording "to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director."

Commissioner Herring questioned whether the applicant (Continental Development) would be required to re-slurry/restripe their parking lot at 3500 Lomita Boulevard, and Planning Manager Lodan advised that staff will also reevaluate the condition of this parking lot and waive the requirement if they determine it's not necessary.

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

MOTION: Commissioner D'anjou moved for the approval of DIV14-00011 and DIV14-00012, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff, with the following modifications concerning DIV14-00011:

Modify

No. 3 That the applicant shall submit a detailed parking plan to ensure that all parking stalls at 3500 Lomita Boulevard and 23450 Madison Street will meet current

standards and preserve Fire Department access to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director.

- No. 4 That the applicant shall re-slurry/restripe the parking lots at 3500 Lomita Boulevard and 23450 Madison Street to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director.

Delete

- No. 5 That the two parking spaces adjacent to the Madison Driveway of Parcel A shall be converted to landscaping to allow for additional throating.

- No. 6 That the parking space adjacent to the driveway of Parcel B shall be converted to landscaping to allow for additional throating and that a minimum of two parking spaces shall be striped within the former drive-aisle between properties.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Watson and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioners Gibson and Skoll).

Planning Assistant Fernandez read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution Nos. 14-074 and 14-075.

MOTION: Commissioner D'anjou moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution Nos. 14-074 and 14-075 as amended. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Herring and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioners Gibson and Skoll).

13. **RESOLUTIONS** – None.

14. **PUBLIC WORKSHOP ITEMS** – None.

15A. **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR WEEKLY SUMMARY REPORTS**

Planning Manager Lodan noted that the Community Development Director Weekly Summary Report for December 5, 2014 was distributed to the Commission.

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

17. **LIST OF TENTATIVE PLANNING COMMISSION CASES**

Planning Manager Lodan reported that the Torrance Regional Transit Center will be reviewed at the January 7, 2015 meeting and the environmental study will be distributed to Commissioners this evening so they will have more time to review it.

18. **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #2**

18A. Commissioner Herring reported that he attended the prescreening of the movie *Unbroken* about Louis Zamperini's life and he thought it was well done and a tribute to a great American hero and he highly recommends that people go see it. He extended Hanukah and Christmas greetings.

18B. Commissioner D'anjou noted that some homeowner associations are beginning to hold meetings about the proposed view preservation/tree ordinance and questioned whether it would be appropriate for a Planning Commissioner to attend such a meeting.

Assistant City Attorney Sullivan advised that the City Attorney would prefer that commissioners not attend any of the meetings because it could pre-determine a commissioner's position and lead to complex disclosures regarding exactly what was and wasn't heard at these meetings.

18C. Commissioner Watson expressed concerns that there are stores along Hawthorne Boulevard with “Going Out of Business” and “30-days only” signs that have been in place at least six months and questioned whether there are restrictions on these signs since they make the area look shabby.

Planning Manager Lodan reported that there are restrictions on the length of time banners can be up, but he wasn’t sure about “Going Out of Business” signs and would have to research this issue.

Assistant City Attorney Sullivan advised that if a business is in bankruptcy local restrictions on signage may not apply.

18D. Commissioner Watson stated that she also highly recommends *Unbroken*, but cautioned that it is not for children, noting that Torrance Historical Society receives a nice mention in the credits. She encouraged people to read the book *Unbroken* and to read Louis Zamperini’s book *Devil at My Heels*, which offers a more personal account of his experiences. She wished everyone happy holidays.

18E. Commissioner Tsao, echoed by Chairperson Polcari, extended Christmas greetings.

19. ADJOURNMENT

At 7:50 p.m., the meeting was adjourned to Wednesday, January 7, 2015 at 7:00 p.m.

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