

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

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Torrance Planning Commission convened in a regular session at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 15, 2006, 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 Browning, Busch, Horwich, Uchima, Weideman and Chairperson Faulk.

Absent: Commissioner Gibson.

Also Present: Planning Manager Lodan, Planning Assistant Hurd, Building Regulations Administrator Segovia, Associate Civil Engineer Symons, Fire Marshal Kazandjian and Deputy City Attorney Whitham.

MOTION: Commissioner Browning, seconded by Commissioner Busch, moved to grant Commissioner Gibson an excused absence from this meeting; voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

Chairperson Faulk welcomed Kurt Weideman to the Commission.

4. REPORT ON POSTING OF THE AGENDA

Planning Manager Lodan confirmed that the agenda was posted on the Public Notice Board at 3031 Torrance Boulevard on 11/9/06.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – None.

6. REQUESTS FOR POSTPONEMENT – None.

*

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

7. **TIME EXTENSIONS** – None.

8. **CONTINUED HEARINGS**

8A. **CUP06-00018: FRANCHER DEVELOPMENT (NINA RAEY)**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Conditional Use Permit to allow the operation of an indoor commercial recreation center/ health club in conjunction with interior tenant improvements and minor exterior changes to an existing commercial building on property located in the Hawthorne Boulevard Corridor Specific Plan North Torrance Sub-District at 4240 Redondo Beach Boulevard, Suite A.

Recommendation

Approval.

Planning Assistant Hurd introduced the request.

Nina Raey, representing 24 Hour Fitness, voiced her agreement with the recommended conditions of approval.

Commissioner Busch expressed concerns about the adequacy of handicapped parking at this center, with only 12 handicapped spaces out of a total of 519, and indicated that he favored adding at least 3 more.

Ms. Raey agreed to increase the handicapped parking with the approval of Planning staff.

Responding to questions from the Commission, Planning Manager Lodan provided clarification regarding changes to the landscaping and exterior lighting and confirmed that the Commission had the authority to limit the hours of operation.

Commissioner Busch noted that according to graphs submitted by the applicant, very few members use the facilities between midnight and 5:00 a.m.

Ms. Raey explained that although the health club is not heavily used during those hours, the 24-hour operation provides an opportunity for those who work different shifts to use the facilities and this flexibility is a selling point for the club. She noted that there is another 24 Hour Fitness in Torrance; that club members are typically professionals; and that the club's operating hours have never been an issue.

Chairperson Faulk questioned how many of the company's 360 clubs are open around the clock. Ms. Raey explained that all but the smaller express clubs are open 24 hours a day.

Chairperson Faulk voiced support for allowing a 24-hour operation at this location, stating that he did not believe the Commission should dictate the hours of operation when there are no apparent problems. He pointed out that there are advantages to having a business open 24 hours, such as discouraging loitering in the parking lot.

MOTION: Commissioner Horwich moved to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Busch and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

Commissioner Uchima voiced support for the project as proposed, with the addition of the three handicapped parking spaces.

MOTION: Commissioner Uchima moved for the approval of CUP06-00018, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff, with the following modification:

Add

- That three additional handicapped parking spaces shall be provided.

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

Planning Assistant Hurd read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 06-120.

MOTION: Commissioner Uchima moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution No. 06-120 as amended. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Browning and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

9. **WAIVERS** – None.

10. **FORMAL HEARINGS**

10A. **CUP06-00020: MICHAEL MCCRALEY**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Conditional Use Permit to allow wine tasting in conjunction with a retail wine establishment on property located in the PD Zone at 2733 Pacific Coast Highway.

Recommendation

Approval.

Planning Assistant Hurd introduced the request.

Michael McCraley, representing Wine Styles, 2733 Pacific Coast Highway, voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval.

In response to Commissioner Browning's inquiry, Mr. McCraley confirmed that the ABC (Alcoholic Beverage Control) must also approve the wine tasting and an application has been filed. He explained that the wine tasting will take place at the rear of the store in a controlled environment, with a set number of wines available for tasting each day. He reported that the business is open six days a week at 11:00 a.m. and closes at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday and Wednesday, 8:00 p.m. on Thursday, 9:00 p.m. on Friday and Saturday, and 5:00 p.m. on Sunday.

MOTION: Commissioner Busch moved to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Horwich and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

MOTION: Commissioner Browning moved for the approval of CUP06-00020, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Busch and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

Planning Assistant Hurd read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 06-126.

MOTION: Commissioner Browning moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution No. 06-126. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Horwich and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

10B. PRE06-00002: DAMIEN AND JOANNA DELANY (PRITZKAT ARCHITECTS/ KEITH JOHNSON)

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 on property located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 5506 Green Meadows Street.

Recommendation

Approval.

Planning Assistant Hurd introduced the request.

Keith Johnson, Pritzkat Architects, voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval. He explained that the second story was necessary because the steep slope to the rear of the property made it impossible to expand on the first level. He noted that the second story was stepped back from the first story to minimize the bulk of the structure; that windows were placed to mitigate the impact on privacy; and that both the height and FAR are well under the maximum allowed. He reported that his clients have met with neighbors and they have no objection to the project.

Chris Parker, 5510 Green Meadows Street, stated that he supports the project and looks forward to its completion.

MOTION: Commissioner Busch moved to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Browning and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

Commissioner Busch expressed support for the project.

MOTION: Commissioner Busch moved for the approval of PRE06-00002, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Uchima and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

Planning Assistant Hurd read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 06-127.

MOTION: Commissioner Weideman moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution No. 06-127. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Horwich and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

Commissioner Faulk commented that this project was a good example of how smoothly the approval process can go when applicants comply with all the rules and regulations and follow the suggestions of staff.

10C. PRE06-00029: GLEN AND DEBBIE WOOD

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Precise Plan of Development to allow the construction of one-story additions in conjunction with interior remodeling to an existing one-story, single-family residence on property located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 5619 Sunnyview Street.

Recommendation

Approval.

Planning Assistant Hurd introduced the request.

Glen Wood, 5619 Sunnyview Street, voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval.

MOTION: Commissioner Horwich moved to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Weideman and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

MOTION: Commissioner Weideman moved for the approval of PRE06-00029, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Busch and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

Planning Assistant Hurd read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 06-128.

MOTION: Commissioner Weideman moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution No. 06-128. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Busch and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

11. RESOLUTIONS

11A. WAV06-00018: D. RALEIGH HARRIS

Planning Commission consideration of a resolution approving a Waiver to allow a reduction in the rear yard setback requirement in conjunction with a one-story addition to an existing one-story, single-family residence on property located in the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 429 Via Los Miradores.

Raleigh Harris, 429 Via Los Miradores, reiterated the reasons for the Waiver, which was approved at the November 1, 2006 meeting.

MOTION: Commissioner Busch moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution No. 06-125. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Browning and passed by unanimous roll call vote, with Commissioners Uchima and Weideman abstaining (absent Commissioner Gibson).

12. PUBLIC WORKSHOP ITEMS – None.

13. MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

13A. ROOF DECK REVIEW

Planning Commission consideration of a citizen's request to review the approval process for roof decks within residential zones.

Planning Manager Lodan noted that this item was brought forward at the Commission's request.

Judy Brunetti, 4815 Greenmeadows, asked that the Commission consider amending the Torrance Municipal Code to make all rooftop decks subject to the same approval process that is currently in effect for the Hillside Overlay area. She explained that rooftop decks in the Hillside area must be approved by the Planning Commission, but there are no restrictions on rooftop decks in the rest of the city as long as they meeting Building Code requirements. She stated that the problems related to rooftop decks are not limited to the hillside area, as the main problems are the impact on privacy and the likelihood of noise. She noted that third stories are not allowed in the R-1 Zone, but a roof deck essentially adds a third story. She pointed out that safety also can be an issue, especially when the deck overlooks a pool as people may be tempted to jump from the deck into the pool, and that a roof deck could detract from the value of an adjoining property. She submitted a petition in support of her request.

Responding to questions from the Commission, Planning Manager Lodan provided clarification regarding the approval process for roof decks in the Hillside Overlay area.

Commissioner Busch questioned whether Ms. Brunetti intends to bring this matter to the attention of the City Council.

Ms. Brunetti reported that she addressed the City Council under "Orals" and was directed to bring the matter to the Planning Commission for consideration.

Commissioner Browning asked about the possibility of discussing this issue at the next General Plan meeting.

Planning Manager Lodan advised that the General Plan looks at broader issues of land use and zoning and suggested that the Commission could discuss this matter as a workshop item at a future Commission meeting.

Commissioner Horwich noted that along with rooftop decks, second-story additions can have a serious impact on privacy, but those who live outside the Hillside Overlay area have no recourse if their neighbors choose to build one. He proposed that this inequity also be discussed during the workshop.

Chairperson Fauk, echoed by Commissioner Browning, expressed support for Commissioner Horwich's proposal.

MOTION: Commissioner Weideman moved to direct staff to prepare a workshop item on the above-mentioned topics. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Browning and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

Planning Manager Lodan advised that it may take several months to prepare the workshop item and confirmed that Ms. Brunetti and all who signed the petition would be notified.

Commissioner Busch recommended that homeowners associations also be notified of the date of the workshop.

14. REVIEW OF CITY COUNCIL ACTION ON PLANNING MATTERS

Planning Manager Lodan reviewed recent City Council action on Planning matters, noting that the Council declined a request to reconsider the approval of the Nordel project on Newton Street (PRE06-00008, PRE06-00009) and that the non-conforming accessory structure on Cota Avenue (VAL06-00001) was approved but must comply with all building codes.

15. LIST OF TENTATIVE PLANNING COMMISSION CASES

Planning Manager Lodan reviewed the agenda for the Planning Commission meeting of December 6, 2006.

The Commission discussed the possibility of cancelling the January 3, 2007 meeting.

16. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

16A. Commissioners welcomed Kurt Weideman to the Commission.

16B. Commissioner Busch noted that he attended the City Council meeting the previous evening and commended Planning Manager Lodan and Deputy City Attorney Whitham for doing a great job with regard to the Planning cases that were brought forward.

16C. Commissioner Browning requested an update on the status of two projects on Carolwood, which were started without benefit of permit.

16D. Commissioner Horwich commended Planning Manager Lodan for doing an excellent job of representing opposing viewpoints during the discussion of Planning cases at the November 14 City Council meeting and Deputy City Attorney Whitham for her clear and concise explanation of legal issues.

16E. Commissioner Uchima commented positively on the new Lowe's home improvement store on Skypark Drive.

16F. Chairperson Faulk wished everyone a happy Thanksgiving.

17. ADJOURNMENT

At 8:20 p.m., the meeting was adjourned to Wednesday, December 6, 2006, at 7:00 p.m.

Approved as Submitted December 20, 2006 Sue Herbers, City Clerk
