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**TORRANCE PLANNING COMMISSION – JUNE 3, 2015**

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At 7:50 p.m., the meeting was adjourned to Wednesday, June 17, 2015 at 7:00 p.m.

June 3, 2015

**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, June 3, 2015, in City Council Chambers at Torrance City Hall.

**2. SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairperson Polcari.

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

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

Absent: Commissioner Gibson.

Also Present: Planning Manager Lodan, Planning Assistant Fernandez, Associate Civil Engineer Symons, Plans Examiner Noh, and Assistant City Attorney Sullivan.

**MOTION:** Commissioner D'anjou moved to grant Commissioner Gibson an excused absence for this meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Skoll and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

**4. POSTING OF THE AGENDA**

Planning Manager Lodan reported that the agenda was posted on the Public Notice Board at 3031 Torrance Boulevard on Thursday, May 28, 2015.

**5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – None.**

**6. REQUESTS FOR POSTPONEMENTS**

Planning Manager Lodan relayed requests to continue Agenda Item 12B, PRE15-00007, WAV15-00005: Peha & Associates indefinitely, and to continue Agenda Item 12D, CUP15-00009, ZON15-00002, DIV15-00004, WAV15-00006: Anastasi Development, to June 17, 2015.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Watson moved to continue Agenda Item 12B indefinitely. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tsao and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

Planning Manager Lodan announced that this item will be re-noticed and re-advertised once a new hearing date has been set.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Skoll moved to continue Agenda Item 12D to June 17, 2015. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Herring and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

Chairperson Polcari announced that this hearing will not be re-advertised because it was continued to a date certain.

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**

11. **WAIVERS** – None.

12. **FORMAL HEARINGS**

12A. **MOD15-00002: STEVE NI (FCI HOLDINGS LLC)**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Modification of a previously approved Conditional Use Permit (CUP01-00029) to allow the service of beer and wine at an existing restaurant, in conjunction with interior renovations, on property located in the H-MP Zone at 22901 Hawthorne Boulevard. This project is Categorical Exempt from CEQA per Guidelines Section 15301 – Existing Facilities.

**Recommendation:** Approval.

Planning Assistant Fernandez introduced the request.

Steve Ni, Grand Chinese Buffet, 22901 Hawthorne Boulevard, applicant, voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval. He reported that he plans to remodel the interior of the restaurant and add the service of beer and wine due to customer demand.

Responding to questions from the Commission, Mr. Ni reported that the restaurant has not changed hands and he plans to reopen by the end of the month.

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

**MOTION:** Commissioner Tsao moved to approve MOD15-00002, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Herring and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

Planning Assistant Fernandez read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 15-036.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Tsao moved to adopt Planning Commission Resolution No. 15-036. The motion was seconded by Commissioner D'anjou and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

**12B. PRE15-00007, WAV15-00005: PEHA & ASSOCIATES (LARRY MCBRIDE)**

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, in conjunction with a Waiver of the side yard setback requirements, on property located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 406 Camino de Encanto. This project is Categorically Exempt from CEQA per Guidelines Sections 15301 – Existing Facilities and 15305 – Minor Alterations.

Item was continued indefinitely.

**12C. PRE13-00006, WAV13-00006: HAMID IRANI (NIMA PROPERTIES, LLC)**

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 with semi-subterranean garage, in conjunction with a Waiver of the front and side yard setback requirements and to exceed a height of 27 feet, on property located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 620 Calle Miramar. This project is Categorically Exempt from CEQA per Guidelines Sections 15301 – Existing Facilities and 15305 – Minor Alterations.

**Recommendation:** Approval.

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

Brett Buchmann, Buchmann Design, project architect, briefly described the proposed project. He explained that the design maintains the existing building footprint as much as possible and includes the addition of a conforming garage in front of the residence. He noted that the project's maximum height is the same as the existing structure; that the east side of the project has been pulled in four feet to mitigate privacy and massing issues; and that the only deck is where there is an existing deck, which will be expanded toward the street.

Chairperson Polcari asked if the project was shared with neighbors.

Mr. Buchmann reported that his client discussed the project with neighbors on either side and the neighbor to the east was concerned about a view from the front of his house so revisions were made to accommodate that view and the neighbor to the west had privacy concerns so the second floor was moved in four feet, the deck was downsized, and west-facing windows were replaced with clerestory windows.

Commissioner Skoll asked if the owner plans to live in the house, and Mr. Buchmann responded that his client has owned the property for some time, but he did not know his intentions.

Commissioner D'anjou and Commissioner Tsao disclosed that they each had driven by the property, but did not speak with anyone.

Janalee Danis Johnson, representing her sister Jillynn Danis, 170 Via Monte D'Oro, reported that her parents bought this home in 1955 and her sister now resides there. She expressed concerns that the proposed second-story addition would loom over the house and

pool area, block the morning sun, and invade the privacy of the house and patio. She urged the Commission to consider the negative impact the project would have on her family home. She noted that subject property has been occupied by renters ever since the applicant purchased the home.

In response to Commissioner Skoll's inquiry, Ms. Johnson clarified that the project does not impact any ocean views, and her concerns were related to privacy impact and the blockage of sunlight.

Greg Scarich, 253 Paseo de las Delicias, voiced objections to the subterranean garage, which he believes was out of character with the rest of the neighborhood.

James Mahoney, 130 Via Las Miradores, reported that his girlfriend is the owner of 170 Via Monte D'Oro and he circulated the petition in opposition to the project (supplemental material) and could have gotten many more signatures if he had had more time. He expressed concerns that the addition will look like a massive prison wall from 170 Via Monte D'Oro and block sunlight from a quarter of the pool.

Lucy Bonnie, 253 Via de las Delicias, voiced her opinion that the applicant should not be allowed to exceed height restrictions because it will encourage others to do the same thing.

Joseph Jeffries, 174 Via Monte D'Oro, stated that the proposed project would take away the privacy of his backyard, submitting photos to illustrate.

Kay White, co-president of the Riviera Homeowners Association, related her understanding that projects in the Hillside Overlay are limited to an FAR (floor area ratio) of 0.50 and the proposed project has an FAR of 0.59.

Planning Manager Lodan explained that an FAR up to 0.60 is allowed in the R-1 Zone and 0.50 is the threshold over which a project in the Hillside Overlay District is subject to the Precise Plan review process.

Chairperson Polcari advised Mr. Buchmann that he could not support the project as proposed, but would support a continuance if the applicant would like an opportunity to work with neighbors to try to resolve their concerns.

Commissioner Skoll indicated that he also would not support the project for a number of reasons, including the design of the project, the privacy impact, and the blockage of sunlight from the pool, noting that he has a pool and would not want anything blocking his sunlight. He stated that the absence of the owner also raises a big red flag for him.

A brief discussion ensued, and it was the consensus of the Commission to continue the hearing and the applicant was encouraged to work with neighbors.

Mr. Buchmann expressed his willingness to do so, but noted that the neighbors' rear property line runs the entire length of the side of the applicant's house so any concessions made will have a major impact on the project so there are no easy solutions.

**MOTION:** Commissioner D'anjou moved to continue the hearing on PRE13-00006 and WAV13-00006 indefinitely. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tsao and passed by unanimous roll call vote (Commissioner Gibson).

**12D. CUP15-00009, ZON15-00002, DIV15-00004, WAV15-00006: ANASTASI DEVELOPMENT (WILLIAM GARRETT)**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Conditional Use Permit to allow a 16-unit residential condominium development, in conjunction with a Zone Change from C-5 (Conditional Commercial District) to RP (Residential Professional District), a Tentative Tract Map to consolidate the existing parcels and for condominium purposes, and a Waiver of the RP Zone height limit, on properties located in the C-5 Zone at 23625-23649 Arlington Avenue. This project is Categorically Exempt from CEQA per Guidelines Sections 15332 – In-Fill Development, and Final Environmental Impact Report State Clearinghouse No. 2008111046 – 2009 Torrance General Plan Update.

Item was continued to June 17, 2015.

**13. RESOLUTIONS** – None.

**14. PUBLIC WORKSHOP ITEMS** – None.

**15. MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS**

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

Planning Manager Lodan noted that the Community Development Director Weekly Summary Reports for May 14 and May 22, 2015 were distributed to the Commission.

**16. REVIEW OF CITY COUNCIL ACTION ON PLANNING MATTERS** – None.

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

Planning Manager Lodan reviewed the agenda for the June 17, 2015 Planning Commission meeting.

**18. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #2**

**18A.** Commissioner Herring reported that he attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Cabrillo Family Apartments, a mixed-use development built with Redevelopment Agency funds, and was very impressed and hopes the City can do more such projects.

**18B.** Chairperson Polcari noted that he attended the rededication of Towers Elementary School, which was well attended.

**18C.** Commissioner Watson reported that the City of Torrance was recently recognized by the L.A. Conservancy for the renovation of the Torrance/El Prado bridge at an awards luncheon at the Biltmore Hotel and a variety of other projects were recognized, including the renovation of a 1950s housing project and a survey conducted by the Los Angeles Unified School District that encompassed every property ever owned since its founding in 1872, which highlights the fact that historic preservation goes beyond pretty houses.

**18D.** Commissioner Tsao echoed comments on the Cabrillo Family Apartments, and questioned if there were any senior housing projects in the works.

Planning Manager Lodan reported that there has been renewed interest in the property behind the Del Amo Financial Center, but no application has been submitted.

**19. ADJOURNMENT**

7:50 p.m., the meeting was adjourned to Wednesday, June 17, 2015 at 7:00 p.m.

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Approved as submitted July 15, 2015 s/ Rebecca Poirier, City Clerk
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