

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

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Torrance Planning Commission convened in a regular session at 7:02 p.m. on Wednesday, June 1, 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 Faulk, Guyton, Horwich, LaBouff and Chairperson Muratsuchi.

Absent: Commissioners Drevno and Uchima.

Also Present: Planning Manager Isomoto, Planning Assistant Naughton, Building Regulations Administrator Segovia, Fire Marshal Gebel, Associate Civil Engineer Symons, and Deputy City Attorney Whitham.

MOTION: Commissioner Horwich, seconded by Commissioner Faulk, moved to grant Commissioners Drevno and Uchima excused absences from this meeting; voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

4. POSTING OF THE AGENDA

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

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

None.

6. REQUESTS FOR POSTPONEMENT

Planning Manager Isomoto requested that Agenda Item 12B (Development Impact Fee) be continued to June 15, 2005.

MOTION: Chairperson Muratsuchi, seconded by Commissioner Horwich, moved to continue Agenda Item 12B to June 15, 2005; voice vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioners Drevno and Uchima).

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

7. CONTINUED HEARINGS

7A. WAV05-00003: ELIZABETH K. FINDLEY (TRACY STONE)

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Waiver to allow a reduction in the front-facing garage setback requirements on property located in the R-1 Zone at 105 Paseo de Suenos.

Recommendation

Approval.

Planning Assistant Naughton introduced the request and noted supplemental material available at the meeting.

Tracy Stone, project architect, reported that the applicant has met with her neighbors and addressed their concerns. She voiced her agreement with the recommended conditions of approval.

Commissioner Horwich noted that he had spoken with the two neighbors who had submitted letters expressing concerns about the project and both indicated that they had seen the final plans and no longer had any objections.

MOTION: Commissioner Horwich moved for the approval of WAV05-00003, 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 (absent Commissioners Drevno and Uchima).

Planning Assistant Naughton read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 05-046.

MOTION: Commissioner Horwich moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution No. 05-046. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Faulk and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioners Drevno and Uchima).

8. WAIVERS

8A. WAV05-00010: GARY POTTER

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Waiver to allow a reduction in the front yard setback requirement in conjunction with additions to an existing single-family residence on property located in the R-1 Zone at 22517 Biak Court.

Recommendation

Approval.

Planning Assistant Naughton introduced the request.

Gary Potter, applicant, voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval. He reported that he shared the plans with neighbors and they have no objections to the project.

MOTION: Commissioner Faulk moved for the approval of WAV05-00010, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Guyton and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioners Drevno and Uchima).

Planning Assistant Naughton read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 05-066.

MOTION: Commissioner Faulk moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution No. 05-066. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Horwich and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioners Drevno and Uchima).

9. FORMAL HEARINGS

9A. CUP05-00011: MYUNG CHUNG (CHULHO KIM/ GOOD COMMUNITY CHURCH)

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Conditional Use Permit to allow the operation of a church in an existing two-story office building on property located in the M-2 Zone at 19950 Mariner Avenue.

Recommendation

Approval.

Planning Assistant Naughton introduced the request and noted supplemental material available at the meeting consisting of correspondence from neighboring businesses.

Myung Chung, project architect, voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval. Responding to concerns about parking overflow and noise (supplemental material), he explained that, in effect, the parking provided is almost double the requirement because the project provides the required 50 spaces for the sanctuary and 41 spaces for the office and the hours of operation for the church and the office are completely different. He reported that the building has concrete walls so the noise transmission from the church should be minimal.

In response to Commissioner Faulk's inquiry, Mr. Chung reported that the church has approximately 150 members and is moving because it has outgrown its present location at Normandie and Torrance Boulevard where it has been located for 10 years. He stated that he did not expect a large increase in church membership, but services could be added in the future to accommodate church growth.

Responding to Commissioner Faulk's inquiry, Planning Manager Isomoto confirmed that staff contacted both people who submitted letters and answered their questions.

Commissioner Guyton noted that one of the letters asks to have “No Parking” signs posted to ensure that vehicles do not park in drive aisles and obstruct business traffic and suggested that a condition be included to address this potential problem.

Chairperson Muratsuchi asked if there are other churches located in the Industrial Business Park General Plan designation, and Planning Manager Isomoto reported that there are several. She noted that it is a permitted use within the designation but a Conditional Use Permit is required to ensure that the church will be compatible with its surroundings.

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

MOTION: Commissioner Fauk moved for the approval of CUP05-00011, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff, with the following modification:

Modify

No. 10 That the applicant shall maintain the “No Stopping at Any Time” signage on Mariner and provide signs on the property to prohibit parking in drive aisles to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Guyton and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioners Drevno and Uchima).

Commissioner Horwich noted that he has expressed concerns in the past about allowing churches to locate in industrial parks due the potential for conflict, however, he has not heard of any complaints and it seems to be a good use space.

Planning Assistant Naughton read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 05-067.

MOTION: Commissioner Horwich moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution No. 05-067 as amended. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Guyton and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioners Drevno and Uchima).

9B. PRE05-00012: CHRIS DONLOU

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 in the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 22508 Gaycrest Avenue.

Recommendation

Approval.

Planning Assistant Naughton introduced the request.

Graham Moreland, representing the applicant, voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval.

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

MOTION: Commissioner Horwich moved for the approval of PRE05-00012, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Guyton and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioners Drevno and Uchima).

Planning Assistant Naughton read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 05-068.

MOTION: Commissioner Faulk moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution No. 05-068. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Guyton and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioners Drevno and Uchima).

9C. PRE05-00013: CLAYT HUDSON (TOM AND JULIA POTTS)

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Precise Plan of Development to allow the construction of a second-story addition and remodeling to an existing one-story, single-family residence located in the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 4701 Via El Sereno.

Recommendation

Approval.

Planning Assistant Naughton introduced the request and noted supplemental material available at the meeting consisting of correspondence from Robert Shafer, 4703 Via El Sereno.

Clayt Hudson, project architect, voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval.

Commissioner Horwich noted that Mr. Shafer's e-mail expresses concerns about the storage of construction equipment/materials on this narrow cul-de-sac. Mr. Hudson reported that the garage will be used as a staging area and closed off from view during nighttime hours. He estimated that the project would take 16 weeks and related his understanding that there would be no construction work done on weekends.

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

MOTION: Commissioner Faulk moved for the approval of PRE05-00013, 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 (absent Commissioners Drevno and Uchima).

Planning Assistant Naughton read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 05-069.

MOTION: Commissioner Horwich moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution No. 05-069. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Guyton and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioners Drevno and Uchima).

9D. MOD05-00006 (CUP98-00015): MCDONALDS CORPORATION (CARLOS MADRIGAL)

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Modification of CUP98-00015 to allow the operation of a 24-hour drive-through service window for an existing McDonald's restaurant located in the M-1 Zone at 24650 Crenshaw Boulevard.

Recommendation

Approval.

Planning Assistant Naughton introduced the request.

Carlos Madrigal, construction manager for McDonalds Corporation, voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval.

Commissioner Faulk questioned whether extending McDonald's fast food operations to 24 hours a day was an area-wide trend.

Mr. Madrigal explained that each site is unique, however, the company tries to get permission for 24-hour service if possible. He reported that, currently, there are no McDonald's operating 24 hours a day in Torrance and typical hours of operation are 5:30 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. for the dining room, with the drive-through window open until midnight or 1:00 a.m.

Commissioner Faulk related his understanding that 24-hour drive-through operations are susceptible to crime.

Mr. Madrigal stated that McDonald's has found that remaining open 24 hours actually discourages criminal activity.

In response to Commissioner Guyton's request for information about vandalism that has occurred at this location, Mr. Madrigal explained that the Animal Liberation Front has covered the building with graffiti on four occasions over the past year.

Responding to questions from the Commission, Mr. Madrigal stated that the existing mini-market and gas station on this site have approval to operate 24 hours a day and related his understanding that the nearby In-N-Out Burgers is open until 2:00 a.m. on weekends and midnight on weekdays.

Chairperson Muratsuchi asked what steps were being taken to mitigate the impact on single-family residences adjacent to this site in the city of Lomita.

Mr. Madrigal noted that there are conditions requiring the speaker box to be redirected away from single-family residences and the installation of a noise screen along the drive-through's southern planter (Condition Nos. 3 and 5). He explained that McDonalds has developed a noise shield similar to a bus shelter that is very effective in buffering noise and orders will be displayed on a screen, which cuts down on conversation during ordering.

Chairperson Muratsuchi expressed concerns about having a 24-hour operation directly adjacent to single-family homes, pointing out that shielding the speaker box would not block noise from blaring car stereos in the parking lot.

Mr. Madrigal offered to post "No Loitering" signs and a sign with a hot line phone number for neighbors to contact if there is a problem.

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

Chairperson Muratsuchi stated that he is particularly sensitive to fast food/ retail operations next to single-family homes because he lives in such a situation. He noted that businesses have no control over inconsiderate customers and these customers are not likely to pay attention to signage. He indicated that he initially considered proposing the same hours as In-N-Out Burgers, but there are no residences near that restaurant. He suggested that residents in Lomita should be afforded the same protection from noise as Torrance residents.

Commissioner Guyton stated that he would like to support McDonald's efforts to deal with the graffiti problem and suggested the possibility of extending the height of the south wall if noise becomes a problem. He noted that neighbors adjacent to a McDonald's at 182nd and Crenshaw requested an eight-foot wall and it seems to have addressed their concerns.

Planning Manager Isomoto reported that staff considered requiring the height of the wall to be increased, but decided not to because there have been no complaints from adjacent neighbors.

Commissioner Horwich questioned whether Lomita residents were notified about this hearing.

The public hearing was reopened so Mr. Madrigal could comment.

Mr. Madrigal confirmed that the owners of the two homes that border the site were notified. He indicated that McDonald's would be willing to increase the height of the block wall by two feet but residents may not want such a high wall. As an alternative, he suggested a one-foot extension of the wall, with the planting of trees to provide an added barrier, or enlarging the shelter over the speaker box to accommodate the full length of a car.

Planning Manager Isomoto advised that 65 hearing notices were mailed to surrounding property owners, the majority of which were in the city of Lomita.

A brief discussion ensued, and Commissioners expressed their reluctance to require an eight-foot wall without the consent of adjacent residents.

Planning Manager Isomoto proposed that that the Commission include a condition requiring an eight-foot wall “to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director” which would allow staff to work with the applicant and adjacent residents to determine an appropriate height.

Mr. Madrigal indicated that he had no objection to such a condition.

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

MOTION: Commissioner Faulk moved for the approval of MOD05-00006, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff, with the following modification:

Add

- That the height of the southerly wall shall be increased to eight feet to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Horwich and passed by a 4-1 roll call vote, with Chairperson Muratsuchi dissenting (absent Commissioners Drevno and Uchima).

Planning Assistant Naughton read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 05-070.

MOTION: Commissioner Horwich moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution No. 05-070 as amended. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Guyton and passed by a 4-1 roll call vote, with Chairperson Muratsuchi dissenting (absent Commissioners Drevno and Uchima).

10. RESOLUTIONS

None.

11. PUBLIC WORKSHOP ITEMS

None.

12. MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

12. MIS05-00097: ANTONIO TELLEZ

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a one-year Time Extension of a previously approved Tentative Parcel Map (DIV03-00006) for condominium purposes on property located in the R-2 Zone at 18524 Mansel Avenue.

Recommendation

Approval.

Planning Assistant Naughton introduced the request.

Antonio Tellez, applicant, reported that the project is under construction and additional time is needed to record the parcel map with the LA County Recorder's Office.

MOTION: Chairperson Muratsuchi moved for the approval of MIS05-00097. The motion was seconded by Commissioner LaBouff and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioners Drevno and Uchima).

Planning Assistant Naughton read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 05-071.

MOTION: Chairperson Muratsuchi moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution No. 05-071. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Horwich and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioners Drevno and Uchima).

12B. DEVELOPMENT IMPACT FEE

Planning Commission review and consideration of a study for a proposed Development Impact Fee Program to be paid by developers. This fee will contribute to undergrounding utilities and improvements to traffic, sewer and storm drain systems.

Continued to June 15, 2005.

13. RECENT CITY COUNCIL ACTION ON PLANNING MATTERS

None.

14. LIST OF TENTATIVE PLANNING COMMISSION CASES

Planning Manager Isomoto reviewed the agenda for the June 15, 2005 Planning Commission meeting.

15. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

15A. In response to Commissioner Horwich's inquiry, Planning Manager Isomoto reported that Home Depot did not request permission from the City to close off 60 spaces in their parking lot over Memorial Day weekend. She noted that she has requested that Environmental Division staff contact Home Depot regarding merchandise blocking the sidewalk in front of the building.

15B. Planning Manager Isomoto suggested that Time Extensions be moved to the top of the agenda for future meetings so that applicants would not have to sit through lengthy hearings for an item that is rarely controversial, and it was the consensus of the Commission to do so.

15B. Commissioner Faulk announced the City Yard Open House on Saturday, June 4, which will include opportunities for the public to provide input on the General Plan Update.

15C. Planning Manager Isomoto reviewed the schedule of upcoming workshops for the General Plan Update.

16. ADJOURNMENT

At 8:20 p.m., the meeting was adjourned to Wednesday, June 15, 2005, at 7:00 p.m.

Approved as Written July 20, 2005 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
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