

April 6, 2005

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

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Torrance Planning Commission convened in a regular session at 7:07 p.m. on Wednesday, April 6, 2005, in City Council Chambers at Torrance City Hall.

2. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Uchima.

3. ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Drevno, Fauk, Horwich, LaBouff, Uchima and Chairperson Muratsuchi.

Absent: None.

Also Present: Planning Manager Isomoto, Planning Associate Crecy, Fire Marshal Carter, Deputy City Attorney Whitham, Plans Examiner Nishioka and Associate Civil Engineer Symons.

4. POSTING OF THE AGENDA

MOTION: Commissioner Uchima, seconded by Commissioner Horwich, moved to accept and file the report of the secretary on the posting of the agenda for this meeting; voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Commissioner Drevno moved for the approval of the February 2, 2005 Planning Commission minutes as submitted. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Fauk; voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

MOTION: Commissioner Horwich moved for the approval of the February 16, 2005 Planning Commission minutes as submitted. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Uchima; voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

6. REQUESTS FOR POSTPONEMENT

Planning Manager Isomoto relayed the applicant's request to continue Item 9D, MOD05-00004, Irwin-Pancake Architects, to May 4, 2005.

MOTION: Commissioner Horwich, seconded by Commissioner Uchima, moved to continue Item 9D to May 4, 2005; voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

Chairperson Muratsuchi noted that the hearing would not be re-advertised because it was continued to a date certain.

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

7. CONTINUED HEARINGS

7A. DIV04-00023: DOUG AND SONIA MOCKETT

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Division of Lot to allow the merger of 2 lots into 1 lot (as a condition of CUP04-00012) on property located in the Industrial Redevelopment Project Area in the M-2 Zone at 1907, 1915 Abalone Avenue and 1910 Border Avenue.

Recommendation

Approval.

Planning Associate Crecy introduced the request.

Cristian Poloni, John Cataldo & Associates, project architect, explained that the applicants originally wanted to merge 3 lots into 1 lot, but changed their plans because the merger would have required the undergrounding of utilities, which turned out to be cost prohibitive.

MOTION: Commissioner Drevno, seconded by Commissioner Uchima, moved to close the public hearing; voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

MOTION: Commissioner Uchima moved for the approval of DIV04-00023, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Horwich and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Planning Associate Crecy read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 05-010.

MOTION: Commissioner Drevno moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution No. 05-010. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Faulk and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

8. WAIVERS

None.

9. FORMAL HEARINGS

9A. PRE05-00003: MARK CRAMER (EMIL SUNJARA)

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Precise Plan of Development to allow the construction of a second-story addition to an existing one-story, single-family residence in the Hillside Overlay District on property located in the R-1 Zone at 5337 Doris Way.

Recommendation

Approval.

Planning Associate Crecy introduced the request and noted supplemental material available at the meeting consisting of public correspondence, including a letter from Mr. and Mrs. Fu Hwang, 5327 Doris Way, rescinding their initial objection to the project.

Denise Cramer, applicant, voiced her agreement with the recommended conditions of approval. She explained that this is the second phase of a two-phase remodeling project; that the first phase included the addition of a kitchen nook and a two-car garage; and that immediate neighbors support the proposed project, which will add a second story.

Mercedes Houghtaling, 5325 Doris Way, stated that she is very pleased with the project and believes it will improve the neighborhood.

MOTION: Commissioner Horwich, seconded by Commissioner Drevno, moved to close the public hearing; voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

MOTION: Commissioner Uchima moved for the approval of PRE05-00003, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner LaBouff and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Planning Associate Crecy read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 05-035.

MOTION: Commissioner Faulk moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution No. 05-035. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Uchima and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Chairperson Muratsuchi noted that he visited the Hwangs' property and observed that the project would impact their view, however, since they apparently have come to some resolution with the Cramers, he did not raise this issue.

9B. MOD05-00002: GREG SCHNEIDER (RICHARD H. MEINE & TRUST)

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Modification of an existing Conditional Use Permit (CUP87-58) to allow the conversion of an existing portion of a light manufacturing building to allow the expansion of an existing church facility on property located in the M-2 Zone at 23915 Garnier Street.

Recommendation

Approval.

Planning Associate Crecy introduced the request and noted supplemental material available at the meeting consisting of an additional condition of approval and a revised resolution.

Todd Wendorff, representing the applicant, voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval.

MOTION: Commissioner Uchima, seconded by Commissioner Horwich, moved to close the public hearing; voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

MOTION: Commissioner Drevno moved for the approval of MOD05-00002, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Faulk and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Planning Associate Crecy read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 05-036.

MOTION: Commissioner Horwich moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution No. 05-036. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Uchima and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

9C. MOD05-00003: RANDY W. QUAN

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Modification of a previously approved Conditional Use Permit (CUP00-00020) to extend the hours of operation of an existing restaurant including entertainment and the on-site consumption of alcoholic beverages, in an existing shopping center located in the Hawthorne Boulevard Corridor Specific Plan Meadow Park Sub-District at 22735 Hawthorne Boulevard.

Recommendation

Approval.

Planning Associate Crecy introduced the request.

Randy Quan, applicant, requested that the time limit specified in Condition No. 2 (Modification shall expire after one year if not used) be extended because it could take more than one year for the Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) License to be modified. Planning Manager Isomoto advised that the applicant could request a time extension from the Community Development Director if it becomes necessary because of another jurisdiction's lack of action.

Mr. Quan requested modification of Condition No. 4 (Proprietor shall provide a minimum of one uniformed state licensed security guard daily from 9:00 p.m. to one hour after closing), explaining that he already employs security guards licensed by the state but contracting with a uniformed guard service would cost an additional \$30,000 to 35,000 per year. He asked to be allowed to employ uniformed guards only on nights when there is entertainment.

Planning Associate Crecy indicated that staff would be agreeable to having uniformed guards only when there is entertainment, however, they do feel it is important to have the guards in uniform and ABC representatives concur with this requirement.

Commissioner Faulk recalled that when this restaurant was originally considered, having security guards in the parking lot was a big issue.

Mr. Quan asked if he could provide uniforms for his state licensed employees, and Planning Associate Crecy indicated that that would be acceptable.

In response to questions from the Commission, Mr. Quan clarified that he plans to have entertainment primarily on Friday and Saturday nights, but requested permission for weeknights also because of occasional corporate parties and other events held during the week.

Mr. Quan requested modification of Condition No. 5 (Trash shall not be emptied into outside containers between the hours of 9:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.) because it could be an issue with the health department if waste cannot be properly disposed of. He explained that all bottles are recycled so it would be paper towels and food waste only.

Planning Manager Isomoto suggested that the condition could be modified to state that no recyclable materials shall be deposited into outside containers during these hours. Commissioner Faulk stated that he saw no reason to modify the condition.

With regard to Condition No. 8 (Requiring westerly emergency exit doors to remain closed during business hours and to be equipped with an alarm system), Mr. Quan wanted to clarify that these doors are sometimes used for the loading and unloading of band equipment.

Referring to Condition No. 10 (Requiring trash enclosure doors to be painted) Mr. Quan asked about color selection, and Planning Manager Isomoto advised that the color would be worked out with staff.

With regard to Condition No. 11 (Requiring the pay telephone located on the rear westerly wall to be removed), Mr. Quan explained that he does not own the telephone, but would ask his landlord and Verizon to remove it.

In response to Mr. Quan's inquiry, Planning Associate Crecy provided clarification of Condition No. 12 (Requiring the installation of additional lighting on the west and north elevations).

Commissioner Horwich noted that he had suggested that Mr. Quan obtain some kind of documentation from the Police Department indicating that they have no objection to the modification and that there have been no recent violations.

Mr. Quan reported that contacted the Police Department and they were not willing to release information about calls for service, however, they did indicate that there have been no violations since 2002.

Planning Manager Isomoto advised that staff has spoken with the Police Department and there was no indication that this location has generated any more calls for service than similar establishments in Torrance and while there have been isolated incidents of criminal activity at the shopping center, i.e. stolen/burglarized cars, none have been tied to this particular business.

Commissioner Drevno recalled that there was a problem with motorcycle gangs at this location. Mr. Quan explained that motorcycle enthusiasts still frequent the restaurant but not the individuals who were causing problems.

Commissioner Faulk commented on the lack of opposition from neighbors, recalling that Mr. Quan's original application for a restaurant at this location was met with a lot of resistance. Mr. Quan reported that some of the residents who originally protested the restaurant are now his customers.

MOTION: Commissioner Drevno, seconded by Commissioner Faulk, moved to close the public hearing; voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

MOTION Commissioner Faulk moved for the approval of MOD05-00003, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Drevno and passed by a 5-1 roll call vote, with Commissioner Horwich dissenting.

Planning Associate Crecy read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 05-037.

MOTION: Commissioner Drevno moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution No. 05-037. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Uchima and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

9D. MOD05-00004: IRWIN-PANCAKE ARCHITECTS (GREG IRWIN)

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Modification of previously approved Conditional Use Permits (CUP94-0038 and CUP03-00001) to allow the removal of existing automobile service bays and the enlargement of the existing mini-mart on property located in the C-2 Zone at 1640 Crenshaw Boulevard/ 2467 Carson Street.

Continued to May 4, 2005.

10. RESOLUTIONS

None.

11. PUBLIC WORKSHOP ITEMS

None.

12. MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

12A. ANNUAL REPORT

Chairperson Muratsuchi noted the almost 20% reduction in the number of cases heard by the Commission in 2004 as compared to the previous year.

MOTION: Commissioner Horwich moved to approve the 2004 Planning Commission Annual Report and forward it to the City Council. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Uchima and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

13. REVIEW OF CITY COUNCIL ACTION ON PLANNING MATTERS

Planning Manager Isomoto reviewed recent City Council action on Planning matters, noting that the Peninsula Pontiac remodeling project was approved with the provision that a parking deck be built in five years and the new Lowe's home improvement store on Skypark was approved with a reconfigured five-legged intersection to address safety issues.

14. LIST OF TENTATIVE PLANNING COMMISSION CASES

Planning Manager Isomoto reviewed the agenda for the April 20, 2005 Planning Commission meeting. She noted that the Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission will be conducting a public workshop on the Conservation Element of the General Plan, which includes the issue of historic preservation, on Thursday, April 7. She also noted that the Planning Commission will be conducting a public workshop on the Circulation Element on April 13.

Responding to questions from the Commission, Deputy City Attorney Whitham provided clarification regarding the Brown Act and how it relates to Commissioners' participation in the public workshop to be conducted by the Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission on April 7.

15. ORAL COMMUNICATION

15A. Planning Manager Isomoto noted that Commissioner Botello's going away dinner is scheduled for May 11 at Café Luna.

15B. In response to Commissioner Uchima's inquiry, Planning Manager Isomoto reported that the Shea Homes appeal will be heard by the City Council on April 19.

15C. Referring to the April 7 Public Workshop, Commissioner Horwich stated that he thought the Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission was the appropriate venue to discuss historic preservation.

15D. Planning Manager Isomoto noted that staff had prepared a draft of the Commission's Code of Ethics and asked Commissioners to review it. After Commissioners indicated that it was acceptable as submitted, Planning Manager Isomoto advised that a copy would be posted at the back of the room next to agenda material at future meetings.

15E. Planning Manager Isomoto reported that a resident at 5224 Doris Way submitted a letter in opposition to PRE05-00003 (Agenda Item 9B) after the project had already been approved, citing concerns about loss of privacy, loss of view, increased noise, and the destruction of small town, close knit community.

15F. Chairperson Muratsuchi invited everyone to attend the Bunka-Sai Japanese Cultural Festival on April 16 and 17 at the Cultural Arts Center, noting that the proceeds benefit the Sister City program, which sends Torrance high school students to Kashiwa, Japan each summer.

16. ADJOURNMENT

At 8:13 p.m., the meeting was adjourned to Wednesday, April 13, 2005 at 7:00 p.m. for a General Plan Workshop.

Approved as Written May 18, 2005 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
