

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

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Torrance Planning Commission convened in a regular session at 6:06 p.m. on Wednesday, November 2, 2005, in City Council Chambers at Torrance City Hall.

2. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Drevno.

3. ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Drevno, Fauk, Horwich, Muratsuchi* and Chairperson Uchima.
*Arrived at 6:10 p.m.

Absent: None.

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

4. POSTING OF THE AGENDA

MOTION: Commissioner Horwich, seconded by Commissioner Drevno, 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 Commissioner Muratsuchi).

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Commissioner Horwich moved for the approval of the August 17, 2005 minutes as submitted. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Drevno; voice vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioner Muratsuchi).

MOTION: Commissioner Drevno moved for the approval of the September 7, 2005 minutes as submitted. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Horwich; voice vote reflected unanimous approval, with Chairperson Uchima abstaining (absent Commissioner Muratsuchi).

6. REQUESTS FOR POSTPONEMENT

Planning Manager Isomoto relayed requests to continue Agenda Item 8A (PRE04-00015, WAV05-00017: Michael Wellens), 8B (PRE05-00023, WAV05-00013: Les Arneson), and 10K (PRE05-00033: Pritzkat Architects) to November 16, 2005.

(Commissioner Muratsuchi arrived at this time)

MOTION: Commissioner Faulk, seconded by Commissioner Drevno, moved to continue Agenda Items 8A, 8B and 10K to November 16, 2005; voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

Chairperson Uchima announced that the hearings would not re-advertised because they were continued to a date certain.

*

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

Planning Manager Isomoto apologized for any inconvenience caused by the cancellation of the October 19 Planning Commission meeting. Noting the lengthy agenda for tonight's meeting, she asked that speakers adhere to the 3-minute time limit as much as possible.

7. TIME EXTENSIONS

7A. MIS05-00244: ALBERT C. EDWARDS/ ELEGANT TOWNHOMES

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Time Extension of two previously approved Division of Lots (DIV03-00014 and DIV03-00015) to allow the subdivision of two existing lots for condominium purposes on property located in the R-2 Zone at 18417 and 18421 Mansel Avenue.

Recommendation

Approval.

Planning Associate Crecy introduced the request.

MOTION: Commissioner Faulk moved for the approval of MIS05-00244. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Horwich and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Planning Assistant Naughton read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution Nos. 05-148 and 05-157.

MOTION: Commissioner Drevno moved for the adoption of Resolution No. 05-148. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Horwich and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

MOTION: Commissioner Faulk moved for the adoption of Resolution No. 05-157. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Horwich and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

8. CONTINUED HEARINGS

8A. PRE04-00015, WAV05-00017: MICHAEL AND CAROLYN WELLENS

Planning Commission consideration of a request for approval of a Precise Plan of Development to allow the construction of a new two-story, single-family residence with a semi-subterranean garage and a height waiver to allow the structure to exceed the 27-foot height limitation on property located in the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 208 Paseo de Granada.

Continued to November 16, 2005.

8B. PRE05-00023, WAV05-00013: LES ARNESON

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Precise Plan of Development to allow the construction of first and second-story additions to an existing one-story, single-family residence and a Waiver of the required side and front-facing garage setback requirements on property located in the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 207 Via Anita.

Continued to November 16, 2005.

9. WAIVERS

9A. WAV05-00026: ANNETTE DIETZ

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a height Waiver to allow a new retaining wall to exceed the maximum height limit in conjunction with first-floor additions to an existing one-story, single-family residence on property located in the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 22503 Warmside Avenue.

Recommendation

Approval.

Planning Associate Crecy introduced the request.

Annette Dietz, applicant, voiced her agreement with the recommended conditions of approval.

MOTION: Commissioner Muratsuchi moved for the approval of WAV05-00026, 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 Assistant Naughton read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 05-149.

MOTION: Commissioner Muratsuchi moved for the adoption of Resolution No. 05-149. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Faulk and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

9B. WAV05-00027: GREG AND LEE ANNE ROBINSON

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Waiver to allow a reduction of the side yard setback requirement in conjunction with the construction of a second unit above a four-car garage on property located in the R-3 Zone at 1315 Arlington Avenue.

Recommendation

Approval.

Planning Associate Crecy introduced the request and noted supplemental material available at the meeting.

Greg Robinson, applicant, briefly described the proposed project, noting that the existing 18-inch side yard setback would be increased to 4 feet, which is 6 inches less than the required setback. He voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval with the exception of Condition No. 5, which prohibits shower or bathing facilities in the playroom to prevent its future conversion into a third unit. He explained that he has four young boys and it would be helpful if they could clean up when they come back from the beach before entering the house. He offered to allow inspections to prove that the playroom has not been converted into a third unit.

Planning Manager Isomoto indicated that staff had no objections to removing this restriction as long as the applicant submits a letter affirming that the playroom shall not be rented out a third unit.

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

MOTION: Commissioner Horwich moved for the approval of WAV05-00027, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff, with the following modification:

Modify

No. 5 That the applicant shall submit a letter stating that the playroom shall not be rented as a third unit.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Muratsuchi and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Planning Assistant Naughton read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 05-150.

MOTION: Commissioner Drevno moved for the adoption of Resolution No. 05-150 as amended. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Muratsuchi and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

10. FORMAL HEARINGS

10A. PRE05-00027: TED AND CINDY NIIDA (WESLEY S. OHYE)

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Precise Plan of Development to allow the construction of first-story additions to an existing one-story, single-family residence on property located in the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 4538 Highgrove Avenue.

Recommendation

Approval.

Planning Associate Crecy introduced the request.

Wesley Ohye, project architect, voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval.

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

MOTION: Commissioner Muratsuchi moved for the approval of PRE05-00027, 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 Assistant Naughton read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 05-151.

MOTION: Commissioner Muratsuchi moved for the adoption of Resolution No. 05-151. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Horwich and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

10B. PRE05-00029, WAV05-00018: CHRIS AND RAE FRIES (ROBERT HARDING)

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Precise Plan of Development to allow the construction of first and second-story additions to an existing one-story, single-family residence and a Waiver to allow a reduction in the rear yard setback requirement on property located in the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 22626 Susana Avenue.

Recommendation

Approval.

Planning Associate Crecy introduced the request.

Chris and Rae Fries, applicants, voiced their agreement with the recommended conditions of approval.

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

MOTION: Commissioner Faulk moved for the approval of PRE05-00029 and WAV05-00018, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Drevno and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Referring to Section 3a of the application, Commissioner Horwich commented that he did not believe depriving the property owners of the ability to build their dream home constitutes an unreasonable hardship.

Planning Assistant Naughton read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution Nos. 05-152 and 05-153.

MOTION: Commissioner Drevno moved for the adoption of Resolution Nos. 05-152 and 05-153. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Horwich and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

10C. PRE05-00032: CHRIS BENOIT

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Precise Plan of Development to allow the construction of 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 2710 Ridgeland Road.

Recommendation

Approval.

Planning Associate Crecy introduced the request and noted supplemental material available at the meeting.

Chris Benoit, 2710 Ridgeland Road, applicant, voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval. He stated that he would like to enlarge his home to accommodate his growing family and believed the addition would have no adverse impact on the view, light, air or privacy of neighboring properties.

Ken Geddes, 2421 Grand Summit Road, voiced objections to the proposed project, stating that it would block sunlight from his patio and master bedroom and intrude on his privacy. He contended that allowing such a large home on a small lot would set a precedent and result in a cumulative detrimental impact to the neighborhood.

Lynn Hollister, 2725 Grand Summit Road, indicated that she shares Mr. Geddes' concerns and has an additional concern that the project would exacerbate existing drainage problems on her property.

Maurice Dohner, 2707 Grand Summit Road, noted his agreement with his neighbors' comments. He reported that the notice of hearing incorrectly stated that the existing residence was two-story, which led to some confusion, and requested that the hearing be continued due to this error.

Planning Manager Isomoto related her understanding that the error was corrected in a second notice that was sent out to residents.

Dolores Armstrong, 2729 Grand Summit, voiced objections to the proposed project due to the impact on her privacy.

JoAnne Grieger, 2710 Grand Summit, stated that the project would take away what is left of her view.

Pat Maki, 2714 Ridgeland Road, contended that the project was too large for the lot and expressed concerns that it would block sunlight from her property. She indicated that impact on her property was somewhat improved after the silhouette was corrected. She requested that no construction be allowed before 8:00 a.m.; that obscure glass be used for the second-story bathroom window; that the exterior light facing her property be eliminated from the balcony; and that the second-story addition be shifted more toward that street and lowered in height.

Commissioner Muratsuchi announced that he had a previously scheduled engagement and had to leave at this time, but would return as soon as possible. He exited Council Chambers at 6:45 p.m.

Mr. Benoit, using photographs to illustrate, disputed claims that the project would impair views, intrude on privacy and block sunlight. With regard to 2714 Ridgeland Road, he noted that a large tree on Ms. Maki's property already blocks her view, light and air and the only window that would face her property has a five-foot sill height. He agreed to have only one light on the southeast corner of the balcony, with no light facing Ms. Maki's property. He explained that his property will drain to the street so it will have no impact on the drainage of adjacent properties. Referring to the properties on Grand Summit behind his home, he reported that shrubs, trees and patio covers block the view into these homes so there would be no intrusion on privacy.

Referring to Ms. Maki's remarks, he clarified that the silhouette was originally constructed incorrectly as the whole back wall extended 3 feet too far into the rear yard and the additional 4-foot setback on the northwest corner was not reflected, therefore the silhouette was corrected and re-certified, which resulted in its being pulled forward 7 feet on Ms. Maki's side. Responding to questions from the Commission, he reported that both floors have 9-foot ceilings, with a vaulted ceiling in the master bedroom.

Commissioner Horwich asked about the possibility of scaling down the size of the project and reducing plate heights. Chairperson Uchima suggested changing the pitch of the roof to further reduce the height of the structure.

Mr. Benoit stated that he could eliminate the upstairs laundry room, which would reduce the square footage by 77 square feet, and possibly lower ceiling heights to 8 feet.

Commissioners suggested that the hearing be continued so Mr. Benoit could discuss these changes with his architect, who was not present at the meeting, and Mr. Benoit agreed.

Commissioner Drevno suggested that Mr. Benoit check with his wife before agreeing to eliminate the upstairs laundry room.

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

Commissioner Faulk reported that he visited the site and surrounding properties on two occasions and did not observe view, light or privacy impacts that rose to a level of significance that would cause him to vote against the project. He related his observation that the homes directly behind the project are significantly lower in elevation and the view into them is blocked by dense foliage and patio covers and that a tree on Ms. Maki's property blocks a large portion of the view from her second-story window. He stated that while flags are visible from homes on the west side of Grand Summit when looking up toward the sky, the distance between these homes and the subject property is considerable and he did not believe this impact was significant.

Mr. Benoit's architect arrived at this time and it was the consensus of the Commission to defer action on this item while Mr. Benoit and his architect conferred on possible changes.

10D. CUP05-00028, DIV05-00015: MIKE BIHN (MICHAEL MULLIGAN)

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Conditional Use Permit to allow the construction of four new condominium units and a Division of Lot for condominium purposes on property located in the R-3 Zone at 1927 Plaza del Amo and 2312 Andreo Avenue.

Recommendation

Approval.

Planning Assistant Naughton introduced the request.

Mike Bihn, representing Michael Mulligan, voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval.

Liz Fobes, 1731 Andreo Avenue, stated that she was strongly opposed to the proposed project. She reported that she and the vast majority of her neighbors believe that condominiums are incompatible with this historic neighborhood. She noted that approximately two-thirds of those who have attended General Plan Update Workshops favor some kind of legislation to protect Torrance's historic resources. She explained that experts have indicated that most, if not all, of the original Torrance tract in which this project is located could qualify for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, therefore, an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) must be prepared before any development can take place. She noted that the City Council has recognized the importance of the City's historic resources by adopting a property tax abatement program to encourage the preservation of these resources. She reported that long-term studies have concluded that property values in historic neighborhoods appreciate much faster than in the community at large and maintained that residents are robbed of this capital appreciation when developers are allowed to build inappropriate structures in pursuit of the quick buck. She contended that the scale of the project was incompatible with the primarily small lots in the area and urged the Commission to deny the project and encourage the property owner to renovate the existing structure, which may or may not be historic. She submitted comments from her neighbor Dayna Berman, 1504 Post Avenue, indicating her opposition to new curb cuts and the division of lots in Old Torrance.

Don Barnard, 2028 Gramercy Avenue, indicated that he was not opposed to a condominium development, but believes it is very important that the project reflect the charm and character of the neighborhood because this site is a focal point when entering Old Torrance from Plaza del Amo. He noted that he has been successful in working with other developers to arrive at projects that are mutually agreeable, however, Mr. Mulligan has failed to return his calls. He recommended that the buildings be wood-framed, with corbels and other design elements of Craftsman homes, and that all stucco be eliminated.

Raymie McCoy, 1918 W. 220th Street, stated that he was opposed to the project because it was not consistent with the neighborhood and cited a four-unit condominium development built across the street from his home as an example of a project with appealing, Craftsman-style architecture.

Sean Baldwin, 1929 Plaza del Amo, voiced his opposition to the demolition of the existing structure, stating that it has a lot of historical features including a 1913 furnace that was used to burn trash.

Bonnie Mae Barnard, Save Historical Old Torrance, stated that her organization is not opposed to development and will be supporting two other projects on tonight's agenda, however, the proposed project does not fit in with this historic neighborhood. She pointed out that the City Council recently rejected two projects because they did not conform to the area. She noted her agreement with Mr. McCoy's comments about the La Charite project at 220th Street and Cabrillo.

Chairperson Uchima questioned whether Ms. Barnard had seen the elevations because the project has a Craftsman-style appearance.

Referring to the staff report, Planning Manager Isomoto noted that the project features a California Bungalow-style design with wood window sills, entry doors and attic siding and that staff was recommending the addition of horizontal wood siding along the building street frontages to complete the Craftsman-style appearance.

After reviewing the elevations, Ms. Barnard characterized the project's design as a fake Craftsman, which was little more than a rectangular apartment building with a bit of wood siding thrown on.

Janet Payne, 1318 Engracia Avenue, voiced objections to the proposed project, maintaining that it was too large and out of character with the neighborhood. She contended that the design was "faux Craftsman," citing the front-facing garages, stucco exteriors, block walls and the lack of defined entries. She urged the Commission to send the project back to the drawing board and suggested that Mr. Mulligan take a look at the La Charite project for inspiration.

Mr. Bihn noted that the project is comprised of two freestanding buildings, the same as the La Charite project, and the driveways are in a similar arrangement. He pointed out that there are a variety of architectural styles in Old Torrance because it was not developed at the same time and forcing everyone to build in the same architectural style flies in the face of the history of this area. He explained that Mr. Mulligan prefers to use stucco for exteriors because he believes it is superior to wood, but expressed his willingness to use whatever material the Commission believes is appropriate. He stated

that staff has requested the use of block walls around the perimeter and enclosing private patios, but the applicant had no objection to using wooden fences instead.

In response to Commissioner Horwich's inquiry, Mr. Bihn confirmed that the applicant had agreed to incorporate porches into the design as outlined in the staff report.

Asked about the difference between the La Charite project and the proposed project, Mr. Bihn explained that the La Charite project has more architectural detailing, more wood and a striking paint scheme and indicated that Mr. Mulligan would be willing to do the same thing.

Commissioner Faulk stated that he is a strong proponent of decorative block walls because wooden fences require a lot of maintenance and frequently fall into disrepair, noting that developers prefer to put in wooden fences because they are less expensive. He indicated that he was not opposed to looking at other materials on a case-by-case basis, but prefers the permanence of a block wall.

Mr. Bihn proposed constructing a block wall along the east property line and a wooden fence along the street frontage. He recalled that the La Charite project has a block wall along the property line.

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

Chairperson Uchima related his observation that the existing stucco apartments on the subject property, which appear to have been built in the 1950s, do not blend at all with one-story Craftsman homes that predominate on Andreo north of the alley, therefore, the proposed project would be a significant improvement. He voiced support for project with the addition of porches and wood siding as earlier discussed.

Commissioner Drevno stated that she also would support the project as modified and thought it would only enhance the neighborhood.

Commissioner Faulk indicated that he favored including a specific condition requiring the use of horizontal wood siding on the building since it is not included on the plans. He stated that he was comfortable allowing the Community Development Director to approve the fence/wall plan but expressed the hope that the Commission's policy of requiring block walls would not be comprised too much.

Planning Manager Isomoto advised that staff would work with the applicant to come up with a plan based on the Commission's direction. She suggested the possibility of requiring a vinyl material that looks like wood but is more durable on areas visible from the street and requiring a block wall along the eastern property line.

MOTION: Commissioner Faulk moved for the approval of CUP05-00028 and DIV05-00015, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff, with the following modifications:

Add

- That wood siding shall be used for all exterior walls of the project to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director.

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

Planning Assistant Naughton read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution Nos. 05-141 and 05-142.

MOTION: Commissioner Drevno moved for the adoption of Resolution Nos. 05-141 and 05-142 as amended. The motion was seconded by Chairperson Uchima and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Muratsuchi).

*

The Commission recessed from 7:55 p.m. to 8:10 p.m., after which consideration of Agenda Item 10C was resumed.

10C. PRE05-00032: CHRIS BENOIT

Greg Schneider, project architect, reported that the applicant has agreed to reduce the pitch of the roof to 3 in 12; decrease the second-story plate height to 8 feet; and reduce the FAR to .58.

In response to questions from the Commission, Mr. Schneider advised that changing the pitch of the roof and decreasing the second-story plate height would result in a height reduction of approximately two feet and that the reduction in the FAR would be achieved by downsizing rooms.

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

Commissioners briefly discussed conditions to be imposed on the project.

MOTION: Commissioner Horwich moved for the approval of PRE05-00032, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff, with the following modifications:

Modify

No. 3 That the maximum height of the residence at the highest point of the roof shall not exceed a height of ~~26 feet 9 inches~~ 25 feet ...

No. 5 That the applicant shall reduce the proposed floor area ratio to ~~comply with the code required Floor Area Ratio maximum of 0.60~~ 0.58 ...

Add

- That the bathroom windows on the second floor shall be opaque.
- That the balcony shall have no more than one exterior light fixture to be located on the southeast corner of the structure.

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

Planning Assistant Naughton read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 05-154.

MOTION: Commissioner Drevno moved for the adoption of Resolution No. 05-154 as amended. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Horwich and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Muratsuchi).

**10E. CUP05-00029, DIV05-00016: 1627 GREENWOOD AVENUE LLC
(RUDY ROCCO)**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Conditional Use Permit to allow the construction of a new two-unit condominium project and a Division of Lot for condominium purposes on property located in the R-2 Zone at 1627 Greenwood Avenue.

Recommendation

Approval.

Planning Associate Crecy introduced the request.

Rudy Rocco, representing the applicant, voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval.

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

MOTION: Commissioner Drevno moved for the approval of CUP05-00029 and DIV05-00016, 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 Commissioner Muratsuchi).

Planning Assistant Naughton read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution Nos. 05-155 and 05-156.

MOTION: Commissioner Drevno moved for the adoption of Resolution Nos. 05-155 and 05-156. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Faulk and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Muratsuchi).

**10F. CUP05-00031: MRS. GOOCH'S NATURAL FOOD MARKETS, INC.
dba WHOLE FOODS MARKET**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Conditional Use Permit to allow on-site wine tasting in an existing grocery store on property located in the PD Zone at 2655 Pacific Coast Highway.

Recommendation

Approval.

Planning Associate Crecy introduced the request.

Margaret Taylor, representing the applicant, voiced her agreement with the recommended conditions of approval.

Responding to questions from the Commission, Ms. Taylor reported that wine tasting rooms have been installed in other Whole Foods Markets and they have not caused any problems. She noted the wine tasting room would be a very small part of the 55,000 square-foot market.

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

MOTION: Commissioner Drevno moved for the approval of CUP05-00031, 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 Commissioner Muratsuchi).

Planning Assistant Naughton read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 05-168.

MOTION: Commissioner Faulk moved for the adoption of Resolution No. 05-168. The motion was seconded by Chairperson Uchima and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Muratsuchi).

10G. CUP05-00032, DIV05-00018: SEAN CASEY/ DAVID CREAL

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Conditional Use Permit to allow the construction of two new detached condominium units and a Division of Lot for condominium purposes on property located in the R-2 Zone at 24215 Ocean Avenue.

Recommendation

Approval.

Planning Associate Crecy introduced the request.

David Creal, applicant, voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval.

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

MOTION: Commissioner Faulk moved for the approval of CUP05-00032 and DIV05-00018, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion

was seconded by Commissioner Drevno and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Muratsuchi).

Planning Assistant Naughton read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution Nos. 05-166 and 05-167.

MOTION: Commissioner Drevno moved for the adoption of Resolution Nos. 05-166 and 05-167. The motion was seconded by Chairperson Uchima and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Muratsuchi).

10H. CUP05-00030, DIV05-00017: DENNIS LA CHARITE

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Conditional Use Permit to allow the construction of three new attached condominium units and a Division of Lot for condominium purposes on property located in the R-3 Zone at 1918 Cabrillo Avenue.

Recommendation

Approval.

Planning Associate Crecy introduced the request.

Dennis La Charite, applicant, voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval.

Don Barnard, 2028 Gramercy Avenue, reported that Save Historical Old Torrance supports the proposed project and appreciates this developer's efforts to conform to the neighborhood.

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

MOTION: Commissioner Horwich moved for the approval of CUP05-00030 and DIV05-00017, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Chairperson Uchima and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Muratsuchi).

Planning Assistant Naughton read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution Nos. 05-160 and 05-161.

MOTION: Commissioner Drevno moved for the adoption of Resolution Nos. 05-160 and 05-161. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Horwich and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Muratsuchi).

10I. PCR05-00004,WAV05-00019: SAL AND ELSA PLAZA

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Planning Commission Review to allow the construction of a new second dwelling unit above a detached garage and a Waiver to allow a reduction in the distance between buildings on

property located in the Small Lot Low-Medium Overlay District in the R-2 Zone at 2304 Andreo Avenue.

Recommendation

Approval.

Planning Associate Crecy introduced the request.

Bonnie Mae Barnard, 2028 Gramercy Avenue, stated that Save Historical Old Torrance supports the proposed project and believes it will be an asset to the neighborhood as the new second unit completely blends with the existing structure.

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

MOTION: Commissioner Fauk moved for the approval of PRE05-00004 and WAV05-00019, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Chairperson Uchima and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Muratsuchi).

Planning Assistant Naughton read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution Nos. 05-164 and 05-165.

MOTION: Commissioner Drevno moved for the adoption of Resolution Nos. 05-164 and 05-165. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Horwich and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Muratsuchi).

10J. PRE05-00031: BEN AND KIM EGAN (MICHELLE GAINER)

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Precise Plan of Development to allow the construction of first and second-story additions to an existing one-story, single-family residence with an attached garage on property located in the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 2730 Grand Summit Road.

Recommendation

Approval.

Planning Associate Crecy introduced the request.

Michelle Gainer, project architect, voiced her agreement with the recommended conditions of approval.

Submitting photographs to illustrate, Patrick Holman, 2726 Grand Summit Road, stated that he was opposed to the project because it would take away one-third of his city-light view, thereby, decreasing the value of his property. He indicated that he was also concerned that the second-story bathroom window could impact his privacy. He requested that the ridgeline be lowered 4 to 5 feet so that it would be in line with the roof of the house to the north of the subject property to mitigate the impact on his view.

In response to Chairperson Uchima's inquiry, Mr. Holman reported that the second story was added to his home before he purchased it.

Planning Manager Isomoto advised that the addition was approved in May of 1978, therefore, it was subject to the Hillside Overlay Ordinance.

Ms. Gainer stated that she has been inside Mr. Holman's home and saw the view in question when she did a small remodeling job for the previous owner and she took this view into account when designing the project and cantilevered the addition over the front of the garage. She noted that the height of the addition is only a little over 23 feet and estimated that it is within inches of the ridgeline of homes on either side of it. She suggested that if Mr. Holman re-oriented his furniture to take advantage of the view straight out, instead of facing the Egans' home, he would not even see the addition. She commented on the numerous revisions this project has undergone since it was initially contemplated in April of 2004.

Chairperson Uchima reported that he viewed the project from Mr. Holman's home and the ridgeline to the north of the subject property does appear to be lower than the silhouette. He asked if the garage could be lowered into the ground.

Ms. Gainer explained that tearing down the existing garage to drop it a few feet would be cost prohibitive.

In response to Commission Faulk's inquiry, Ms. Gainer reported that the property owners met with the Holmans a number of times and their last discussion was in December of 2004, at which time the Holmans indicated that they would oppose any second-story addition.

Chairperson Uchima asked if there were any alternatives that might work for her clients as well as the neighbors. Ms. Gainer explained that there was no way to expand to the rear with only a 20-foot backyard and that she thought a 400 square-foot addition, with an FAR of .42 was reasonable, especially since there are two-story homes on either side of it.

Chairperson Uchima suggested the possibility of reducing the height of the 10-foot garage ceiling. Ms. Gainer explained that the additional height is necessary to accommodate the forced air heating and water heater. She indicated that some height reduction might be achieved by changing the pitch of the roof.

It was the consensus of the Commission to defer taking action on this item while Ms. Gainer met with her clients and Mr. Holman to discuss possible modifications.

10K. PRE05-00033: PRITZKAT ARCHITECTS / KEITH JOHNSON

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Precise Plan of Development to allow the construction of first and second-story additions to an existing one-story, single-family residence with an attached garage on property located in the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 863 Calle de Arboles.

Continued to November 16, 2005.

10L. PRE05-00028, WAV05-00016: KHOSROW SHEIK

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Precise Plan of Development to allow the construction of first and second-story additions in conjunction with a Waiver of the required front-facing garage setback for an existing one-story, single-family residence with an attached garage in the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 4714 Bindewald Road.

Recommendation

Approval.

Planning Associate Crecy introduced the request.

Khosrow Sheik, applicant, voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval.

Catherine Doyle, 4718 Bindewald Road, stated that she was concerned about the possible impact on her privacy due to the proximity of the rear balcony to her patio and master bedroom; that Mr. Sheik has promised to plant shrubbery to act as a screen; and that she had been advised to mention this so it would be part of the record even though she understands the Commission.

Mr. Sheik confirmed that he agreed to plant shrubbery as a privacy screen for Ms. Doyle.

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

MOTION: Commissioner Horwich moved for the approval of PRE05-00028 and WAV05-00016, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Chairperson Uchima and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Muratsuchi).

Planning Assistant Naughton read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution Nos. 05-158 and 05-159.

MOTION: Commissioner Faulk moved for the adoption of Resolution Nos. 05-158 and 05-159. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Horwich and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Muratsuchi).

The Commission resumed discussion of Item 10J at this time.

10J. PRE05A-00031: BEN AND KIM EGAN (MICHELLE GAINER)

Ms. Gainer reported that she met with Mr. Holman and reviewed his photographs and he indicated that he would not oppose the project if the ridgeline could be lowered to match that of the house to the north of the subject property, which appears to be 12 to 18 inches lower than the silhouette. She stated that the Egans are not happy with this solution but would agree to do so in order to get their project approved.

Commissioners discussed the difficulty of determining how much of a reduction would be needed without having the project re-silhouetted.

Planning Manager Isomoto reminded the Commission that Mr. Holman's second-story was built after the Hillside Overlay was enacted.

Commissioner Horwich voiced support for the project as proposed, explaining that, in his opinion, a view acquired after the Hillside Ordinance was enacted is not protected.

Commissioner Faulk stated that he was inclined to support the project as proposed because the addition is very modest in size and the Egans have apparently been working for some time to come up with an acceptable design. He noted that there are two-story homes on either side of the project and while there is some impact to Mr. Holman's view, it has been the Commission's practice not to afford acquired views the same protection as original views.

Commissioner Drevno noted her agreement with her colleagues' comments and indicated that she would support the project as proposed.

Chairperson Uchima stated that he would find it easier to support the project if a compromise could be reached.

Ms. Gainer reported that her clients feel that they have done all they can to accommodate Mr. Holman's view and would like the Commission to vote on the project at this time.

Planning Manager Isomoto expressed confidence that Ms. Gainer would reduce the height should there be an opportunity to do so when the plans are finalized, and Ms. Gainer agreed to do so.

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

MOTION: Commissioner Drevno moved for the approval of PRE05-00031, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Horwich and passed by a 3-1 roll call vote, with Chairperson Uchima dissenting (absent Commissioner Muratsuchi).

Planning Assistant Naughton read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 05-162.

MOTION: Commissioner Drevno moved for the adoption of Resolution No. 05-162. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Horwich and passed by a 3-1 roll call vote, with Commissioner Uchima dissenting (absent Commissioner Muratsuchi).

11. **RESOLUTIONS** – None.

12. **PUBLIC WORKSHOP ITEMS** – None.

13. **MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS** – None.

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

Planning Manager Isomoto reviewed recent City Council action on Planning matters. She reported that the Council rejected two condominium projects in Old Torrance, noting that the Portola Avenue project (CUP05-00022, DIV05-00010) will come back to the Commission after revisions and the Arlington Avenue project (CUP05-00020, DIV05-00009) will go directly to the Council.

15. LIST OF TENTATIVE PLANNING COMMISSION CASES

Planning Manager Isomoto reviewed the agenda for the Planning Commission meeting of November 16, 2005.

16. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

16A. Planning Manager Isomoto commended Chairperson Uchima for doing a great job of getting through tonight's lengthy agenda.

16B. Bonnie Mae Barnard, Save Historic Old Torrance, stated that she was very pleased by the progress that has been made since his organization was founded 2½ years ago and very appreciative of the City Council's action on historic preservation. She expressed the hope that she had dispelled Commissioner Horwich's earlier impression that she was opposed to any condominiums in the Old Torrance area.

16C. Leslie Shoecraft, 1311 Arlington Avenue, expressed concerns that the balcony on the second unit at 1315 Arlington Avenue (Agenda Item 9B), would look directly into her home.

Chairperson Uchima explained that this project was approved earlier in the meeting and Ms. Shoecraft would have to appeal the decision to the City Council if she had concerns about it.

Planning Manager Isomoto related her understanding that the only balcony is on the rear of the building and offered to review the plans with Ms. Shoecraft after the meeting.

16D. Commissioner Horwich commented that he had been concerned that Save Historic Old Torrance was opposed to condominiums in general and now recognizes that their focus is on design and compatibility.

16E. Chairperson Uchima commended Save Historic Old Torrance for doing an excellent job of enlightening the Commission on historic preservation.

17. ADJOURNMENT

At 9:26 p.m., the meeting was adjourned to Wednesday, November 16, 2005 at 7:00 p.m.

Approved as Submitted December 7, 2005 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
