

**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, September 15, 2010 in City Council Chambers at Torrance City Hall.

**2. SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Busch.

**3. ROLL CALL**

Present: Commissioners Browning, Busch, Skoll, Uchima, Weideman and Chairperson Horwich.

Absent: Commissioner Gibson.

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

**MOTION:** Commissioner Browning moved to grant Commissioner Gibson an excused absence from the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Uchima 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, September 9, 2010.

**5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Browning moved for the approval of August 4, 2010 Planning Commission minutes, as submitted. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Uchima and passed by unanimous roll call vote

**MOTION:** Commissioner Browning moved for the approval of August 18, 2010 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 Lodan requested that Item 11C, CUP09-00023, GPA09-00001, TTM71250 (EAS09-00005): David Boyd, be continued to October 6, 2010 due to an error in the notification process.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Browning moved to continue Agenda Item 11C to October 6, 2010. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Busch and passed by unanimous voice vote.

7. **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #1** – None.

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

8. **TIME EXTENSIONS** – None.

9. **CONTINUED HEARINGS**

9A. **CUP10-00010, DIV10-00003, DVP10-00001, WAV10-00005: OBELISK ARCHITECTS (ST. MERCURIUS/ ST. ABRAAM CHURCH)**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Conditional Use Permit and Development Permit for the development of a Church Master Plan, a Division of Lot to allow for the consolidation of two existing parcels into one parcel, and a Waiver of the street and landscaped setback requirements to allow the rehabilitation of an existing structure and retention of an existing landscaped planter on property located in the HBCSP-DA2 Zone at 3611 and 3645 Torrance Boulevard.

**Recommendation**

Approval.

Planning Assistant Yumul introduced the request and noted supplemental material consisting of correspondence received after the agenda item was completed.

Nagy Bakhoun, project architect, voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval. He reported that since the previous hearing on August 4, the church held an open house inviting neighbors within a 500-foot radius and a summary of the discussion was included in the agenda material. He noted that the church has designated a group of three people to be the point of contact should neighbors have any concerns about church activities, and Father Kyrollos has also agreed to serve as a backup. He clarified that 30 children are enrolled in the church's preschool program, but a maximum of 25 are present at one time, which conforms to the church's entitlements.

Mr. Bakhoun briefly summarized the topics discussed at the community meeting:

- Traffic – Residents agreed that making the exits right-turn only would improve traffic flow.
- Noise – Residents felt this issue could be addressed by ending children's activities at 6:00 p.m.
- Fencing/gates - There was some debate as to whether the site should be secured with perimeter fencing and the church will defer to the Commission's wishes on this issue.

- Trees – Residents were concerned about the loss of trees adjacent to their pool area. Three cypress trees and two palm trees must be removed per Fire Department access requirements, however, trees will be planted in the new planter to the west to provide a buffer for the pool area.
- Drainage – Subject property currently drains into the property to the north and the project will correct this by directing water flow to Amie Avenue.
- Trash dumpster – Residents were being disturbed by early morning trash pick-up, so the dumpster has been moved further away and the church has requested a later pick-up time.

Commissioner Browning noted that the staff report mentions that the church would eventually like to expand the preschool program to 75 children once Phase 2 of the project has been completed and suggested that this maximum be included as a condition so the applicant would not have to amend the CUP in the future. He indicated that matters involving fencing and trees would not factor into his decision.

James Cosier, manager of apartments at 21113 Amie Avenue, noted that he sent a letter and photographs detailing his concerns (supplemental material). He reported that noise levels have improved and he felt the best way to resolve any remaining issues was to work through the committee being established by the church. He stated that he saw no benefit to removing trees adjacent to the pool area and would prefer that they remain in place.

In response to Commissioner Weideman's inquiry, Mr. Cosier indicated that he would prefer that parking lot gates be locked at night so that residents would not be disturbed by late-night partying.

In response to Commissioner Busch's inquiry, Fire Marshal Kazandjian confirmed that if the gates are locked, they must be equipped with a Knox-Box system to provide for emergency access.

Genevieve Peters, 21113 Amie Avenue, submitted written material for the record. She questioned whether Amie Avenue would be closed off during construction; requested that contact information for the church be mailed to nearby residents; and asked if "children at play" caution signs would be posted on Amie Avenue. She expressed appreciation for the way residents were treated at the church's open house, noting that noise levels have greatly improved.

Associate Civil Engineer Symons advised that Amie Avenue will remain open throughout the construction process although there may be construction in the parkway area related drainage.

Returning to the podium, Mr. Bakhom explained that he understood that the trees adjacent to the pool area were a major concern for residents because they provide shade and privacy and offered his assurance that new trees would be planted to replace the ones that must be removed to meet Code requirements. He stated that late night noise in the parking lot could be addressed by either locking the gates or by installing signage prohibiting overnight parking and rigidly enforcing this ban and either method was acceptable to the church. He confirmed that church contact information will be distributed to managers of nearby apartment buildings.

A brief discussion ensued concerning whether or not to require that parking lot gates be locked.

Commissioner Uchima noted that staff does not support restricting access to the parking lot due to potential safety issues as discussed in the staff report.

Planning Manager Lodan explained that it is best to have room to turn around when there are locked gates so that vehicles don't have to back out into traffic and it is not possible to do so in this case.

It was the consensus of the Commission not to require the gates to the parking lot to be locked, with the understanding that that the church would install signage and strictly enforce the overnight parking-ban.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Busch moved to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Weideman and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

Discussion continued regarding adding/modifying conditions, and Commissioner Weideman recommended including the maximum number of children that can be present at the church's summer day camp since this matter is not addressed in the church's entitlements.

In response to Commissioner Skoll's inquiry, Planning Manager Lodan confirmed that the church's children's programs comply with State regulations.

Commissioner Browning recommended that parking lot gates be kept closed whenever children are playing outside for purposes of safety.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Busch moved for the approval of CUP 10-00010, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff, with the following modifications:

**Modify**

No. 12 That a "Right Turn Only" sign ~~signs~~ shall be placed on the Amie Avenue driveway exit and both exits on Torrance Boulevard to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director.

**Add**

No 28 That there shall be a maximum of 75 participants for the preschool program and 100 participants for the summer day camp program and the hours of operation shall be limited to 7:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

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

**MOTION:** Commissioner Bush moved for the approval of DIV10-00003, DVP10-00001 and WAV10-00005, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Uchima and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

Planning Assistant Yumul read aloud the number and title of Planning Commissioner Resolution Nos. 10-046, 10-047, 10-048 and 10-049.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Busch moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution Nos. 10-046, 10-047, 10-048 and 10-049 as amended. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Browning and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

**9B. CUP10-00011: COLE VOCATIONAL SERVICES – TORRANCE**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Conditional Use Permit to allow an Adult Daycare Facility on property located in the H-NT Zone at 4236 Artesia Boulevard.

**Recommendation**

Approval.

Planning Assistant Yumul introduced the request.

Tiffany Tonnu, project manager, voiced her agreement with the recommended conditions of approval with the exception of Condition No. 9, which requires that the existing roof-mounted sign be removed prior to the issuance of building permits. She stated that the applicant would like to re-use this sign because it provides good visibility and she did not believe it would adversely impact neighboring properties.

Planning Manager Lodan explained that applicants are typically required to replace old roof-mounted signs with monument signs, but staff had no objections to deleting the condition in this case due to the applicant's budget constraints and the nature of the services provided.

Commissioner Weideman asked about the elimination of the Code Requirement that a street tree be planted, and Planning Manager Lodan clarified that staff determined that there was not room in the parkway for a tree due to the existing building overhang.

Commissioner Skoll questioned whether Condition No. 3, which limits the site to a maximum of 30 clients and 12 staff members at any given time, conforms to State requirements.

Planning Manager Lodan advised that Condition No. 3 was derived from parking requirements, which are based on the number of employees (1 space per employee) and clients (1 space for every 15 clients).

Ms. Tonnu reported that the facility must be licensed by the State and this will take place after the Conditional Use Permit has been approved.

David Rowe reported that he owns the building next door to the subject property (4232 Artesia Boulevard) and the two buildings share the same driveway; estimated that the proposed adult daycare facility could generate up to 100 trips a day in and out of the driveway; and related his belief that it would be unfair to require him to pay half the cost of repaving the driveway when it becomes necessary since his business generates only about 20 trips per day.

Chairperson Horwich noted that the issue of cost-sharing for repairs was not within the Commission's purview and should be worked out with the parties involved.

Associate Civil Engineer Symons reported that access easements typically spell out who is responsible for maintaining the driveway and what proportion each party will be required to pay.

Planning Manager Lodan related his understanding that clients will be transported to and from the facility in a van so it will not generate as much traffic, and Ms. Tonnu confirmed that vans will be used.

Responding to Commissioner Busch's inquiry, Ms. Tonnu reported that the service area is within a 10-mile radius of the facility; that clients are contracted through the Harbor Regional Center; that March 2011 is the target date for opening; and that there is already a waiting list for the facility.

Commissioner Busch expressed support for the project, noting that it is a much-needed facility that will benefit both the City and the region.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Uchima moved to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Browning and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

**MOTION:** Commissioner Uchima moved for the approval of CUP10-00011, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff, deleting Condition No. 9. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Busch and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

Planning Assistant Yumul read aloud the number and title of Planning Commissioner Resolution No. 10-051.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Uchima moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution No. 10-051 as amended. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Browning and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

**9C. MOD10-00007: PAUL BOGHOSSIAN (CHURCH OF CHRIST THE KING LUTHERAN CHURCH)**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Modification of a previously approved Conditional Use Permit (CUP75-19) to allow the installation of a modular classroom on property located in the A-1/R-2 Zone at 2706 182<sup>nd</sup> Street.

**Recommendation**

Approval.

Planning Assistant Yumul introduced the request.

Commissioner Skoll disclosed that he visited the site, had a short discussion with the pastor and walked around the grounds, but had not made a decision on the project.

Reverend Dale Krumland, pastor of Christ the King Lutheran Church, thanked staff for providing detailed information regarding landscaping improvements that would be required in conjunction with the project. He stated that while the church believes the conditions are reasonable, it would be a hardship to comply with them due to budget constraints. He explained that his congregation is small and aging and the landscaping improvements would add \$5,000-6,000 to the cost of the project and requested that the Commission consider waiving the conditions. He reported that the most problematic condition was the requirement that five new 24" box trees be planted in the front yard area (Condition 3c – staff report) because the trees would obstruct the view of the front of the church, which includes a mosaic of Christ the King, and church leadership felt it was important to leave this area as open as possible.

Commissioner Weideman disclosed that he visited the site, but did not speak to the pastor. He stated that he thought the site was very attractive and understood the concern about adding five trees to the front of the church but was not in favor of waiving all of the conditions. He asked what other conditions Reverend Krumland found objectionable.

Referring to Condition No. 1, which requires a landscape plan to be submitted to the Community Development Department, Reverend Krumland questioned whether the plan could be prepared by the person who will be doing the landscape work.

Planning Manager Lodan indicated that was acceptable and expressed staff's willingness to work with the applicant on landscaping improvements to ensure that they are cost-effective.

Reverend Krumland stated that he was agreeable to the rest of the landscaping conditions as long as Condition 3c was eliminated.

Commissioner Busch suggested the possibility of requiring two trees instead of five in the front yard area, but it was the consensus of the Commission to eliminate Condition No. 3c. (Planning Manager Lodan noted that this condition is listed as Condition No. 5c in the Resolution).

**MOTION:** Commissioner Weideman moved to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Browning and passed by unanimous voice vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

**MOTION:** Commissioner Busch moved for the approval of MOD10-00007, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff, deleting Condition No. 5c. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Weideman and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

Commissioner Skoll commented that he was pleased this matter has been resolved because he felt the landscaping could use some improvement and he believed the church would find working with staff beneficial.

Planning Assistant Yumul read aloud the number and title of Planning Commissioner Resolution No. 10-050.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Weideman moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution No. 10-050 as amended. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Browning and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

The Commission briefly recessed from 8:20 p.m. to 8:32 p.m.

10. **WAIVERS** – None.

11. **FORMAL HEARINGS**

11A. **PRE10-00008, WAV10-00007: PETER RAHILL (NICK & KAREN TRAINA)**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Precise Plan of Development to allow first story additions and the remodel of the first and second story of an existing two-story single-family residence in conjunction with a Waiver to allow less than the required front and side yard setbacks on property located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 22705 Draille Drive.

**Recommendation**

Approval.

Planning Assistant Yumul introduced the request.

Peter Rahill, project architect, voiced his agreement with the conditions of approval with the exception of Condition No. 7, which requires the kitchen bay window to be replaced with a true garden/greenhouse window or a non-projecting window. Submitting photographs to illustrate, he explained that the applicant intends to re-use the existing garden window, which qualifies as a “true garden/greenhouse window.”

Planning Manager Lodan stated that staff was not aware the existing garden window would be re-used and had no objections to deleting this condition.

Chairperson Horwich questioned when the un-permitted deck over the garage was installed.

Nick Traina, 22705 Draille Drive, owner of the subject property, reported that he installed the deck and exterior spiral staircase in 1985 and while Condition No. 11 requires that the deck and staircase be removed, he would prefer to keep it and bring it up to Code.

Responding to questions from the Commission, Planning Manager Lodan advised that the deck/staircase would not add to the project’s FAR because the space is not enclosed and indicated that he was not aware of any concerns about the deck.

Commissioner Browning related his understanding that exterior staircases are not permitted. Planning Manager Lodan clarified that exterior staircases are allowed as long as they do not connect with second-floor living space and the roof deck in question does not connect to living space.

Voicing support for the project, Commissioner Browning noted that he drove by the property and observed that it enhances this corner and appears to be well thought-out.

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

Commissioner Busch stated that he usually was not in favor of allowing un-permitted structures, but would support the retention of the deck/staircase as long as it is brought up to Code and completed at the same time as this project.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Busch moved for the approval of PRE10-00008 and WAV10-00007, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff, with the following modifications:

**Modify**

No. 11 That the un-permitted deck structure and exterior spiral staircase shall be allowed to remain in the current configuration if building codes are met and building permits are obtained and that this shall be done in conjunction with the issuance of permits for this project.

**Delete**

No. 7 That the final plans shall be revised to replace the proposed south kitchen bay window with a true garden/greenhouse window or a non-projecting window, prior to the issuance of building permits.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Uchima and passed by unanimous roll call vote, with Chairperson Horwich abstaining.

Commenting on his abstention, Chairperson Horwich stated that he was not in favor of modifying Condition No. 11 and allowing people to flaunt the City's rules.

Planning Assistant Yumul read aloud the number and title of Planning Commissioner Resolution Nos. 10-052 and 10-053.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Browning moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution No. 10-052 and 10-053 as amended. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Uchima and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

**11B. DIV10-00004, WAV10-00008: DAVID KNELL/ WILLDAN ENGINEERING (KENNETH LOUIE AND ROBERT HARBOUR)**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Lot Line Adjustment to accommodate an existing encroaching garage, in conjunction with a Waiver of the side yard setback requirement on properties located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 4100 and 4106 Via Lado.

**Recommendation**

Approval.

Planning Assistant Yumul introduced the request and noted supplemental material available at the meeting consisting of correspondence received after the agenda item was completed.

Robert Harbour, 4100 Via Lado, explained that an error occurred when the house at 4106 Via Lado was constructed in the late 1950s and the property line was off by approximately 18 feet; that the error was only recently discovered and both parties have agreed to formalize the property line as it currently exists; and that the Division of Lot and Waiver are necessary to accomplish this.

In response to Commissioner Skoll's inquiry, Mr. Harbour reported that he has been paying the property taxes for the disputed property since purchasing his home in 1972 and the owner of 4106 Via Lado will be responsible for the taxes after the Lot Line Adjustment is approved since it will be incorporated into his lot.

Helen Kim Colindres, Levinson Arshonsky & Kurtz, LLP, legal counsel for Kenneth Louie, owner of 4106 Via Lado, provided background information regarding the disputed property. She explained that the area in question was originally part of the 4100 Via Lado parcel but was excepted when the property was purchased in 1968 and continued to be omitted from all subsequent conveyances therefore it was never owned by Mr. Harbour even though he paid the property taxes for it. She confirmed that both parties have agreed to the Lot Line Adjustment and voiced her opinion that it was a fair compromise.

In response to Commissioner Browning's inquiry, Ms. Colindres reported that the error was discovered when Mr. Louie had a survey done in preparation for doing some remodeling.

Commissioner Busch expressed support for the proposed Division of Lot and Waiver.

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

**MOTION:** Commissioner Busch moved for the approval of DIV10-00004 and WAV10-00008, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Uchima and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

Planning Assistant Yumul read aloud the number and title of Planning Commissioner Resolution Nos. 10-054 and 10-055.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Busch moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution Nos. 10-054 and 10-055. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Uchima and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

**11C. CUP09-00023, GPA09-00001, TTM71250 (EAS09-00005): DAVID BOYD (OLD TOWN REDLANDS, LLC/DOROTHY CAKE FAMILY TRUST)**

Planning Commission consideration for the adoption of a Negative Declaration, the approval of a Conditional use Permit to construct a self-storage building with underground parking and interim RV storage in conjunction with a Tentative Tract Map to create five lots to match existing parcel using and a General Plan Amendment to reconcile a proposed new lot to match existing zoning on property located in the ML-C4 Zone at 20525 Hawthorne Boulevard.

Continued to October 6, 2010.

**12. RESOLUTIONS**

**12A. CUP09-00005, VAR09-00002, WAV09-00006 (EAS09-00002): ION CRETU/ SAINTS ARCHANGELS MICHAEL & GABRIEL ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH**

Planning Commission adoption of Resolutions reflecting their decision to approve a Conditional Use Permit to allow the construction of an auxiliary building above the parking lot of the existing church facility, a Variance to allow less than the required lot size and parking requirements, and a Waiver of the side and rear setback requirements on property located in the R-2 Zone at 4102 Hickman Drive.

Planning Assistant Yumul read aloud the number and title of Planning Commissioner Resolution Nos. 10-038 and 10-039.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Busch moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution Nos. 10-038 and 10-039. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Browning and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

**13. PUBLIC WORKSHOP ITEMS** – None.

**14. MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS** – None.

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

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

Planning Manager Lodan reviewed the agenda for the October 6, 2010 Planning Commission meeting.

**17. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #2**

**17A.** Commissioner Skoll asked about the status of the new Walmart. Planning Manager Lodan reported that the project is currently in plan check and construction is expected to take 4-6 months.

**17B.** In response to Commissioner Skoll's inquiry regarding the procedure for contacting neighbors who live adjacent to a project, Planning Manager Lodan advised

that planners usually walk the neighborhood and leave business cards at the homes of immediate neighbors unless a neighbor has expressed a concern about a project, in which case the planner will make an effort to contact this neighbor directly.

**17C.** Commissioner Busch, echoed by Commissioner Weideman, commended Chairperson Horwich for doing an excellent job of conducting the meeting.

**17D.** Commissioner Busch noted the recent passing of Cheryl Vargo, who appeared before the Commission numerous times representing various developers. He suggested that the meeting be adjourned in her memory, and it was the consensus of the Commission to do so.

**17E.** Commissioner Browning reported that he participated in a paddle tennis tournament in Rancho Palos Verdes last Saturday and congratulated Plans Examiner James Noh and his partner on winning first place.

**17F.** Commissioner Weideman noted that he visited three of the properties on tonight's agenda earlier in the day and none of them had public notice signs posted.

**17G.** Commissioner Weideman expressed an interest in knowing the number of large outdoor billboards in Torrance, and Planning Manager Lodan stated that he would try to track down this information.

**17H.** Commissioner Skoll noted that Commissioner Browning reported at the last meeting that the Farmers Market at Del Amo Fashion Center had failed to comply with requirements meant to protect the public safety and questioned whether this issue has been resolved. Planning Manager Lodan stated that Fire Department was investigating the matter, but he did not have the details at this time.

**17I.** Commissioner Busch asked about "no parking" signs that are periodically placed in the parking lot near the Sports Authority, and Planning Manager Lodan advised that if the signs are temporary, they are not permitted.

**18. ADJOURNMENT**

At 9:20 p.m., the meeting was adjourned to Wednesday, October 6, 2010 at 7:00 p.m.

Approved as Submitted October 20, 2010 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
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