

**INDEX**  
**TORRANCE PLANNING COMMISSION – AUGUST 20, 2014**

<b><u>SUBJECT</u></b>	<b><u>PAGE</u></b>
<b><u>OPENING CEREMONIES</u></b>	
1. Call to Order	1
2. Flag Salute	1
3. Roll Call/Motions for Excused Absence	1
4. Posting of the Agenda	1
5. Approval of Minutes	1
6. Requests for Postponement	1
7. <b><u>ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #1</u></b>	1
8. <b><u>TIME EXTENSIONS</u></b>	1
9. <b><u>SIGN HEARINGS</u></b>	1
10. <b><u>CONTINUED HEARINGS</u></b>	
10A. ZON14-00003, GPA14-00003, DIV14-00008: Chandler Ranch Properties, LLC/ BRI, LLC/ Chandler Perris, LLC <span style="float: right;"><i>Res. 14-037</i></span>	2-3
11. <b><u>WAIVERS</u></b>	3
12. <b><u>FORMAL HEARINGS</u></b>	
12A. PRE14-00007: Charles Belak-Berger (Stiles) <span style="float: right;"><i>Res. 14-050</i></span>	3-5
12B. CUP14-00018: Habitat for Humanity of Greater LA <span style="float: right;"><i>Res. 14-051</i></span>	5-6
12C. CUP14-00019: Arthur Murray Dance Studio <span style="float: right;"><i>Res. 14-052</i></span>	6
13. <b><u>RESOLUTIONS</u></b>	6
14. <b><u>PUBLIC WORKSHOP ITEMS</u></b>	6
15. <b><u>MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS</u></b>	
15A. Community Development Director Weekly Summary Reports	7
16. <b><u>CITY COUNCIL ACTION ON PLANNING MATTERS</u></b>	7
17. <b><u>LIST OF TENTATIVE PLANNING COMMISSION CASES</u></b>	7
18. <b><u>ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #2</u></b>	7-8
19. <b><u>ADJOURNMENT</u></b>	8

At 8:17 p.m., the meeting was adjourned to Wednesday, September 17, 2014 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, August 20, 2014 in City Council Chambers at Torrance City Hall.

**2. SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner D'anjou.

**3. ROLL CALL/ MOTIONS FOR EXCUSED ABSENCE**

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

Absent: Commissioner Gibson (excused).

Also Present: Planning Manager Lodan, Planning Associate Martinez,  
Plans Examiner Noh, Fire Prevention Manager Mapes and  
Assistant City Attorney Sullivan

**4. POSTING OF THE AGENDA**

Planning Manager Lodan reported that the agenda was posted on the Public Notice Board at 3031 Torrance Boulevard on Friday, August 15, 2014.

**5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Skoll moved to approve the August 6, 2014 Planning Commission minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Commissioner D'anjou and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

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

**7. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #1 – None.**

\*

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.**

**10A. ZON14-00003, GPA14-00003, DIV14-00008: CHANDLER RANCH PROPERTIES, LLC/ BRI, LLC / CHANDLER PERRIS, LLC**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a “City Boundary Modification” between Torrance and Rolling Hills Estates to allow the annexation/de-annexation of 41 acres, a Zone Change and General Plan Amendment to designate the annexed land as P-1 Zone, Public/Quasi-Public/Open Space Land Use Designation, in conjunction with Tentative Parcel Map 61287 as it relates to land located in Torrance, and notice of intent to consider adoption of a Development Agreement on properties located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1/R1-PP/A-1 Zone. The environmental clearance for this project has been completed by the lead agency, Rolling Hills Estates, which certified a 2011 Final Environmental Impact Report (SCH#2008011027) for the project and later adopted a 2014 Addendum pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21166, determining that none of the triggers that would have required further environmental review had occurred. The City of Torrance is acting as responsible agency pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15096.

**Recommendation:** Approval.

Planning Associate Martinez introduced the request.

Andrew Fogg, Cox, Castle & Nicholson LLP, legal counsel for the applicant, voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval. He provided an overview of the project, which involves a 41-acre land swap between the City of Torrance and the City of Rolling Hills Estates, the reconfiguration of the Rolling Hills Country Club golf course, and the building of 114 homes within Rolling Hills Estates. He reported that the land being annexed to Torrance will be deed restricted so that it will remain permanent open space and it includes what is commonly known as Dead Horse Canyon. He clarified that an error in the Final EIR indicating that all students would attend Palos Verdes schools has been corrected in the Errata to the Final EIR and no changes are proposed to school district boundaries. He explained that the project is expected to generate about 20 students for Torrance schools and the school district will be compensated accordingly. He noted that some students may prefer to go to Palos Verdes schools, in which case there is a permitting process and this can be handled on a case-by-case basis.

Chairperson Polcari asked about the timeline for the project, and Mr. Fogg reported that the annexation/de-annexation must be approved by LAFCO (Los Angeles County Local Area Formation Commission), so the earliest construction would begin is the first quarter of 2015.

Commissioner Skoll asked about the portion of the gravel pit/landfill to remain in Torrance. Mr. Fogg explained that the site will be remediated and an extensive storm water system will be installed to ensure that all run-off flows to the golf course and then the land will be used to reconfigure the golf course, with all costs to be paid for by the developer.

Commissioner Watson questioned whether there would be public access to the open space being annexed to Torrance.

Michael Cope, representing Chandler, reported that the land has severe topographic features making it unsuitable for recreation so it will be reserved as passive open space. He confirmed that it is currently fenced and will remain so.

In response to Commissioner Watson's inquiry, Mr. Cope provided clarification regarding the new residential development to be built in Rolling Hills Estates, explaining that there will be one entrance into the development with a gate house, which will not be manned.

At the Commission's request, Mr. Fogg reported on the storm water system, which is designed to capture 100% of rainwater, filter it and direct it to the large lake in the center of the golf course.

Commissioner Watson commented positively on the project, noting that the new storm water system will benefit nearby residents because there have been problems in this area.

Commissioner Skoll noted that in the Development Agreement - Recitals Item G(4) it states that the agreement will generate substantial revenues for the City and questioned what form these revenues would take.

Mr. Fogg advised that in 2007, the City of Torrance entered into an agreement with the developer that called for a payment of \$200,000 at that time and another \$9.8 million to be paid upon recordation of the final map.

Chairperson Polcari invited public comment and no one came forward to speak.

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

**MOTION:** Commissioner Skoll moved to approve ZON14-00003, GPA14-00003 and DIV14-00008, 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 (absent Commissioner Gibson).

Planning Associate Martinez read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 14-037.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Skoll moved to adopt Planning Commission Resolution No. 14-037. The motion was seconded by Commissioner D'anjou and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

Planning Manager Lodan reported that the Zone Change and General Plan Amendment require City Council approval so the entire project will be forwarded to the Council for review in the near future.

11. **WAIVERS** – None.

12. **FORMAL HEARINGS**

12A. **PRE14-00007: CHARLES BELAK-BERGER (GREG AND JOELLEN STILES)**

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 on property located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 22317 Redbeam Avenue. This project is Categorically Exempt from CEQA per Guidelines Section 15301 – Existing Facilities.

**Recommendation** – Approval.

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

Charles Belak-Berger, project architect, voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval, but requested that Conditions 4, 5 and 6 be amended to allow a three-inch increase in the project's maximum height. He explained that this is necessary because there was some confusion regarding the location of the lowest adjacent grade from which the height of the project is measured and offered his assurance that the height increase would not impact any of the neighbors. He briefly described the project, noting that it features a Craftsman-style design with a large front porch.

In response to Commissioner Watson's inquiry, Mr. Belak-Berger confirmed that the shed referenced in the letter contained in the supplemental material will be removed.

Joellen Brady Stiles, 22317 Redbeam Avenue, applicant, provided information about the history of the property, noting that she grew up in this house, which was built in the 1950s, and hopes to eventually pass it on to her son.

Steve Griggs, 22314 Warmside Avenue, stated that now that it has been confirmed that the shed will be removed, he had no objections to the project.

In response to Chairperson Polcari's inquiry, Mr. Belak-Berger reported that he hopes to break ground on the project by the end of the year.

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

Commissioner Skoll asked staff to comment on the proposed 3-inch height increase, and Planning Manager Lodan indicated that staff had no objection since the project was observed to have no impact on the view, light, air or privacy of neighbors.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Skoll moved to approve PRE14-00007, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff with the following modifications:

**Modify**

- No. 4 That the maximum height of the addition at the highest point of the roof shall not exceed a height of ~~24.28~~ 24.53 feet, as represented by the survey elevation of ~~425.50~~ 125.75 feet for the highest ridge...
- No. 5 That the final height of the structure shall be certified by a licensed surveyor/engineer prior to requesting a framing or roof-sheathing inspection and shall not exceed a survey elevation of ~~425.50~~ 125.75 feet for the highest ridge...
- No. 6 That revised elevations showing a maximum height of ~~24.28~~ 24.53 feet shall be submitted to Planning and this maximum height shall be reflected on the final Building Permit plan submittal to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director.

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

Planning Associate Martinez read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 14-050.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Skoll moved to adopt Planning Commission Resolution No. 14-050 as amended. The motion was seconded by Commissioner D'anjou and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

**12B. CUP14-00018: ERIN RANK, HABITAT FOR HUMANITY OF GREATER LA (GARFIELD DEVELOPMENT LTD)**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Conditional Use Permit to allow the operation of a Habitat for Humanity ReStore, involving retail sales and donation/recycling center, on property located in the M-2 Zone at 18600 Crenshaw Boulevard. This project is Categorically Exempt from CEQA per Guidelines Section 15301.

**Recommendation:** Approval.

Planning Associate Martinez introduced the request and noted supplemental material consisting of a revised resolution.

Erin Rank, Habitat for Humanity of Greater LA, applicant, voiced her agreement with the recommended conditions of approval. She provided background information about the Habitat for Humanity ReStore, which sells new and used building materials that have been donated to generate revenue for the organization. She reported that the Torrance store will be one of three in the Los Angeles area and will replace an existing store in Gardena and each store grosses between \$1.8 and \$1.9 million annually.

Chairperson Polcari related his belief that this should be a good location for the store since it's close to the freeway.

Commissioner Watson noted that she has purchased items at the Gardena store for her home, including a front door.

In response to Commissioner Skoll's inquiry, Ms. Rank confirmed that she had reviewed the revised conditions in the supplemental material and was in agreement with them.

Chairperson Polcari invited public comment, and no one came forward to speak.

Ms. Rank invited Commissioners to attend the grand opening of the store, which is expected to take place in 10-12 weeks.

Commissioner Skoll commented positively on the Habitat for Humanity organization and the work they do.

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

**MOTION:** Commissioner Watson moved to approve CUP14-00018, 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 Commissioner Gibson).

Planning Associate Martinez read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 14-051.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Watson moved to adopt Planning Commission Resolution No. 14-051 as revised per supplemental material. The motion was seconded by Commissioner D'anjou and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

**12C. CUP14-00019: ARTHUR MURRAY DANCE STUDIO (ROLLING HILLS PLAZA LLC)**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Conditional Use Permit to allow the operation of a dance studio in an existing 2,562 square-foot commercial tenant space located in the PD Zone at 2521 Pacific Coast Highway. This project is Categorically Exempt from CEQA per Guidelines Section 15401 – Existing Facilities.

**Recommendation:** Approval.

Planning Associate Martinez introduced the request.

Renzo Zegarra, representing Arthur Murray Dance Studio, applicant, voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval. He related his belief that the business has a positive impact on the community as it provides an opportunity for someone to learn a skill in a couple months that will last a lifetime. He provided an overview of the dance studio's operation, noting that it is open 1:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. Monday through Friday with a dinner break from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. He reported that there are practice sessions on Friday evenings and this is the studio's busiest time with 5-6 couples in attendance.

Responding to questions from the Commission, Mr. Zegarra reported that Arthur Murray Dance Studios has been in business for 60 years and the closest dance studio to Torrance is in Long Beach.

Chairperson Polcari invited public comment, and no one came forward to speak.

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

**MOTION:** Commissioner D'anjou moved to approve CUP14-00019, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Skoll and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

Planning Associate Martinez read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 14-052.

**MOTION:** Commissioner D'anjou moved to adopt Planning Commission Resolution No. 14-052. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Skoll and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

**13. RESOLUTIONS – None.**

**14. PUBLIC WORKSHOP ITEMS – None.**

**15. MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS**

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

Planning Manager Lodan noted that Community Development Director Weekly Summary Reports for August 1 and August 7, 2014 were distributed to the Commission.

**16. REVIEW OF CITY COUNCIL ACTION ON PLANNING MATTERS**

Planning Manager Lodan reported that former Planning Commissioner Mike Griffiths was appointed to the open position on the City Council at the August 12 Council meeting.

Chairperson Polcari expressed concerns about having two vacancies on the Planning Commission.

Assistant City Attorney Sullivan related his understanding that the appointment process will take place after a Commissioner Certification class has been held to ensure that there is a sufficient pool of qualified candidates and a date for the class has not been set.

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

Planning Manager Lodan noted that the Planning Commission meeting of September 3, 2014 has been cancelled due to the Labor Day holiday and the agenda for the September 17 meeting has not been finalized.

**18. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #2**

**18A.** Larry Fisher reported that he and his wife own two businesses in Torrance, one of which is a consignment shop located at the southwest corner of Pacific Coast Highway and Hawthorne Boulevard. Using diagrams to illustrate, he expressed concerns about the impact of the elimination of the left-turn lane from Hawthorne Boulevard onto 242<sup>nd</sup> Street, pointing out that it will make it more difficult to get to businesses on the west side of the street and increase cut-through traffic in the residential neighborhood. He related his understanding that the elimination of the lane was approved in conjunction with the commercial development on the southeast corner of the intersection and was being implemented as part of Measure R improvements to the PCH/Hawthorne Boulevard intersection.

Commissioners recommended that Mr. Fisher bring this matter to the attention of the Traffic Commission and staff offered to provide information about the date and time of Traffic Commission meetings.

Assistant City Attorney Sullivan disclosed that Mr. Fisher is his son's scoutmaster and he has coached Mr. Fisher's son in soccer.

**18B.** Commissioner Skoll asked about the status of the Sunrise senior living project on Hawthorne Boulevard, and Planning Manager Lodan advised that building permits have been pulled and construction is expected to start in the near future.

**18C.** Commissioner Watson asked about the project on the former Daily Breeze site, and Planning Manager Lodan reported that the entitlements remain active, but the hospital has indicated that they want to revise project.

**18D.** Chairperson Polcari related his understanding that construction has halted on the Ferrari dealership, and Assistant City Attorney Sullivan reported that he observed activity at the site earlier today.

**18E.** Chairperson Polcari asked about a potential project involving Butcher Hill, and Planning Manager Lodan indicated that staff has not heard anything about this site.

**19. ADJOURNMENT**

At 8:17 p.m., the meeting was adjourned to Wednesday, September 17, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

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Approved as submitted October 1, 2014 s/ Rebecca Poirier, City Clerk
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