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**TORRANCE PLANNING COMMISSION – NOVEMBER 4, 2015**

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At 7:56 p.m., the meeting was adjourned to Wednesday, November 18, 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, November 4, 2015, 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 Gibson, Herring, Polcari, Skoll, Tsao, Watson and Chairperson D'anjou.

Absent: None.

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

**4. POSTING OF THE AGENDA**

Planning Assistant Yumul reported that the agenda was posted on the Public Notice Board at 3031 Torrance Boulevard on Thursday, October 29, 2015.

**5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Polcari moved to approve the October 7, 2015 Planning Commission minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tsao and passed by unanimous roll call vote

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

**7. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #1**

**8. TIME EXTENSIONS**

**8A. EXT15-00004: SIMON PROPERTY GROUP, INC**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Time Extension for a previously approved Division of Lot (DIV13-00005) for the purposes of lot consolidation and re-subdivision to match the proposed development on property located in the H-DA1 Zone at 3525 Carson Street. This project meets the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act because there are no circumstances under the Public Resources Code Section 21166 that would trigger the requirement to prepare further CEQA documentation.

**Recommendation:** Approval.

Planning Assistant Yumul introduced the request.

Michael Silbey, representing Simon Property Group, reported that the additional time is necessary to complete the L.A. County plan check and recordation process, which has been complicated because there are two corporate entities involved.

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

**MOTION:** Commissioner Polcari moved to approve EXT15-00004, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Tsao and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Planning Assistant Yumul read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 15-078.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Polcari moved to adopt Planning Commission Resolution No. 15-078. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gibson and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

9. **SIGN HEARINGS**- None.

10. **CONTINUED HEARINGS** – None.

11. **WAIVERS** – None.

12. **FORMAL HEARINGS**

12A. **CUP15-00022: MIGUEL GARCIA (MARUMATSU, INC)**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Conditional Use to allow the re-establishment of a restaurant with alcohol service on property located in the C-2 Zone at 5150 190<sup>th</sup> Street. This project is Categorically Exempt from CEQA per Guidelines Section 15301- Existing Facilities.

**Recommendation:** Approval.

Planning Assistant Yumul introduced the request.

Eric Newman, Newman Building Designs, project architect, stated that he would comply with the recommended conditions of approval, but requested that the Commission consider eliminating the condition requiring new windows to be non-openable or fixed. He explained that while he understands staff's concern about noise, he believes allowing fresh air into the building is a healthier option than using air conditioning all the time. He suggested the possibility of including a condition requiring the windows to be closed at a certain time to ensure that noise does not become a problem for neighbors. He briefly described the proposed project, noting that the goal is to eliminate the bar-type atmosphere and make the restaurant a family-friendly, community gathering place.

Commissioner Gibson questioned how many windows are facing the townhomes to the west, and Mr. Newman reported that there are no windows on that side of the building.

Commissioner Tsao related his understanding that the restaurant plans to have karaoke and asked where this activity will take place.

Mr. Newman reported that the karaoke area will be incorporated into the game area at the rear of the restaurant.

Commissioners entertained the idea of allowing the windows to be openable and requiring them to be closed at a certain time as Mr. Newman suggested, and asked staff to comment.

Planning Manager Lodan expressed concerns that allowing openable windows would create an enforcement issue.

Chairperson D'anjou related her belief that this was a valid concern.

Mr. Newman stated that he would do whatever the Commission prefers with regard to the windows.

Commissioner Herring voiced support for the project, noting that a veterans group he belongs to used to meet at this restaurant and he hopes they will be able to do so again. He called attention to the letter from the Mayor of Culver City (Attachment 3 - agenda material), which speaks highly of the applicant and his restaurant in that city.

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

Planning Manager Lodan advised that the condition requiring windows to be fixed was inadvertently omitted from the resolution and requested that the commission consider adding it.

A brief discussion ensued and it was the consensus of the Commission to do so.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Polcari moved to approve CUP15-00022, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff, adding a condition that all windows shall be fixed. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Gibson and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Planning Assistant Yumul read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 15-079.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Herring moved to adopt Planning Commission Resolution No. 15-079 as amended. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gibson and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

**12B. CUP15-00025: ELLM INC (TORRANCE TOWN CENTER ASSOCIATES, LLC)**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Conditional Use Permit to allow beer and wine service in conjunction with the operation of a new restaurant on property located in the P-D Zone at 2755 Pacific Coast Highway, Unit A. This project is Categorically Exempt from CEQA per Guidelines Section 15301- Existing Facilities.

**Recommendation:** Approval.

Planning Assistant Yumul introduced the request.

Edward Moriarty, ELLM Inc., applicant, voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval. He briefly described the proposed restaurant, which will offer a variety of seafood served family-style. He reported that this will be his fourth location, but it is a new concept and he's very excited about coming to Torrance.

Commissioner Skoll stated that he was very impressed by the detailed business plan provided by the applicant and believes all restaurants should operate in this manner.

Commissioner Polcari asked about the timeline for the project, and Mr. Moriarty reported that they hope to open by December 20.

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

**MOTION:** Commissioner Skoll moved to approve CUP15-00025, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Polcari and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Planning Assistant Yumul read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 15-080.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Skoll moved to adopt Planning Commission Resolution No. 15-080. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Herring and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

**12C. PRE15-00018, WAV15-00011: WILL BASILIO (CHRISTINA SUENAGA)**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Precise Plan of Development to allow first story additions to an existing one-story, single-family residence, in conjunction with a Waiver of the rear yard setback requirement on property located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 5326 Clearsite Street. This project is Categorically Exempt from CEQA per Guidelines Section 15301- Existing Facilities.

**Recommendation:** Approval.

Planning Associate Yumul introduced the request.

Christina Suenaga, 5326 Clearsite Street, voiced her agreement with the recommended conditions of approval. She briefly described the proposed project, noting that her husband grew up in this home, but it has become too small now that they have three children and they don't want to move because they love the neighborhood.

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

**MOTION:** Commissioner Polcari moved to approve PRE15-00018 and WAV15-00011, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Tsao and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Planning Assistant Yumul read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution Nos. 15-081 and 15-082.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Polcari moved to adopt Planning Commission Resolution Nos. 15-081 and 15-082. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Herring and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

**12D. PRE15-00019: WILL BASILIO (MICHAEL D. JONES)**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Precise Plan of Development to allow first and second-story additions to an existing two-story, single-family residence, in conjunction with a new rear deck on property located within the Hillside Overlay in the R-1 Zone at 22640 Ellinwood Drive. This project is Categorically Exempt from CEQA per Guidelines Section 15301- Existing Facilities.

**Recommendation:** Approval.

Planning Associate Yumul introduced the request.

Michael Jones, 22640 Ellinwood Drive, applicant, voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval. He briefly described the proposed project, which includes a new master bedroom suite and family room on the first floor and the expansion of an existing second floor bedroom. He noted that he will also be adding a ground level deck to make the steeply sloping backyard more usable and a balcony off the second-floor back bedroom.

In response to Chairperson D'anjou's inquiry, Mr. Jones confirmed that the deck was modified to eliminate the view impact for the neighbor at 4922 Reynolds Road.

Michael Oshimo, 22641 Lupine Drive, reported that he lives directly below the subject property and expressed concerns that the project could destabilize the hillside. He suggested that a retaining wall might be needed to prevent soil from sliding into his backyard.

Plans Examiner Noh advised that structural engineering and a soils analysis must be done for any hillside project that involves grading to ensure that the stability of the hillside is maintained.

Mrs. Oshimo, 22641 Lupine Drive, expressed concerns about privacy impact, explaining that these neighbors already have a direct view into her backyard from their existing patio and the proposed extension will further encroach on her privacy. She confirmed that the applicant had discussed the project with her and her husband, but indicated that she was not aware of the second-floor balcony.

Mr. Jones stated that he did mention the balcony to the Oshimos, but he understands their concerns. He related his belief that the proposed addition would be no more intrusive on their privacy than the existing home and that the ground level deck will probably give them a little more privacy due to the change in perspective for someone sitting on the deck. He noted that he planted five citrus trees close to the property line, but it could take some time for them to grow. He offered his assurance that the project will be properly engineered to ensure that the hillside is not destabilized.

Chairperson D'anjou suggested that the topography of this lot makes it hard to avoid impacting the privacy of the lot below.

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

Commissioner Watson agreed that topography has a lot to do with the privacy impact and pointed out that there's no way to remediate the height differential between the two properties.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Polcari moved to approve PRE15-00019, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Watson and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Planning Assistant Yumul read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 15-083.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Polcari moved to adopt Planning Commission Resolution No. 15-083. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Watson and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

13. **RESOLUTIONS** – None.

14. **PUBLIC WORKSHOP ITEMS** – None.

15. **MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS**

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

Planning Manager Lodan noted that the Community Development Director Weekly Summary Reports for October 15 and October 23, 2015 were distributed to the Commission.

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 November 18, 2015 Planning Commission meeting.

18. **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #2**

18A. Commissioner Tsao asked about plans for the property at Via Valmonte and Hawthorne Boulevard, and Planning Manager Lodan reported that a residential developer has expressed an interest in this property also known as Butcher Hill and fault lines and seismic issues are currently being investigated.

18B. Commissioner Polcari asked if the City Council must approve excused absences, and Assistant City Attorney Sullivan clarified that the Commission may grant excused absences unless the number of absences exceeds 25% of meetings in a 12-month period, in which case the City Council's approval must be obtained.

18C. Commissioner Watson requested excused absences for the meetings of December 2 and December 16 because she will be cruising the Amazon River.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Polcari, seconded by Commissioner Tsao, so moved and the motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

**18D.** In response to Commissioner Herring's inquiry, Planning Manager Lodan provided clarification regarding the approval process for food trucks at breweries.

**18E.** Commissioner Herring reported that various events will be held in conjunction with the City's Veterans Week Celebration, including a "Visit with a Veteran" event on Sunday, November 8, hosted by the Torrance Historical Society featuring veterans from different conflicts. He encouraged everyone to thank military veterans they come into contact with for their service.

**18F.** Commissioner Skoll noted that the condominium project at Arlington Avenue and 236<sup>th</sup> Street, which was previously approved by the Commission, is scheduled for next Tuesday's City Council meeting because the Zone Change requires the Council's approval, and related his belief that the project will be a good addition to his neighborhood.

**18G.** Commissioner Skoll commented that he was pleased that the Costco project was finally underway and asked about the completion date.

Planning Manager Lodan reported that he heard they have an aggressive construction schedule, but predicted winter rains could cause delays.

**19. ADJOURNMENT**

At 7:56 p.m., the meeting was adjourned to Wednesday, November 18, 2015 at 7:00 p.m.

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Approved as submitted December 2, 2015 s/ Rebecca Poirier, City Clerk
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